

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, The Street, Fornham St Martin, IP31 1SW on Thursday 11 February 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Penny Borrett; Michael Collier (Chair), Peter Forster Gary Hubbard and Jayne Hubbard.

In attendance: Paul MacLachlan (Clerk) and one member of the public.

The following documents will be appended to the signed minutes:

- the Agenda;
- the following appendices:
 - 1: actions arising from prior meetings;
 2. planning applications and decisions;
 3. Local Council Award Scheme – Foundation Award details;
 - 4: report of the Responsible Finance Officer;
 - 5: Internal Auditor's terms of reference.

1. Apologies

The apologies of Cllr Nick Owen (illness) and Paul Butler (business meeting) were received and accepted.

Cllr Hopfensperger was unable to attend as her car had broken down.

2. Declarations of Interest

The requirement to update the Register of Interests was noted.

No further interests were declared. No dispensations were sought.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meetings dated 14 January 2016 were agreed a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. Borough, County and Community Reports

Cllr Hopfensperger did not attend the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned for public question time

Cllrs were advised of correspondence from the Highways Department advising that the central white lines on *The Street* were not to be restored for safety reasons.

Cllrs were advised that while a new street light column had been erected near the Old Thetford Road it was not yet operative.

The meeting reconvened.

5. Clerk's report

- (i) The Clerk reported progress on actions arising from prior meetings (see Appendix 1). Cllr Forster proposed, Cllr Collier seconded and it was agreed that 3 new notice boards be ordered from the Noticeboard Company at a cost of £1,007.00 + VAT and that the Parish Council accept Cllr Hopfensperger's offer to fund them out of her Locality budget.
- (ii) The Clerk commented on the following issues:

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- that the VAS columns had been approved for use and that the cost of purchasing the VAS equipment would be covered by Cllr Hopfensperger;
- that potholes near Park Avenue and the poor state of the pavement in Parklands Green had been reported.

6. Decisions taken since the last meeting

The Clerk reported that no decisions had been taken since the last meeting.

7. West Suffolk Operational Hub

The Chairman reported on arrangements for the Parish Council's Hub drop-in consultation to take place on Saturday 13 February.

Cllrs asked the Clerk to draft the Parish Council's response to the West Suffolk Operational Hub consultation and to circularise it for comment prior to submission before the 19 February deadline.

8. Planning and Environment

(i) Responses to planning consultations

Cllrs resolved to support application 16/0140/HH for a single storey rear extension at 6 Wentworth Close, Fornham St Martin.

(ii) Cllrs noted the planning decisions recorded at Appendix 2.

Cllr Collier proposed, Cllr Borrett seconded and it was agreed that agenda items 8(iii), 8(iv) and 8(v) be taken at the end of the meeting.

9. Governance

(i) The Clerk reported on questions raised with the Charity Commissioners regarding the trustee status of the King George Field in Fornham St Martin;

(ii) Cllrs Borrett and Jayne Hubbard were nominated and agreed to review the Parish Council's compliance with the accounting and governance statements within the Annual Return and the Parish Council's own Risk and Management statement;

(iii) Cllrs considered the information at Appendix 3 and resolved that the Clerk should take such action as is necessary for the Parish Council to achieve the Local Council Award Scheme's Foundation Status;

(iv) Cllrs noted the interim findings of the Community Governance Review and noted that the next round of consultation will begin in mid-February 2016 running until late April 2016 with a final decision being made by the Borough Council in June 2016.

10. Finance

(i) Cllrs agreed that the report of the Responsible Finance Officer for February 2015 (Appendix 3) be received and that any outstanding payments be made.

Cllrs approved all payments and agreed that:

- payments to the Information Commissioner be paid by direct debit;
- that the Village Hall Committee be asked to agree a new electricity contract from 11 May 2016.

(ii) Cllrs asked the Clerk to seek a quotation for the insurance of the assets at the King George Field;

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- (iii) Cllrs approved the Internal Auditor's terms of reference at Appendix 5;
- (iv) Cllrs agreed that the 2015/16 accounts inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights be Friday 10 June to Thursday 21 July 2016 and the 2015/16 Annual Return be submitted on or before Monday 6 June 2016

11. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

- (i) Reports on meetings attended had been considered;
- (ii) There were no future meetings requiring attendance;
- (iii) No further items were identified for consideration at future meetings. It was however decided not to discuss the possibility of a Neighbourhood Plan before the West Suffolk Operational Hub issue was resolved.
- (iv) No further items of information were raised.

