

Forncett Parish Council  
Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council  
held at Forncett Village Hall on Thursday 18 January 2024 at 7.30pm

In Attendance: Cllr B Frith (Chairman), Cllr G Barnes, Cllr D Welsby, Cllr D Bezkorowajny, Cllr M Sanders

Parish Clerk Anne Rayner  
4 members of the public

1. **To consider apologies for absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Humphreys. County Councillor Catharine Rowett and District Councillor Kim Carsok also sent their apologies.
2. **To receive any declarations of interest** – None to report.
3. **To approve the minutes of the last meeting (19<sup>th</sup> December 2023)** – The minutes were approved without alteration and signed as correct by the Chairman.
4. **To consider matters arising from the minutes (for information only)** – Nothing to report.
5. **Open forum, to hear from members of the public including, if available, a report from District Councillor Kim Carsok and County Councillor Catherine Rowett** – Councillor Carsok sent a report which included information about the planned closure of Diss swimming pool for repairs and improvements. The pool will close on 12 February and is expected to re-open in November. The Mobile Help Hub van has been delivered. A full schedule is being planned for the Spring. Clean up and Bloom grants of £300 are available – the parish council agreed to apply for one of these to spend on bulbs / planting at appropriate spots in the village and also agreed they could perhaps plan this in conjunction with Forncett Nature Group. Finally, South Norfolk Council have passed a public space protection order on vehicle related anti-social behaviour, meaning that fines can be issued to owners of vehicles causing nuisance or intimidation.  
  
County Councillor Catherine Rowett also sent a report. This contained seasonal information around staying warm and safe during the Winter months, all the information is available on the Norfolk County Council website. The Cabinet at NCC opted to postpone implementation of new 'level 3' devolution deal until 2025. Planning permission is now in place for the Long Stratton bypass and a decision on the contractor to carry out the work is expected soon.
6. **To consider planning applications: None to report**
7. **To report planning comments agreed via email between meetings: None to report**
8. **To hear of planning decisions and information:**
  - a) **2023 / 3539 – Chequers Farm, Chequers Hill – Machinery Store – For information only**  
– Prior approval not required
  - b) **FUL / 2023 / 0034 – Old Court Farm, Wacton Rd – Receipt, transfer and temporary storage of asbestos waste – Approved**

9. **To consider information from NALC regarding .gov.uk domains** – NALC have issued information regarding the possible migration of parish council websites to a 'gov.uk' domain setting and, in hand with this, parish councillors would be offered email addresses with the same format. This is not a requirement at the moment but is considered to be good practice. This was discussed briefly, with the only concern being the potential of important information or deadlines being missed, if Councillors do not log in to the 'additional' email account regularly. It was agreed to wait for further information before moving to this format.
10. **Ongoing Highways issues:**
- **Grit bins** – The bin at the top of Tabernacle Lane has been filled. NB – The Chairman reported after the meeting that the Moulton Bridge bin has also been filled.
  - **Wash Lane Ford** – There continue to be vehicles failing to recognise the depth of the Ford and attempting to cross when the levels are too high, resulting in the need to be towed out. Councillor Welsby confirmed she has been aware of three such incidents within the last few weeks. The Chairman displayed some photos of the Ford and it was agreed that the depth gauge is not visible enough and is not situated in the most appropriate place. The concerns around visibility are even greater during the dark. It was agreed that the clerk will contact our Highways Officer to ask for a meeting at the site to discuss potential improvements.
  - **Station Rd junction** – The clerk has written to the highways officer again asking about the funding source for the recommended works to be carried out.
  - **Low Rd flooding** – All present agreed that something significant has changed to cause the constant surface water on Low Road. This is an area which has never suffered from flooding previously but the road is now permanently under water. The Chairman will take photos and the clerk will contact the highways officer.
  - **Public footpaths 4 and 29** – Keith Fromings was present and he reported that FP29 (off Tabernacle Lane, at the side of the sewage works) is under water at various points, which seems to relate to water leaking from the reed beds. If it is not possible to rectify this, it seems some sort of boardwalk structure may be required in order that the footpath is still accessible. A meeting with Anglian Water is planned for the end of February. Keith kindly gave permission for his email address to be included in the parish council report for the Forncett Flyer, in order that residents can report any footpath issues to him directly. The parish council thanked Keith for all the maintenance work he does on the footpaths in the village. With regard to FP4, the clerk has asked again about what would happen if the path deteriorates further and becomes unsafe for public access. A response to this is needed before a course of action can be agreed.
  - **Ditch hazards on Cheney's Lane and Station Rd (near Hunt's Mead)** – Highways have placed barriers alongside ditches on Cheney's Lane and Station Road, near Hunt's Mead. The parish council has raised concerns around highway safety at both locations but highways are aware as they have put the barriers in place.
  - **School parking** – Despite the best efforts of all involved, this continues to be an issue. A recent report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team at Long Stratton confirmed that police had attended Manor Road School to look at parking issues and this resulted in letters being issued to several car owners. The clerk has contacted

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the team again and asked if they will visit Forncett. Councillors agreed that the length of time people stay parked for (around drop off / pick up) contributes to the situation. Councillor Welsby reported that she is aware of some schools that have continued to stagger drop off / pick up times (a practice initially introduced by some during the covid pandemic).

- **Gilderswood Lane / Tabernacle Lane junction** – Acknowledging that some long / large vehicles need to access the fields from this junction, it was agreed that prior warning signs along the lines of ‘unsuitable for long vehicles’ may alert some drivers who are unaware of the layout of the junction. The clerk will include this in a round up email to the highways officer and will copy in County Councillor Catherine Rowett.

**11. To receive the financial report and consider the approval of the following payments:**

| Payment method | Amount   | Payee     | Notes           |
|----------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| SO             | £ 346.86 | A Rayner  | January salary  |
| DD             | £ 65.02  | A J Bell  | January pension |
| BACS           | £ 250.00 | M Chapman | Allotment rent  |

All payments and the financial report were approved.

**12. To consider correspondence:**

**a) Freemantle, Hapton – Licence refusal** – For information only.

- 13. Items for information and comment** – The Chairman reported that, although the District council have not formally announced the ‘Litter Pick’ information as yet, it is assumed it will go ahead as usual. The Chairman proposed a date of Saturday 23 March and this was supported. The Chairman also suggested a purchase of ‘hoops’ to keep the bin bags open, to be taken from the £200 litter pick prize awarded last year. There seem to be two different style of hoop (one £8 each and the other £15 each) and the Chairman advised he would purchase two, to compare efficiency and see if it is worth spending the additional funds on the more expensive hoop. This idea was supported by the parish council. The Chairman also mentioned a ‘Spring tidy up’ day of 13<sup>th</sup> April planned to do a few jobs in and around the village hall. Any additional volunteers would be most welcome. Possible tasks to be done on the day include tidying the outside area, raking leaves, touching up paintwork and cleaning the seats of the chairs.

**14. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.