

FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 4 May 2021 at 6pm

Present – Cllrs. Simon Buggey, Caroline Ilott, Jane Trevanion, Peter Howell, Andy Brown, Cllr Sheryl Williamson, Geoff Barnes of the Parish Council, Cllr. Peter McDonald (County Councillor) and Cllr. Deborah Roberts (District Councillor), and 1 member of the Foxton electorate.

Cllrs Sheryl Williamson, Geoff Barnes and Peter McDonald joined late on in the meeting.

Apologies – Cllr. Peter Tye

Due to Covid 19 the meeting was conducted via video/teleconference. The conference was recorded following all attendees' consent. The recording will be kept until the minutes are approved at the next meeting.

1. Introduction and welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that the Annual Parish Meeting was being held online prior to the temporary regulations for holding virtual meetings ending on 7 May 2021. The Annual Parish Meeting must be held by 1 June 2021. The Parish Council will look to hold an in-person parish meeting later on in the year to bring members of the public and village organisations together, if it is safe to do so.

The Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled last year in accordance with the temporary regulations put in place due to Covid.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 April 2019 – Proposed

Cllr. Simon Buggey, seconded Jane Trevanion. All agreed.

Simon Buggey signed the minutes at the meeting.

3. Matters Arising – None

4. Report of the Chairman covering the activities of the Parish Council

See Appendix 1 for report covering activities of the last two years, focusing mainly on the previous year.

5. Presentation of Annual Accounts

See Appendix 2 for RFO report.

6. Open forum for questions and feedback

A member of the electorate thanked the Parish Council for its hard work.

Cllr. Roberts noted that there should hopefully be more information later on in the year about the OxCam Arc, East West Rail plans and the proposed Foxton travel hub as well as a better idea about the progress of the Local Plan Call for sites sifting process.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The Meeting closed at 6.25 pm

Annabel Wright

Parish Clerk

6 May 2021

Appendix 1 - Foxton Parish Council Chairman's Report by Simon Bugey Annual Parish Meeting 4 May 2021

Your Parish Council works on your behalf to look after the interests of the village and it is my privilege to report on the activities of the council. This report will largely focus on the past year but as we were unable to hold an Annual Parish Meeting last year I will cover 2019-20 too (apologies if this makes it a bit longer!).

The last 12 months have been truly challenging for all of us. We had no idea in March last year that our ways of working would change quite so dramatically, and it was a major challenge for the Council to eliminate virtually all face to face contact, take on board the ever-changing central and local government guidance, as well as dealing with the day-to-day demands of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In supporting the village during the pandemic, we owe a great deal of thanks to the Foxton Coronavirus Volunteer Group who identified and offered support to those most vulnerable. I also thank all those working at the village shop for helping to serve and support the village, particularly during the first lockdown. This is a prime example of the community spirit that exists in Foxton and makes it such a great place to live (and now for many more of us, to work).

Parish Council membership

This Parish Council has seen some changes in its make-up over the past two years and I would like to thank Louise Lord, Dean Howe and Huw Liddell for their contributions during their time on the Council. We currently have just eight councillors which does stretch our resources. The full complement is nine councillors, and this will rise to ten in 2022 following South Cambridgeshire District Council agreeing to our request for an additional councillor to deal with the ever increasing workload, so there are existing and forthcoming opportunities for residents to become parish councillors and contribute towards maintaining this fantastic village. Anyone interested should speak to a councillor or contact the Clerk.

Recreation and Amenities

Recreation and Amenities (R&A) forms a major part of the Council's work and we have a dedicated R&A Working Party, which until recently has been led by Jane Trevannion. I am very grateful to Jane for leading this group, not just for the past three years, but also for the previous Parish Council. The role has now been taken on by Sheryl Williamson.

The main focus of the R&A Working Party is maintaining the recreation ground and other green areas of the village, including ensuring all the trees on Parish Council land are safe and present no risks to the public.

Annual safety checks of the play area and skate park are also conducted. As required, necessary repairs and remedial work are carried out although with the potential renewal of the play area this has been curtailed to essential work only.

After a comprehensive review, we now have in place new contracts for maintenance activities which include grass cutting, fertiliser treatments, seeding, weed spraying and general remedial work. These contracts are reviewed annually and updated or reassigned

based on the standard of work from the previous year and the proposed rates by the contractors. Through proactive management savings are made where possible and the savings redirected to unforeseen costs.

R&A work closely with the Cricket Club, adult Football Club and Dynamos Football Club to manage recreation ground use for the benefit of the clubs and to ensure the recreation ground is also available for other activities.

Last year we adopted standard conditions of general use of recreation ground and these are displayed on the notice board. More specific conditions apply to the sports clubs and these are agreed between the Parish Council and the Sports Clubs.

A welcome development is that increasingly, villagers are interested in planting wild flowers on the verges around the village alongside a more relaxed approach to mowing grass. A verge planting policy has been established and activities have taken place on Baron's Lane, Hardman Road and Barrington Road.

In July 2019, David Salmons, the long-standing Village Warden resigned as he was moving away from the area. I am pleased to report that Peter Evans has now taken on this role and you may see him around the village undertaking routine, small scale maintenance.

Planning

The pandemic appears to have had an impact on planning applications as during 2020 and this year to date there have been applications for just five residential extensions and five applications relating to new properties to be built, including the conversion of the barn on Fowlmere Road.

All these were considered by our Planning Committee, chaired by Caroline Ilott.

The development of 22 new houses off Station Road, now named Challis Close after Foxton luminary, Don Challis, was completed in 2020. However, there is no current progress on redeveloping the old Trinity School site in Station Road. A planning application was submitted in 2019, but after objections, particularly from the South Cambs Conservation Officer, it was withdrawn.

The biggest concerns for the Planning Committee are the current proposals to build a travel hub adjacent to Foxton Station, the Thakeham 'new town' development that spreads across a large swathe of South Cambridgeshire, and the Station Fields proposal by Axis. No planning applications have yet been submitted for any of these developments.

Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) have indicated that they will engage further with the community on their plans for the Travel Hub in May/June of this year, with a view to submitting a planning application in the autumn. We have constantly asked that GCP are more proactive with their community engagement as we want to ensure that our voice is heard and that any proposals meet the needs of Foxton. Please take the opportunity to respond to whatever form the engagement takes. The Parish Council remains opposed to the plans as they currently stand. While we would support a true, multi-modal, sustainable travel hub, what is currently being proloped is little more than a very large car park.

I am grateful to Andy Brown for leading on behalf of the Parish Council on the latter as well as the support of our County and District Councillors. Allied to this, we have also worked with representatives of other parish councils in the A10 corridor to seek joined-up, strategic solutions to travel problems, rather than what appears to be a piecemeal approach by a number of different agencies.

Finally, SCDC and Cambridge City are working towards the next Local Plan. Following a call for sites, 12 sites in and around Foxton were submitted. The Parish Council has commented on all of these and SCDC will sift them later this year.

Neighbourhood Plan

I am very pleased to report that the process to have a Neighbourhood Plan for Foxton is nearing the end.

Following a public consultation that took longer than expected, as it had to be paused due to the pandemic, it has now been reviewed by an independent examiner. Subject to some relatively minor amendments recommended by the examiner, it will proceed to a village referendum later this year.

This project started in 2015 and I would like to express our thanks to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party for their hard work and dedication throughout this time, particularly Catherine Cairns, who has led the working party during this time, demonstrating great skill, knowledge and expertise.

Infrastructure

Last year a Community Speedwatch group was set up and following training, started to undertake speed monitoring on the entrances to the village on Barrington Road, Fowlmere Road, Shepreth Road as well as on the High Street. Unfortunately, the group's activities have been curtailed by repeated lockdowns. Community Speedwatch not only acts as a deterrent to speeding motorists but provides valuable evidence for speed reduction infrastructure.

However, despite having this evidence, our request for funds from the County Council's Local Highways Initiative to install speed reduction infrastructure has been refused for the third year running. As well as trying to find out the reason for this we will consider what alternatives are available to us.

Section 106 Working Party

Early last year we set up a Working Party to take forward spending the significant sums of money that the Parish Council has received from housing developers, known as Section 106 funds. These funds must be spent within 10 years of receipt and we recognised that the clock was ticking and the need to use the money or risk losing it.

After reaching out to the community we identified a range of projects, large and small. Some, such as the display panel in the Dovecote Meadow and the hedge between the recreation ground and the churchyard have been completed but others are larger, longer term projects.

One of the larger projects is to review and renew the play equipment on the recreation ground as well as taking a holistic view of how the recreation ground can benefit as many people as possible. We are grateful for the input and feedback from residents and will bring some proposals forward for consultation in the coming months.

The progress on all the projects can be followed via a tracker that's on our website.

Finance

The Parish Council's accounts will be presented shortly but our finances remain sound, and I am grateful to our Clerk, Annabel Wright for her careful management of the accounts. Following significant increases in the past two years, we decided not to increase the precept for 2021-22, where possible making savings that would not impact on our key responsibilities in maintain the village.