8 Planning and Environment (continued)

- (iii) Cllrs reviewed two quotations for the environmental management of the parish. It was proposed by Cllr Borrett, seconded by Cllr Jayne Hubbard and agreed that:
 - further information be sought from the existing litter picker;
 - the Clerk and Chairman be authorized to make appropriate arrangements for the environmental management of the parish.
- (iv) Cllrs decided that all 3 rights of way within the parish should be maintained by the County Council 4 times per annum at a 2016 cost of £177.55;
- (v) Cllrs considered residents' feedback from The Bugle article (Jan/Feb 2016 issue) and decided that two-thirds of the King George Field should be planted with a mix of top quality wild flower and grass seed leaving one-third as grass for ball games and other community uses. It was further decided that:
 - the community should be asked to assist with the design of the wild meadow area;
 - grants be sought to assist with the cost of this work.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

.....
Chairman 10 March 2016

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Paul MacLachlan, Clerk, 17 The Glebe, Lavenham, Suffolk, CO10 9SN
Tel: 07958 932480 Email: fsmgpc@gmail.com

3 February 2016

Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council to be held on Thursday 11 February 2016 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, The Street, Fornham St Martin, IP31 1SW for the purpose of transacting the business below.

Members of the public

Members of the public are welcome to attend and may address the Council following item 4 on the agenda, when the meeting will be adjourned.

Reporting on Meetings

Except where members of the public have been excluded due to the confidential nature of the business, any person may film, photograph, audio record or use social media to report on meetings of the Council, including any public comment and/or questions.

Persons intending to report are requested to give notice before the start of the meeting to the Clerk or Chairman of the Council to enable reasonable facilities to be afforded.



Paul MacLachlan, Clerk

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive apologies and to approve the reason for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

- (i) To receive any declarations of interest in items on the agenda;
- (ii) To consider any written requests for a dispensation received by the Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting.

3. Minutes

To consider adopting the minutes of the Parish Council meeting dated 14 January 2016.

4. County, Borough and Community reports (15 minutes)

To receive a report from County and Borough Councillor, Rebecca Hopfensperger.

The meeting will be adjourned for Public Question Time

The time allocated is at the discretion of the chairman.

Residents are invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this agenda or to raise issues for future consideration.

The meeting will be reconvened at the end of Public Question Time.

5. Clerk's report

- (i) to report progress on actions arising from prior meetings (Appendix 1);
- (ii) to advise any significant matters not on the agenda and not already drawn to councillors' attention.

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Paul MacLachlan, Clerk, 17 The Glebe, Lavenham, Suffolk, CO10 9SN
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6. Decisions taken since last meeting

To be advised of any decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.

7. West Suffolk Operational Hub

To report on actions taken since the last meeting in connection with the proposed location of the West Suffolk Operational Hub at Hollow Road Farm and to consider any further action.

8. Planning and Environment

- (i) to consider application 16/0140/HH seeking permission for a single storey rear extension at 6 Wentworth Close, Fornham St Martin;
- (ii) to note recent planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority (Appendix 2);
- (iii) to receive a report on quotations for the environmental management of the parish and to appoint contractors;
- (iv) to decide whether additional maintenance is required on rights of way in the parish during 2016;
- (v) to decide on the extent to which King George's Field should be planted with wild meadow flowers.

9. Governance

- (i) to report on correspondence with the Charity Commissioners regarding the trustee status of King George Field;
- (ii) to nominate councillors to review the Parish Council's compliance with:
 - the accounting and governance statements within the Annual Return;
 - the Parish Council's risk assessment and management statement.
- (iii) to consider whether the Parish Council wishes to seek recognition under the Local Council Award Scheme (Appendix 3);
- (iv) to note the interim findings of the Community Governance Review.

10. Finance

- (i) to receive the payments and receipts report of the Responsible Finance Officer and to approve bills for payment (Appendix 4);
- (ii) to consider insurance of assets within King George's Field;
- (iii) to approve the internal auditor's terms of reference (Appendix 5);
- (vi) to agree the inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights and the submission date for the Annual Return.

11. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

Councillors may use this opportunity to:

- (i) report on meetings attended;
- (ii) agree the attendance of councillors at forthcoming meetings;
- (iii) raise items for future agendas;
- (iv) report matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda.

Copy to:

County and Borough Councillor, Rebecca Hopfensperger

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Appendix 1: Actions arising from prior meetings

Presented to Parish Council meeting dated 11 February 2016

Cllrs – All Councillors	PBo – Penny Borrett	PBu – Paul Butler
MC – Mike Collier	PF – Peter Forster	GH – Gary Hubbard
JH – Jayne Hubbard	NO – Nick Owen	HAC – Hub Advisory Comm
Clerk – Paul MacLachlan	RH – Rebecca Hopfensperger - Borough/County Cllr	

Actions carried forward from Parish Council meeting dated 14 January 2016

Ref	Action	Who	Done
14 January 2016			
7	Make arrangements for Hub drop-in event, Bugle article and distribution of flyers	HAC	Yes
8(i)	Respond to planning consultations	Clerk	Yes
9(iii)	Submit Precept and Grant application form	Clerk	Yes
10(i)	Register with the Information Commissioner	Clerk	Yes
10(iv)	Re-book village hall for changed APM date – 23 May 2016	Clerk	Yes
Meeting dated 15 October 2015			
8(iv)	Review environmental management within the parish	MC & Clerk	agenda

