Felsham Parish Council

Minutes of the MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on 14th April 2026 in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Simon Garrod (Chairman), Cllr Ken Sparkes, Cllr Paul Kearney, Cllr Mark Tavernor, Cllr Jason Stringer, Cllr Beverley Williams, Cllr Karen Hubbard

In attendance: SCC Cllr Penny Otton, MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshere, Clerk & RFO Miss Isabelle Reece

Apologies: None

2025/120 Chairman's Welcome & to receive apologies for absence – Chairman Cllr Garrod welcomed everyone to the meeting

2025/121 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensation – Cllr Sparkes for the Felsham Charity

2025/122 Minutes of the Previous Parish Council – The Minutes of the meeting of 10th March 2026 were considered, **APPROVED**, and signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record.

2025/123 Public Forum – Housing Enablement Officers Sue Downs and Robert Feakes gave an update on the situation regarding the potential for a Felsham Community-led Housing Project and answered questions from members of the Council. The consensus was that it would not be feasible for Felsham to undertake a project involving a Community Land Trust and it was agreed to explore further the option of a partnership with Approved Registered Providers of Community Housing. An introduction would be arranged by the Housing Enablement Officers.

2025/124 To receive reports from SCC & MSDC Cllrs

a. **SCC Cllr Penny Otton**

Cllr Otton's final report, previously circulated, was noted and is available on this website, under Agendas and Reports. She emphasized the restrictions owing to the Pre-election period of Heightened Political Sensitivity and the uncertainties surrounding the future Suffolk County Council. Cllr Garrod led thanks and good wishes to Cllr Otton from Felsham and a small bouquet of flowers was presented to her.

b.**MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshere**

Cllr Willshere had sent her report prior to the meeting and is available on this website, under Agendas and Reports. She highlighted the changes to the recycling system, and mentioned the results of the 'Call for Sites'. Initial findings will be available for preliminary consultation by mid summer. Cllr Willshere also highlighted that funds were now available from her Locality Budget for the new Financial Year. Extensive discussions about the new Waste & Recycling System ensued. Cllr Hubbard asked why the gulley pump was not activated at the same time as the roads are swept: **ACTION** – Cllr Willshere will take the question to the relevant Mid Suffolk Department

2025/125 There was nothing to report not elsewhere on the Agenda

2025/126 Finance & Governance

a. The Internal Auditor's Report 2025 was **RECEIVED**

b. The Accounts 2025-26 were **RECEIVED**

c. The Certificate of Exemption 2025/26 (for External Audit) was reviewed, **APPROVED & SIGNED**

d. The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 (AGAR Section1) was reviewed, **APPROVED & SIGNED**

e. The Accounting Statements 2025/26(AGAR Section2) were reviewed, **APPROVED & SIGNED**

f. The period for the Exercise of Public Rights was **AGREED**

g. The following order requests for payment were **APPROVED** – Clerk's Salary March £282.60, SCC (Street Lighting) £211.92, SALC Subscription £260.70, CAS (Tech. upgrade) £66.00 (The Blackthorn (Grass cutting) invoice for £780.00 had been sent in error and so was **NOT APPROVED)**

h. Following clarification of queries by the Clerk, the updated version of Register of Assets was reviewed and **APPROVED**

i. The APM invitations would be sent and last year's minutes added to the website. Cllr Hubbard would request a notice in the Felsham & Gedding Village News.

2025/127 Planning
a. No Planning Applications had been received

b. DC/25/05432 – Discharge Condition 3 (Vents) Monks Park Cottage, Cockfield Road, Felsham, IP30 0QP was **NOTED**

c. The Conservation Officer Report – It was noted that approved work on the Six Bells had commenced

d. Further Planning matters – See item 2025/123

2025/128 Village Maintenance – Trees & Greens
a. To receive a report from the Tree Officer – Nothing to report

b. To consider matters reported & updates – Logs from a recent tree cut have been removed by persons unknown

c. Projects update – Work will begin on the plinth for the village sign as soon as the work group can find time; materials to be sourced locally; a drawing to be supplied by Cllr Garrod. (The Clerk reminded Cllr Garrod to bring the Planning Application fee invoice for reimbursement.)

2025/129 Highways & Footpaths
a. To receive a report from the Footpath Officer – Cllr Kearney is working on a spreadsheet to provide comprehensive information on the footpath network, and a tool to log works required including photos. The footbridge at the bottom of Path No. 3 at the junction with Path 4 is seriously eroded and will need to be replaced this year. The bridge which crosses the stream on Path 9 is being undermined by badger setts at both ends and is listing badly, but can probably easily be done locally.

b. To consider any matters reported – there is a new footbridge on one of the footpaths; since the footpath route is not followed by walkers the bridge appears somewhat superfluous. The trees on Path 8 have been dealt with, though the rooted area will remain as work to do. It was noted that Cllr Willshere had not provided updates on two matters relating to Public Realm and Mid Suffolk Housing

c. This item had been dealt with during the March meeting

d. Projects Update – Cllr Hubbard had completed an advertisement for a Lengthsman, though a couple of parishioners had generously volunteered to form a team of 'Village Rangers', under the auspices of the Parish Council. They are happy to undertake a range of activities, including bringing to the attention of the parish council matters that need its attention. The Village Name sign on the Brettenham Road needs to be replaced **ACTIONS** – Cllr Hubbard to liaise and develop the Ranger team initiative; Clerk to report Village Road sign to the relevant department.

2025/130 Correspondence
a. Parish Council Suggestions Box – Nothing submitted

b. To note correspondence & consider action – Nothing further

2025/131 Matters to be brought to the attention of the council/future agenda items – Funding to provide Computer Software for the Felsham & Gedding Village News; Cllr Hubbard supplied a different email address for the Village News; the grit bins need attention, particularly to break up the hardened mass of congealed grit

2025/132 Date of next Meeting – Tuesday 19th May (NB One week later in the month than usual) which will include the Annual Parish Meeting

The Meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 21.15hrs

Signed_____ Chairman Dated_____