Conclusion

There is much more besides but I hope that this has given a flavour of what the Parish Council has worked on and achieved in the past two years. You can always find out more by attending Parish Council meetings and the minutes of all our meetings are published on our website.

I would like to thank our District Councillor, Deborah Roberts and our County Councillor, Peter McDonald for the work they do to further Foxton's interests.

I am also truly grateful to our clerk, Annabel Wright for her expertise and professionalism, ensuring that the Council follows correct governance procedures as well as undertaking the myriad of administrative tasks that come with the role.

Foxton is fortunate to have residents who are prepared to give up their time for the benefit of the village and I am grateful for all the hard work and commitment of my fellow councillors who strive to help make Foxton the great place it is to live and work.

Thank you.

Simon Bugey
Chairman
Foxton Parish Council
4 May 2021

Appendix 2 – RFO Report
Foxton Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 4 May 2021
Finance Report

The Precept for the year 2020-21 was £45,000 and remains the same for 2021-2022.

Cost Centre	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Net Position +/- Under/over spend	Comment
01 Income	45,210.00	45,042.57	0.00	0.00	-167	Reduction in bank interest
02 Staff	0.00	70.00	14,570.00	14,897.88	-258	Salary and tax over budget due to additional hours worked, however saving on mileage and pension (cheaper pension agreed and reduced in next budget)
03 Admin	0.00	0.00	3,762.00	3,331.75	430	Includes insurance £1100, audit fees. Training budget of £500 used for clerk and councillor training (website/planning). Separate emails for councillors and zoom video conferencing. New printer and shredder. Saving on website cost, Scribe accounting software and APM expenses
04 Village Hall	0.00	0.00	1,130.00	519.87	610	Saving on village hall hire due to Covid, no waste disposal fee
05 Open Spaces	4,243.28	3,743.28	21,510.00	17,986.77	3,023	Village maintenance: £2011, grounds maintenance £14,244, bin emptying £858. Under budget: village warden: £489; grass/ grounds maintenance £1666 (partly due to Covid and RGT contribution £3000); play area and skatepark maintenance: £1000 (none required)
07 Planning	0.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	200	Not required for Neighbourhood Plan this year
08 Highways (Village Street Lighting)	0.00	0.00	2,700.00	1,882.26	818	Includes village street light electricity: metered supply £131, unmetered supply £1289 and maintenance contract. Budgeted for CCC bill for electricity which was actually taken in the previous financial year
09 Memberships	0.00	0.00	595.00	608.61	-14	Includes CAPALC, SLCC, DPO
10 Donations	0.00	0.00	1,350.00	1,727.00	-377	MAYD £127; Under S137: Church £750, Rail Partnership administrator £700, British Legion Remembrance Wreath

						£50, Community Transport £100
11 Earmarked reserves	5,710.00	32,182.78	134,850.21	7,968.04	153,355	S106: £148,600; other: legal/ tree works/ grants/ defibrillator. From S106: churchyard boundary hedge work £1417; Dovecot thatching £2500; Dovecot display board £1955; grass seeding and goal £2600 (£15,000 committed to tennis club, £2866.45 committed for disabled path and picnic benches)
NET TOTAL	55,163.28	81,038.63	180,667.21	48,922.18	157,620	
VAT		1,985.01		1,864.84		£1985 reclaimed
GROSS TOTAL		83,023.64		50,787.02		

The Parish Clerk/ RFO and grounds and village maintenance remain high expenditure items.

S106/ grant receipts

S106 funds received:

Dovecot:	£5514.95
Sports facilities:	£24835.31

Grants/ contributions received:

RGT contribution towards recreation ground costs:	£3000
CCC grass cutting:	£743
Covid community grant:	£200
Zero carbon Dovecot meadow wildflower project:	£834

Bank balances

S106 earmarked reserves:

Bank	31/03/2021	31/03/2020
Lloyds	£61,562.81	£60,905.00
Barclays	£87,037.10	£62,655.21
Sub Total:	£148,599.91	£123,560.21

Other bank balances:

Bank account	Balance 31/03/2021	Balance 31/03/2020
Barclays Current	£24,044.39	£17,354.12
Barclays Saver	£14.60	£14.60
Lloyds 32-day notice	£23,900.69	£23,878.12
Lloyds treasurers	£484.89	£0.81
Sub Total	£48,444.57	£41,247.65

Total reserves	£197,044.48	£164,807.86
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General reserves (Total reserves – EMR)	£43,689
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This in line with the Good Councillors Guide to keep 3-12 months annual expenditure in reserves (Foxton aims for 12 months equivalent expenditure) and in line with precept amount. Annual expenditure was £42, 909.10 excluding S106 expenditure.