Future agenda items

Neighbourhood planning

Publication of delegated decisions

No decisions were made

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Appendix 2: Applications and decisions between 7 January and 8 February 2016 Presented to Parish Council meeting dated 11 February 2016

New applications received

16/0033/HPA	The Laurels, Parklands, FSG, IP28 6UH			
	Single storey rear extension (6.95m) with max height of 3.5m and 2.4m to eaves			
	Notification date	Not notified	Recommendation	Not consulted
	Consultation date	Not consulted	Decision	
16/0140/HH	6 Wentworth Close, FSM			
	Single storey rear extension			
	Notification date	03/02/2016	Recommendation	
	Consultation date	24/02/2016	Decision	

Prior applications - decisions pending

15/0662/VAR	Fornham Park, FSG, IP28 6TT			
	(i) change of use of land to 9 hole pay and play golf course with changing room facilities and associated landscaping, (ii) erection of 26 timber lodges, manager's lodge and associated landscaping, (iii) non-compliance with condition 17 of planning permission E/89/2307/P and condition 20 of planning permission E/97/2470/P, relating to retention of existing vehicular access without compliance with condition 6 of SE/05/02293 to enable occupation of holiday lets without bringing the golf course into use.			
	Notification date	06/08/15	Recommendation	Object
	Consultation date	20/08/15	Decision	
15/2502/FUL	Hollow Road Farm, Hollow Road, FSM, IP31 1SJ			
	Construction of vegetable store			
	Notification date	10/12/15	Recommendation	Support
	Consultation date	18/01/16	Decision	
15/2440/RM	Land North West Of Bury Tut Hill Fornham All Saints Suffolk Out of parish			
	Reserved Matters Application - Submission of details under O.P.P DC/13/0932/HYB for strategic infrastructure comprising details of roads, footpaths, cycleways, drainage and landscaping details of for the second section of the Primary Movement Corridor and landscaping of Green Corridors M, N, O and P			
	Notification date	18/12/15	Recommendation	Support
	Consultation date	18/01/16	Decision	

Decisions made

15/2162/TPO	The Laurels, Parklands Green, FSG, IP28 6UH			
	TPO30(1960)11 -Tree Preservation Order Application - Fell - 2no Sycamore (T2 and T3 on plan) and 1no Sweet Chestnut (T4 on plan) (All within area A5 of Order) and works to trees within Group 1 (Trees T5- Sycamore, T6 - Sweet Chestnut, T7- Ash, and T1- Oak are not protected by the TPO , therefore work to these trees does not require consent)			
	Notification date	16/11/15	Recommendation	Support
	Consultation date	11/12/15	Decision	Approved

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15/1752	Lark's Pool Farm. Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to part offices (Class B1(a)) and part storage (Class B8).		
15/1753	Lark's Pool Farm. Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to storage (Class B8).		
15/1754	Lark's Pool Farm (Building D). Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to storage (Class B8).		
15/1757	Lark's Pool Farm (Building E), Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Part retention of replacement building (former agricultural building demolished) to be used for Class B1(a) offices or B1(b) research or B1(c) industrial or B8 storage.		
15/1758	Lark's Pool Farm (Building F). Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to Class B1(a) offices or B1(b) research or B1(c) industrial or B8 storage or sui generis use.		
15/1759	Lark's Pool Farm. Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural land to use for open storage (Class B8) for caravans and motorhomes (10 max), horseboxes (5 max) and containers (20 max).		
15/1760	Lark's Pool Farm (Building I). Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to (Class B8) storage use.		
15/1761	Lark's Pool Farm (Building J). Mill Road, FSG, IP28 6LP		
	Retention of modification and change of use of former agricultural buildings to (Class B8) storage use.		
Notification date		17/09/15	Recommendation
Consultation date		08/10/15	Decision
			Object
			Approved

A guide to the Local Council Award Scheme

THE LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME EXISTS TO CELEBRATE THE SUCCESSES OF THE VERY BEST LOCAL COUNCILS, AND TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT ALL LOCAL COUNCILS TO MEET THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

All local councils want to serve their local communities and make a real difference to the lives of the people that live there. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

The Award Scheme has been designed to both provide the tools and encouragement to those councils at the beginning of their improvement journeys, as well as promoting and recognising councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector. It is only through the sector working together to share best practice, drive up standards and supporting those who are committed to improving their offer to their communities that individual councils and the sector as a whole will reach its full potential.

The scheme was created in 2014 and is managed on behalf of local councils by the Improvement and Development Board (IDB).

Councils can apply for an award at one of three levels:

The Foundation Award demonstrates that a council meets the minimum requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice.

The Quality Award demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development.

The scheme sets out criteria to meet at each level covering selected aspects of the council's work. Councils can seek to progress through the tiers over time thereby raising standards. Councils of any size can aspire to an award appropriate for their budget and level of activity.

To support transparency, councils achieving an award at any level must use an online facility for publishing documents and information. In all instances the council confirms that the required documents, information and conditions are in place (whether published or not) by resolution in public at a full council meeting. For Quality Gold, councils also provide statements for submission to the panel demonstrating excellence in their activities. The panel may ask for additional information to check the accuracy of claims.

TO ACHIEVE A FOUNDATION AWARD A COUNCIL DEMONSTRATES THAT IT HAS THE MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION IN PLACE FOR OPERATING LAWFULLY AND ACCORDING TO STANDARD PRACTICE. THE COUNCIL ALSO HAS POLICIES FOR TRAINING COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS AND IS BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

GOVERNANCE	COMMUNITY	DEVELOPMENT
Criteria demonstrating good governance in managing the business and finances of a council	Criteria representing a council's role in the community and how it engages with the community	Criteria representing council improvement through the management and development of staff and councillors
Its standing orders and financial regulations	Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	
Its Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	Its action plan for the current year	
Its publication scheme	Evidence of consulting the community	
Its last annual return	Publicity advertising council activities	
Transparent information about council payments	Evidence of participating in town and country planning	
A calendar of all meetings including the annual meeting of electors		
Minutes for at least one year of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee and sub-committee meetings		
Current agendas		
The budget and precept information for the current or next financial year		
Its complaints procedure		

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

GOVERNANCE

Criteria demonstrating good governance in managing the business and finances of a council

A risk management scheme

A register of assets

Contracts for all members of staff

COMMUNITY

Criteria representing a council's role in the community and how it engages with the community

DEVELOPMENT

Criteria representing council improvement through the management and development of staff and councillors

Disciplinary and grievance procedures

A policy for training new staff and councillors

A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year

A clerk who has achieved 12 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points in the last year

The council notifies the accreditation panel co-ordinator when the resolution has been agreed and provides a link to its website.

WHAT IS THE ACCREDITATION PANEL LOOKING FOR?

The panel seeks assurance that a council acts lawfully and according to standard practice. Unless it is a matter of law, the panel is not making a judgement on the quality of the evidence at this level; it simply carries out spot-checks to confirm that the documentation and information is in place, up-to-date and complies with the guidance below. For those documents that are not posted up online, the panel will ask to see the evidence if it is considered necessary.

■ All policies should comply with current legislation and guidance and note the date of the next review.

■ Standing orders, financial regulations, the Code of Conduct, publication scheme and complaints procedure are public documents tailored to the specific council. Standing orders or financial regulations explain procedures for contracts and internal controls. All policies and procedures should demonstrate compliance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 including an open media policy which does not restrict engagement with the press. For councils with an annual turnover of less than £25,000 they also demonstrate compliance with the upcoming Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities once this comes into effect.

■ The council does not need to publish the councillors' registers of interests on their own website provided that there is a working link to the complete register of all councillors' interests on the principal authority's website.

■ The council's website should include the name of the clerk and contact details (address, phone, email) for the council as a corporate body.

It should also publish the names of councillors and councillors' responsibilities in compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code.

■ The council posts up a scanned copy of the last annual return. The panel checks that the council has a limited assurance (unqualified) opinion from the external auditor; the opinion may contain recommendations for consideration as long as a qualified opinion is not given. The panel checks the arrangements for internal audit and internal controls. From 2017, councils with an annual turnover of less than £25,000 will not be required to complete an annual return. Panels check that these councils comply with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities once this comes into effect.

■ Information on all payments must be transparent and in accordance with financial regulations and statutory proper practices. The panel will check the minutes of meetings, financial regulations, the annual return (if relevant) and compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code.

■ The calendar (in any format) includes the Annual Meeting of the Council and the Annual Parish/Town Meeting and both meetings must be held during the correct statutory period. The calendar also shows that the council has at least four full council meetings a year.

■ Similarly, the minutes for full council meetings over the last year include the Annual Meeting of the Council. If relevant, the council also posts up the minutes of its Finance Committee to demonstrate transparency according to statutory regulations and of its Planning Committee showing that procedures for reviewing planning

applications are correct. The panel checks that minutes and agendas demonstrate the lawful convening of meetings and decision-making and that all meetings allow the public to make representations to the council.

- The council can post up the current or next year's budget (or both). Budget documents would normally show columns comparing the year in question with the two previous years; they include information on income and expenditure (or receipts and payments) and show how the precept was calculated.

- The council must publish an action plan; as a minimum this is a one-page document listing the council's objectives for the current year. It is not a parish plan which is a plan for the future of the community; the council can extract objectives for action from the parish plan depending on its areas of responsibility.

- The panel seeks at least one piece of evidence from council publicity that it consults and actively serves its community. Publicity might include an annual report, web material or news bulletins. The information gives a flavour of any council activity such as lobbying principal authorities, giving grants to community groups, the provision of a service or helping with community events. For guidance, councils can refer to The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. Similarly any form of consultation is suitable, including surveys, online polls, focus groups or public meetings.

- Council documents demonstrate that the

council participates in the planning system by, for example, commenting on planning applications or working on a neighbourhood plan. Decisions on planning matters must be made in properly convened meetings and, if required, by delegation to a committee. Some decisions may be delegated to an officer.

- Contracts, disciplinary/grievance procedures, a risk management policy and register of assets can be based on a model but tailored to the specific council. They are not published.

- A training policy for new staff and councillors can be a short statement of intent while a training record gives dates, titles and providers of development activities undertaken by named individuals in the last year, including, for example, updating events, online courses, CPD activity and qualifications. Councillors should note that they should undertake training on financial management for which they are all responsible. In particular, the clerk's training record includes evidence of CPD such as training, conference attendance, mentoring and studying for qualifications. CPD points are allocated according to a system published by the IDB.

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

GOVERNANCE

Criteria demonstrating good governance in managing the business and finances of a council

A scheme of delegation (where relevant)

Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money

Addressed complaints received in the last year

COMMUNITY

Criteria representing a council's role in the community and how it engages with the community

At least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election

A printed annual report that is distributed at locations across the community

DEVELOPMENT

Criteria representing council improvement through the management and development of staff and councillors

A qualified clerk

A clerk (and deputy) employed according to nationally or locally agreed terms and conditions

A formal appraisal process for all staff

A training policy and record for all staff and councillors

The council notifies the accreditation panel's co-ordinator when the resolution has been agreed and provides a link to its website.

TO ACHIEVE THE QUALITY AWARD A COUNCIL DEMONSTRATES THAT IT MEETS ALL REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOUNDATION AWARD AND HAS ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION IN PLACE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE, EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT. A COUNCIL WITH A QUALITY AWARD ALSO MEETS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE.

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it meets all requirements for the Foundation Award and that it also publishes on its website:

GOVERNANCE	COMMUNITY	DEVELOPMENT
Criteria demonstrating good governance in managing the business and finances of a council	Criteria representing a council's role in the community and how it engages with the community	Criteria representing council improvement through the management and development of staff and councillors
Draft minutes of all council and committee meetings within four weeks of the last meeting	A community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	
A Health and Safety policy	Councillor profiles	
Its policy on equality	A grant awarding policy	
	Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting	
	An action plan and related budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	
	Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	
	Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	

WHAT IS THE ACCREDITATION PANEL LOOKING FOR?

The accreditation panel checks that the criteria for the Foundation Award are in place if the award was granted more than one year ago. It then considers the additional criteria for the Quality Award.

The panel assesses the quality of documents and information with a light touch, seeking reassurance that the council is acting lawfully and according to good (rather than best) practice. The panel carries out spot-checks to confirm that the documentation and information is in place and up-to-date and complies with the guidance below. For those documents that are not posted on the website, the panel will ask to see the evidence if it is considered necessary.

- All council policies should comply with current legislation and guidance and note the date of the next review.
- Draft minutes (marked Draft) of all council and committee meetings keep people up-to-date with decisions and action should be posted up as soon as possible after the meeting and within at least four weeks. The minutes will show that the council monitors its actions, internal controls and performance against the budget at least every three months.
- A community engagement policy demonstrates the council's commitment to hearing what people in the community think and communicating its own actions and decisions. The council also gives grants to community organisations and publishes a grant awarding policy.
- Councillor profiles normally contain a photo and reference to the ward represented (if relevant) but personal contact details are not required.
- The panel seeks evidence that the council has in place light touch policies for managing Health

and Safety, including its duty of care to staff and promoting equality in compliance with legislation. For example, evidence might include employment documents or statements on agendas.

- Evidence that electors can contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting can come in any form; for example, it could be an invitation to attend and participate in discussions or a record of how community groups spoke about their use of grant funding over the last year.
- The action plan (or similar forward plan) summarises findings from community engagement and sets out aims and objectives that respond to community views. The action plan includes a timetable for actions to be completed with dates for reviewing the plan. The council's budget shows how the action plan is put into practice and manages risks to public money.
- The council is expected to produce an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins throughout the year. The annual report and news bulletins must be online even if they were also distributed in hard copy such as in printed newsletters or village magazines. If the council uses social media such as Facebook or Twitter, this will be evident from the council's website. The accreditation panel will read the materials looking for evidence of community engagement, council activities and promoting democratic processes. The panel expects to see that the council consults the community in at least three different ways (such as surveys, focus groups, online or street polls and community workshops) and engages with other organisations, including community groups and the principal authority(ies). It will look for at least three positive actions for the community in the last year.

