

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Trowell Parish Council

Held at Trowell Parish Hall, Trowell on Wednesday 30th July 2025, commencing at 7.32pm

Present: Shaun Bell, Helen Cutting, Martin Follows, Thomas Hall, Michelle Harvey, Cynth McGann, Don Pringle.

In attendance: Jane Murden (Clerk/RFO)

Item Ref	Description
FUL-058/25	Chairmans Welcome. The Chair welcomed all attendees and thanked them for attending this Extra Ordinary Meeting of Trowell Parish Council. Housekeeping matters were addressed, including the location of the toilets and the procedures to follow in a fire. The Chair then provided a brief overview of the purpose of the meeting, explaining the reasons for calling this additional session and outlining the Council's intentions regarding the matters to be discussed.
FUL-059/25	To Receive Apologies for Absence. No apologies for absence were received.
FUL-060/25	Declarations of Interests. Councillors are required to declare any interest they have in the subsequent agenda items as follows. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Pecuniary interests – none received.b) Other registerable interests – none received.c) Non-registerable interests – none received.
FUL-061/25	Public Forum (15 Minutes) No members of the public were present and no issues were raised.
FUL-062/25	FOI Overview and Context. The Clerk provided an overview of the Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received, including the number submitted and the relevant time frame. Members were informed of the context and subject matter of each FOI, with particular attention given to recurring themes and areas of concern. An update was also provided on recent developments following concerns raised by the Clerk to the WhatDoTheyKnow platform regarding the nature and volume of FOI requests, which constituted a targeted campaign against the Council. In response, WhatDoTheyKnow conducted an internal investigation and subsequently informed the Clerk that the eight user accounts responsible for submitting the FOIs had been suspended for breaching the platform's house rules. Their investigation also confirmed that the activity originated from a single source. Following review and consideration of the information received and legal advice taken, Members approved the Council's response to each FOI request. Members also approved the issuing of a formal statement to provide clarity and transparency on the Council's position and the actions taken in response to the matter.
FUL-063/25	Clerks Report on FOI Handling. Councillors received a report from the Clerk outlining the administrative and financial implications associated with responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. The report detailed the time and resources required to process requests, the impact on staff workload, and potential costs incurred. Members noted the importance of maintaining transparency while also recognising the strain that frequent or complex FOI requests can place on council operations.
FUL-064/25	Budget Consideration for FOI Handling. Councillors considered a recommendation to allocate a dedicated budget for the management of Freedom of Information responses as part of future financial planning. Following a discussion, members resolved to review the matter during the budget- setting process in November, allowing time to monitor whether the volume of requests continues or proves to be an isolated incident.

- FUL-065/25

Precept Implications.

Members considered the potential impact on the parish precept should a dedicated budget for Freedom of Information (FOI) response management be approved. It was **noted** that any additional allocation may have financial implications for future precept levels. Given the uncertainty around whether the current volume of FOI requests represents a targeted campaign or an ongoing trend, members **resolved** to monitor the situation and review the matter during the November budget – setting process.
- FUL-066/25

Date of next Ordinary Meeting of Trowell Parish Council: 9th September 2025.

Items for the agenda are required to be submitted to the Clerk by the 26th of August 2025.

Meeting Closed at 8.35pm

Signed

Date