

Fornsett Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council
held at remotely via Zoom on Thursday 15 October 2020 at 7.30.

In Attendance: Cllr B Frith (Chairman) Cllr B Humphreys, Cllr A Coleman, Cllr G Barnes, Cllr D Welsby, Cllr S Allen

Parish Clerk Anne Rayner
County Councillor Bev Spratt

- 1. To consider apologies for absence** – District Councillor Barry Duffin sent his apologies.
- 2. To receive any declarations of interest** – None to report,
- 3. To approve the minutes of the last meeting (17 September 2020)** – The minutes were approved without alteration and signed as correct by the Chairman.
- 4. To consider matters arising from the minutes (for information only)** – The Parish Partnership bid is nearly ready and will be submitted shortly.
- 5. Open forum, to hear from members of the public, including reports from District and County Councillors** – Although District Councillor Barry Duffin was absent, he did send the following report - *With the uncertainty of a second wave before us, I want to share with you the half-time scores that demonstrate just how your local Council has stepped in to help individuals, families and businesses address the impact of COVID-19 so far.*

The figures are really impressive, but what is staggering and makes me most proud, is the way that our team has taken this pandemic in its stride. Over a quarter of our staff have been redeployed and their efforts augmented by volunteers to ensure that every fridge has been filled, every bin collected, every homeless person found a roof over their head and each business assisted with cash, grants or other intervention.

Our staff working in our help hub answered more than 20,000 calls from people needing help and support on a seven day per week rota. In addition we super-served nearly 5,000 shielded residents or were known to be vulnerable. Staff worked from spare bedrooms, kitchens and garden sheds to keep the wheels turning.

Our teams, supported by hundreds of volunteers delivered 4,000 food parcels and prescriptions to those in the greatest need and we provided 78 residents with safe, temporary accommodation.

Our housing and benefits team dealt with more than 9,000 calls, our Economic Development team and our Business Rates team helped administer more than £50 million in business grants and our crews collected over one million bins - black, green and brown

Our website team published nearly 4,000 page updates and we had over 250,000 visits to our website from residents and businesses looking for information and support.

I want to thank our staff and the hundreds of volunteers, who stood up and offered to help, for everything you've done and there are undoubtedly people alive today who wouldn't be, without your efforts.

Now we look to the future and the recovery. We have secured over £400,000 to upgrade the narrow Thoroughfare in Harleston to allow safe shopping with pedestrian priority whilst

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allowing free access for cars, buses and delivery vehicles.

In Wymondham, the station access will now finally be upgraded for disabled access from both platforms in a £1m investment.

And our Confidence Team, is continuing to work with our towns and businesses to get our high streets back on their feet and cash registers ringing again. We are working with businesses across the district to help save jobs and we are helping our licenced premises to stay open, while keeping you safe.

But we cannot afford to be complacent. We haven't beaten this virus yet and that's why it's important that we don't let our guard down and that we're ready for what's to come this winter. But whatever is thrown at us, I can reassure you that your local Council will be ready to help you and loved ones keep safe and secure.

County Councillor Bev Spratt reported that the roads seem to be coping well so far, particularly given the enormous amount of rain we have had so far in October. It appears that the section with the natural spring on Cheney's Lane has been coping much better following works undertaken there. Councillor Humphreys mentioned the poor condition of Wash Lane, which the clerk has reported to NCC but has only received a response saying that they are aware of the situation and plan to return to carry out further works at some point in the future. Councillor Humphreys will send photos of the worst sections to the clerk.

- 6. To consider planning applications: None to report**
- 7. To hear of planning decisions and other information:**
a) 2020 / 1425 – Sequoia, Long Stratton Rd – Erection of oak framed garage to front of dwelling and car port – Approved
- 8. To report planning comments agreed via e-mail in between meetings: None to report**
- 9. To consider the Councillor vacancy** – South Norfolk Council have confirmed that the time has elapsed following the notification of a casual vacancy and the parish council may now co-opt. The clerk will include some information regarding this in the Flyer report this month.
- 10. To consider the allotment lease renewal** – The current lease agreement expires in February 2022. It is hoped that the landowner will agree to a new lease and, following discussion, Councillors agreed that the clerk should send an updated lease agreement to the landowner.
- 11. To discuss budget planning for 2021/22** – In previous years, the Chairman and the other two cheque signatories, Councillors Humphreys and Barnes, have met with the clerk to discuss options for the budget, before presenting the information at a full council meeting. This year, it was agreed that some ideas and initial figures would be circulated for comment between the same four people before they are discussed in full at the November meeting.

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12. To receive the RFO report and consider the approval of the following payments:

Ch. No.	Amount	Payee	Notes
SO	£ 351.23	A Rayner	October salary
DD	£ 51.27	A J Bell	October pension contribution
BACS	£ 143.88	A Rayner	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription
BACS	£ 35.21	B Frith	Mower expenses
BACS	£ 25.00	C Minns	Reimbursement – Remembrance Day wreath

13. To consider correspondence:

a) Mobile Library Service – The mobile libraries are back out on the roads, with the appropriate safety measures in place, such as face coverings, hand sanitising, limits on numbers and books being quarantined on return. The clerk has a new timetable of stopping times and places and this will hopefully be included in the Flyer this month.

14. Items for information and comment – Little Tractors playgroup have returned to the village hall, as have indoor bowls and art group, although the latter has been re-purposed to allow for social distancing and it now has more of a teaching aspect to the group. It was decided that line dancing couldn't accommodate enough dancers, given the social distancing requirements, to make it viable. The Chairman thanked the small group of people who have managed to keep up with footpath maintenance over the Summer. The paths have been well walked this year, probably because more people have been at home than a normal year, and this has helped to keep growth down. NCC cut some of the paths in late July, which was very welcome. Thanks also to the landowners who, despite a difficult year for agriculture, have respected field edge and crossfield paths.

Councillor Gilly Barnes reported that St Peter's Church are in the process of setting up a Facebook page and also a Just Giving page. They are also waiting to hear about two outstanding funding applications. Possibilities for Christmas carol plans are still being considered.

Councillor Andrew Coleman reported that the Methodist Church plans to open for services from 6 December. Social distancing and limits on numbers will be observed.

15. To confirm the date of the next meeting as 19 November 2020 to be held remotely.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm.