

Swanton Novers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20th November

2023 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present: Cllr. Chris Armstrong, Cllr Ian Watson, Cllr. Gary May, Cllr. Jenny Anderson.

2023/058

Apologies for absence – Parish Councillor Shaun Doncaster, Parish Councillor Virginia Riseborough, County Councillor Steffan Aquarone, District Councillor Mike Hankins.

2023/059

- **To receive declarations of interest** – None

2023/060

Public Forum-

- Local parishioners were in attendance.
- Church Lane- the condition of the road has been a concern since the consistent downpours recently. Increased amounts of mud and standing water is occurring. Parish clerk to report this to highways department so that on the next road inspection on January 8th 2024 by the Highways dept this can be highlighted and hopefully be resolved.
- 30mph sign – The 30mph sign that is positioned in the hedgerow at the crossroads of Holt Road and The Street is now not visible when the hedge is in full leaf. It is only currently visible once the hedge is not in leaf in the Autumn/Winter period. This is also to be reported to the Highways dept by the Parish Clerk for attention to be resolved at the next road inspection on January 8th.
- Thursford spotlights- Member of the public commented on the beacons that are in use nightly during the Thursford Xmas Spectacular of the light pollution. It was mentioned to the member of the public that Mr Cushing form the Thursford Spectacular has applied for the required permissions to use the lights during the time of the performances.

2023/061

Reports from District/County Councillors -

- County Councillor Aquarone and District Councillor Mike Hankins were unable to attend the meeting. A copy of his report was available to the Councillors and presented at the meeting.

2023/062

Matters arising from the meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023.

- All other matters are agenda items.

2023/063

- **To sign as correct - The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held Monday 18th September 2023.**
- The Minutes were signed as correct by the Chair, Parish Councillor Chris Armstrong, and the Parish Clerk Jason Crowe.

2023/064

Matters arising from correspondence.

- **Village Hall Grant from the Parish Council-** It was discussed that to further support the Swanton Novers Village Hall a grant be issued from the Parish Council to help enhance the village hall with support from the local community. Parish Councillor Jenny Anderson proposed a grant of £1500.00 be donated to the Village Hall. A vote was taken, a unanimous vote was carried by all Parish Councillors in attendance of the granting of the donation for future projects for the community at the Village Hall in 2024/25.
- **New Church burial ground-** A discussion took place in which the Parish Council talked about the proposed extension of land donated from Astley Estate to Swanton Novers Church and how the Parish Council could support the project. The project is in its infancy currently, but it was discussed that a grant from the Parish Council to aid the costs of ground clearance/ fencing/ access ramp maybe a possibility along with the increased costs of ground maintenance to the new area.
- **Biodiversity Duty 2024-** Parish Councillor Ian Watson discussed with those in attendance briefly about what would be required to comply with the act. As a minimum Parish Councils must have Biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting before the end of 2023. They must note what action they are already taking to conserve biodiversity and lastly agree what future steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- An action plan and policy to be created regarding Biodiversity for March 2024 meeting. Parish Councillor Ian Watson will undertake a training course in February regarding Biodiversity Duty to help with the understanding of the aims and objectives of the act.
- All other correspondence has been passed on to Councillors.

2023/065

D Day 80 June 2024- Development Group.

- Village Hall Committee to meet with the Parish Council to discuss possibilities for a plan to co-ordinate together the celebration of this day.

2023/066

Affordable Housing update- Ian Watson Secretary Swanton Novers Community Land Trust

- The Swanton Novers Community Land Trust secretary Ian Watson mentioned that final planning permission was still to be received but all matters relating to the application had been resolved.
- Broadland Housing (the developer) is liaising with Rivers Ecology to seek a solution to nutrient neutrality at the site. Since March 2022 all new housing developments are required to demonstrate as part of the planning application that they can accommodate the nutrient load generated by the proposed development. Broadland Housing has 101 houses in several developments to be built across Norfolk effected by this process and is working tirelessly to come up with a solution to satisfy the Environment agency.
- The process is currently being discussed nationally and could possibly lead to an easing of the legalities surrounding the Nutrient Neutrality, if this was to occur it could ease the planning process and still lead to the possibility of building commencing in early 2024.

2023/067

Planning.

- Currently no new planning applications are present for Swanton Novers.
- The planning application for the re-naturalising of the river Stiffkey, work has now begun and it was commented on that work is progressing well but due to the poor weather and large amounts of rain that caution is needed if approaching the area as the ground is very muddy. Work will continue weather permitting but the proposed closure of the footpath for a month may overrun if the weather does not improve.

- **River re-naturalising diversion scheme along the stretch of the river Stiffkey north of the Fulmodeston Road, Fulmodeston (599987, 330946 to 600448, 331387)**

Section Of River Stiffkey (know As Swanton Novers Meadow) Land North East Of Fulmodeston Road Barney Common Fulmodeston

Ref. No: PF/23/0677 | Received: Thu 23 Mar 2023 | Validated: Fri 24 Mar 2023 | Status: Pending Consideration

| Received: Wed 14 Jun 2023 | Validated: Thu 15 Jun 2023 | Status: Pending Consideration

2023/068

Working groups – Update:

- **Communications** – Cllr Chris Armstrong- Village Newsletter. Chris Armstrong, Hazel Mindham arranged a meeting to discuss details of content within the Newsletter going forward.
- **Governance structure – Policies, Cllr Jenny Anderson-** Policies are currently being reviewed by the Parish Council for ratification, At the next PC Meeting it is intended to approve more policies and begin work on the new Biodiversity policy and the Risk Management policy was approved.
- **Policies-** Policies that have been voted on to be added to the Parish Council website.

2023/069

Financial report and payments for approval.

- Parish Clerk presented the finances and the status of the Parish Council accounts.

2023/070

Precept 2024/25.

- The Parish clerk presented the current costings year to date and proposed expenditure and donations for the Parish Council. A draft budget showing expected costs for 2024/25 was shown to the Parish Councillors to be discussed and agreed at the January 2024 meeting.

2023/071

Setting of Future Parish Council Meeting Dates 2024/25.

- The proposed meeting dates of the Parish Council for 2024/25 were voted for and agreed and will be positioned in the public noticeboards and updated onto the website for parishioners to view.

2023/072

Parish Council Donations 2023.

- The Parish Council discussed the proposed local charities that it would support for 2023 with donations of £100 to each.
- Four local charities were voted for and agreed to receive £100 each. Norfolk Air Ambulance, Fakenham Citizen Advice Bureau, Salvation Army food bank Briston and Age UK. The Parish Clerk is to raise the payments and send to these well deserving local charities.

Items from Councillors and registered electors to be considered for inclusion on the agenda for the next Parish Council Meeting.

- D Day 80 June 2024.
- Budget proposal for Parish Council FY 2024/25.
- Agree Precept for 2024/25.

2023/073

- **Close Meeting**
- There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Chair

Date.....

Clerk.....