■ The annual report should be distributed widely. It is accepted that it cannot always be distributed to all households, but copies can be left at prime locations in a community, including a library, doctors' surgeries, schools, pubs, shops or residential homes.

■ The panel seeks evidence from council documents and online information that it supports the community in planning for its future. This can include at least one contribution to creating, implementing or reviewing a parish or town plan, a design statement or a neighbourhood plan, holding community planning events, facilitating debate in the community about planning applications or registering community assets.

■ The panel also seeks evidence of promoting elections and the value of the democratic process; this might include explaining how the system works, advising people of election dates and promoting the value of being a councillor.

■ At the time of making the resolution, at least two-thirds of the seats on the council must be filled by councillors who stood for election at either the last ordinary elections or a by-election. This shows that the council represents the community through the democratic process. Councillors who stood for election, even if elected unopposed, do count, while councillors who were co-opted or appointed cannot count. If two thirds is not a whole number, then it must be rounded up to the next whole number using the table below.

Total council seats

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

4 4 5 6 6 7 8 8 9 10 10 11 12 12 13 14

Two thirds

properly operates the delegation of decision-making to committees, sub-committees and officers (where relevant). Arrangements for delegation may be set out in standing orders or in a separate scheme of delegation.

■ The panel may wish to check that insurance policies have been reviewed and are up-to-date and that the council recognises insurance as a way of mitigating risks to public money.

■ The panel may also seek evidence that any formal complaints received by the council during the last year have been properly addressed. The panel does not seek to judge the appropriateness of the insurance policies themselves

■ A qualified clerk is defined in Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012. The clerk (and deputy clerk) should be properly remunerated with a contract in accordance with terms and conditions set out in the national agreement or in a local government scheme.

■ The panel can ask to see the document setting out the formal appraisal process that must be in place for all staff. It checks that the council has a training budget and may ask to see a general training policy for staff and councillors with a detailed record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year. The panel seeks assurance that a training culture is embedded in the council. The clerk is expected to achieve at least 12 CPD points every year.

■ The panel may wish to check that a council

panel co-ordinator asks the IDB to appoint two representatives to review the situation. The IDB assesses the severity of the case before deciding whether to impose a sanction which may include the removal of all awards or returning the council to a lower award.

■ The council can appeal to the IDB if the decision to remove an award is taken in which case two different IDB representatives review the case and their decision is final.

FEES

There are two fees:

- A registration fee paid to the National Association of Local Councils
- An accreditation fee paid to the organisation responsible for administering the local or regional accreditation process.

The registration fee paid to NALC is £50 paid by all councils for each level regardless of size.¹

The accreditation fee² varies according to:

- the award applied for
- the income of the council³
- the council's accreditation history.

	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE
Foundation Standard	£50	£50	£50
Quality Standard	£60	£80	£100
Quality Gold	£100	£150	£200

The IDB will review fee levels annually.

The fee is reduced by 20% if the council sought accreditation at a lower level within the previous 12 months as the checking process covering criteria for the previous standard requires less work.

1 All figures quoted are excluding VAT.

2 The figures quoted are the discounted rates for members of NALC. Both the registration fee and accreditation fee are reduced by 50% for member councils. Non-member councils must pay the full fee ie double the figures quoted in this grid.

3 Small councils have an annual income of <£25,000. Medium councils have an annual income of £25,000 to £250,000. Larger councils have an income of >£250,000.

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Appendix 4: February 2016 RFO report Presented to the Parish Council meeting dated 11 February 2016

Chq	Payments	Gross	VAT	Net	
DD	Eon	592.22	98.70	493.52	Village Hall electricity
1816	Fornham Toddler Group	32.98	0.00	32.98	Donation s137
1817	Office Depot	304.64	50.77	253.87	Printer ink, paper, envelopes
1818	St Edmundsbury BC	62.40	0.00	62.40	Bin collection
1819	David Hoggett	651.60	0.00	651.60	Oct - Dec litter picking
1820	LCPAS	25.00	0.00	25.00	Rights of Way training
1821	P&S Brooklyn	187.81	0.00	187.81	Bugle editing - Feb/Mar
1822	Paul MacLachlan	346.84	0.00	346.84	Salary (Feb)
		2,203.49	149.47	2,054.02	
Direct	Bank of Ireland	-1.22	0.00	-1.22	Interest
159	Leon Brown Arb Agri	-28.00	0.00	-28.00	Bugle advertising
160	Eco Sweep	-70.00	0.00	-70.00	Bugle advertising
160	JDR Home Improvements	-29.16	0.00	-29.16	Bugle advertising
		-128.38	0.00	-128.38	

red Authorized but not on prior RFO report
blue To be authorized

Notes

- 1 Recommend Parish Council authorizes payment of annual payment to information Commissioner by direct debit - £35.00 now due
- 2 Recommend that the Village Hall Committee be asked to agree a new electricity contract from 11 May-16
- 3 To advise that, pre-recovery, the Parish Council will pay 20% VAT on village hall electricity at 20%.

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

	2015/16 ytd Actual	2015/16 projection	Original 2015/16 Budget
Income			
Precept	17,842.00	17,842.00	17,842.00
Parish Support Grant	2,158.00	2,158.00	2,158.00
Other Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest	17.60	19.60	30.00
Other Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	20,017.60	20,019.60	20,030.00
Expenditure			
Staff costs	4,790.32	5,766.32	5,500.00
Office Admin Costs	894.95	1,259.95	1,510.00
Office Equipment Costs	32.00	32.00	350.00
Insurance	381.24	381.24	425.00
Subscriptions	505.00	505.00	500.00
Auditor Fees	510.00	510.00	500.00
Election Costs	42.68	42.68	0.00
Publications and Training	551.30	576.30	100.00
Cost of meetings	0.00	340.00	300.00
Website	0.00	0.00	0.00
VAT paid	1,338.15	1,388.15	1,500.00
VAT Refunded	-1,610.89	-2,847.34	-1,500.00
Administration Costs	7,434.75	7,954.30	9,185.00
Grass Cutting	1,615.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
Planters and Planting	53.82	53.82	100.00
Litter Picking	1,346.58	2,148.58	2,000.00
Paths Maintenance	0.00	0.00	950.00
Trees Maintenance	400.00	400.00	400.00
Refuse / Bin Collection	915.20	977.20	800.00
Other Environmental Costs	1,614.50	1,884.50	750.00
Environment	5,945.10	7,264.10	6,800.00
Play Area Mowing	784.13	784.13	800.00
Play Area Maintenance	565.98	1,065.98	470.00
Play Area Insurance	0.00	0.00	150.00
Play Area Safety Inspections	0.00	0.00	0.00
Play Area	1,350.11	1,850.11	1,420.00
Bugle: Editing	793.71	983.71	1,200.00
Bugle: Printing and Distribution	508.70	1,228.70	1,300.00
Bugle: Advertising	-1,217.49	-1,347.49	-1,200.00
The Bugle	84.92	864.92	1,300.00
Community Events	0.00	0.00	50.00
Community Campaigns	91.65	91.65	50.00
Community Assets	638.32	638.32	100.00
Community Costs	729.97	729.97	200.00
S137 Village Hall donations	1,419.40	1,419.40	1,600.00
S137 Churchyard donation	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Other S137 donations	18.50	51.50	200.00
Section 137 Donations	2,437.90	2,470.90	2,800.00
Total Expenditure	17,982.75	21,134.30	21,705.00
Surplus / Deficit	2,034.85	-1,114.70	-1,675.00
Bank balance at 31 March 2015	11,434.00		
Less outstanding cheques	-489.89	10,944.11	
Surplus for 2015/16		2,034.85	
		12,978.96	
Bank balance at 31 Jan 2016	13,039.64		
Less outstanding cheques	-60.68	12,978.96	
Less payments to be authorised	-1,611.27		
Plus credits in transit	0.00	-1,611.27	
Net available funds available		11,367.69	

Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Appendix 4: Budget projections to 31 March 2016

Presented to Parish Council meeting dated 11 February 2016

CLERK ONLY

For reference

2015/16 Budget		Actual to Jan 2016	Feb-16	Mar-16	2015/16 projection
Income					
17,842.00	Precept	17,842.00	0.00	0.00	17,842.00
2,158.00	Parish Support Grant	2,158.00	0.00	0.00	2,158.00
0.00	Other Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30.00	Interest	17.60	1.00	1.00	19.60
0.00	Other Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
20,030.00	Total	20,017.60	1.00	1.00	20,019.60
Expenditure					
5,500.00	Staff costs	4,790.32	434.00	542.00	5,766.32
1,510.00	Office Admin Costs	894.95	255.00	110.00	1,259.95
350.00	Office Equipment Costs	32.00	0.00	0.00	32.00
425.00	Insurance	381.24	0.00	0.00	381.24
500.00	Subscriptions	505.00	0.00	0.00	505.00
500.00	Auditor Fees	510.00	0.00	0.00	510.00
0.00	Election Costs	42.68	0.00	0.00	42.68
100.00	Publications and Training	551.30	25.00	0.00	576.30
300.00	Cost of meetings	0.00	0.00	340.00	340.00
0.00	Website	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1,500.00	VAT paid	1,338.15	50.00	0.00	1,388.15
-1,500.00	VAT Refunded	-1,610.89	0.00	-1,236.45	-2,847.34
9,185.00	Administration Costs	7,434.75	764.00	-244.45	7,954.30
1,800.00	Grass Cutting	1,615.00	0.00	185.00	1,800.00
100.00	Planters and Planting	53.82	0.00	0.00	53.82
2,000.00	Litter Picking	1,346.58	652.00	150.00	2,148.58
950.00	Paths Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
400.00	Trees Maintenance	400.00	0.00	0.00	400.00
800.00	Refuse / Bin Collection	915.20	62.00	0.00	977.20
750.00	Other Environmental Costs	1,614.50	0.00	270.00	1,884.50
6,800.00	Environment	5,945.10	714.00	605.00	7,264.10
800.00	Play Area Mowing	784.13	0.00	0.00	784.13
470.00	Play Area Maintenance	565.98	0.00	500.00	1,065.98
150.00	Play Area Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0.00	Play Area Safety Inspections	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1,420.00	Play Area	1,350.11	0.00	500.00	1,850.11
1,200.00	Bugle: Editing	793.71	190.00	0.00	983.71
1,300.00	Bugle: Printing and Distribution	508.70	540.00	180.00	1,228.70
-1,200.00	Bugle: Advertising	-1,217.49	-130.00	0.00	-1,347.49
1,300.00	The Bugle	84.92	600.00	180.00	864.92
50.00	Community Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
50.00	Community Campaigns	91.65	0.00	0.00	91.65
100.00	Community Assets	638.32	0.00	0.00	638.32
200.00	Community Costs	729.97	0.00	0.00	729.97
1,600.00	S137 Village Hall donations	1,419.40	0.00	0.00	1,419.40
1,000.00	S137 Churchyard donation	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
200.00	Other S137 donations	18.50	33.00	0.00	51.50
2,800.00	Section 137 Donations	2,437.90	33.00	0.00	2,470.90
21,705.00	Total Expenditure	17,982.75	2,111.00	1,040.55	21,134.30
-1,675.00	Surplus / Deficit	2,034.85	-2,110.00	-1,039.55	-1,114.70
10,378.00	Reserves	12,978.96	10,868.96	9,829.41	



Internal Audit Service – Terms of Reference

Mission

To assist local councils to maintain and improve internal control in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Internal Audit Objectives and Responsibilities

The primary objective of Internal Audit is to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the council, and to achieve this will adopt a predominantly systems-based approach to audit.

The council's internal control system comprises the whole network of systems established within the council to provide reasonable assurance that the council's objectives will be achieved, with particular reference to:

- The effectiveness of operations
- The economic and efficient use of resources
- Compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws and regulations
- The safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity and corruption
- The integrity and reliability of information, accounts and data

Accordingly, in the conduct of planned audits Internal Audit may:

- Carry out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year in order to be able to complete Section 4 (Annual internal audit report) of the Annual Return
- Review the reliability and integrity of financial information and the means used to identify, measure, classify and report such information
- Review the means of safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verify the existence of such assets
- Appraise the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed, identify opportunities to improve performance and recommend solutions to problems
- Review the established systems to ensure compliance with those policies, procedures, laws and regulations which could have a significant impact on operations, and determine whether the council is in compliance
- Review the operations and activities to ascertain whether results are consistent with objectives and whether they are being carried out as planned

The Scope of Internal Audit Activity

There are no limitations on Internal Audit's scope of activities. The scope of Internal Audit allows for unrestricted coverage of the council's activities, including both financial and non-financial systems of internal control.

Independence

The main determinant of the effectiveness of Internal Audit is that it is seen to be independent in its planning and operation. To ensure this, Internal Audit will operate within a framework that allows:

- Unrestricted access to the officers of the council
- Reporting in its own name
- Segregation from the day to day operations of the council

Every effort will be made to preserve objectivity by ensuring that all Internal Auditors are free from any conflicts of interest and do not undertake any non-audit duties on behalf of the council.

Rights of Access

There are no limitations on Internal Audit's access to records. Internal Auditors have the authority to:

- access council premises at reasonable times agreed in advance
- access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems
- receive any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration
- require any employee to the council to account for cash, stores or any other council asset under his/her control
- access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors when required

The Councils Responsibilities

The Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer have clearly defined responsibilities for Risk Management, Internal Control, Internal Audit and preventing Fraud and Corruption.

The existence of Internal Audit does not diminish the responsibility of the council to establish systems of internal control to ensure that activities are conducted in a secure and well-ordered manner.

Reporting

The Internal Auditor will formally report the results of audits and the recommendations made to the council and will follow up at subsequent Internal Audits to make sure that corrective actions are taken.

Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as necessary every three years.

Date of next review:

Approved by FsmSG Parish/Town Council on (date) 11/2/16

Minute reference: 10(m) Signed: P. W.

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