WHEPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

**held in the Community Centre on**

**Friday April 25th 2014 at 7.30pm**

**Attendees:**

**Parish Councillors: Public**

Cllr. Mike Morris (Vice Chair) Phil Robertson Anne Robertson

Cllr. Nigel Aitkens Jenny Botting Jill Harper

Cllr. Stanley Durrant Colin Botting Susan Quay

Cllr. Elizabeth Nutt John Richmond James Reynolds

Cllr. Andrew Maddever Kevin Mayes Janice Mayes

**Guests:** Stephen Cousins Daphne Risbrooke

SCC - Cllr. Terry Clements

PCSO - Claire Fuller

PCSO – Ryan Wilson

Neighbourhood Watch - Steve Nutt

Rev. Cannon Richard Norburn

Jordan Hughes (St. Nicholas Hospice)

Arran Bridgenorth (St. Nicholas Hospice)

**Clerk:**

Di Rix

**INTRODUCTION**

The vice chairman, Cllr. Mike Morris, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He then pointed out the position of fire exits.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were accepted from the following: Graham O’Dell, Linda O’Dell, Angela Rushen, Mary Long, Di Howe, Henry Rix, Keith Feakes, Cllr Rob Murray.

**2. MINUTES OF THE 2013 ANNUAL MEETING**

The minutes of the last annual meeting had been circulated to those present. It was proposed by Cllr. Aitkens and seconded by Andrew Maddever and **resolved** that the minutes of the annual meeting held on April 26th 2013 be taken as read and confirmed.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None

**4. PRESENTATION BY REV. CANON RICHARD NORBURN & JORDAN HUGHES OF ST. NICHOLAS HOSPICE CARE**

Canon Norburn took us back to 1500 when Bury St Edmunds, along with Canterbury and Glastonbury, was one of three pilgrimage centres. Because pilgrims walked miles and often arrived at their destination with injuries, seven hospices grew up around BSE. The word Hospice means resting place on a pilgrimage. The original St. Nicholas Hospice was situated on the Barton Road. During the reformation all the hospices were closed down. But in the 19th century concern grew about the poor health of workers in industrial centres. ‘Homes for Incurables’ grew up and soon after a group of nuns set up St. Joseph’s Hospice in Hackney. The modern Hospice movement was started by Dame Cecily Saunders in the 1960’s. And from her work, the approach to care for the terminally ill was transformed.

Thirty five years ago, Richard Norburn was rector of Ingham and rural dean of Thingoe and he had three terminally ill people in his parish who he felt deserved better treatment. When Ingham Rectory came on the market he thought it would make a good hospice but did nothing and subsequently felt very guilty when it was sold. Fortuitously, Dr Barringdon Ward, a local GP he knew, had bought Ingham Rectory and he got involved helping to convert Turret Close (near the double roundabout in BSE) - which the Borough Council donated - into a hospice, where it remained for almost ten years.

On May 1, 30 years ago, the first nurse went out in the community to specifically help those with life limiting illnesses. The Borough Council then donated an area of woodland behind the West Suffolk Hospital, which is where the Hospice has been since November 1992. The first patients arrived in March 1993. There are now 120 staff, 650 volunteers and it costs £5.5m a year to run. The Government contributes some, but £3.8m - £11,000 a day – has to be raised in the community.

Jordan Hughes, one of the community fundraisers, explained that there were many ways cash was being raised. A £1 a week lottery brought in £300,000 every year. BSE’s Hidden Gardens, which has been running for 28 years (17 of them for the Hospice), brought in £22,000 last year and is entirely run by volunteers.

He said the Hospice was responsible for 185,000 households, but only reached 1% of people living with a life limiting illness. Last May, the Hospice bought an outreach centre – The Burton Centre – in Haverhill which was proving very successful.

Cllr Morris thanked the Hospice team for their fascinating talk on how the Hospice started.

**5. REPORT BY BOROUGH COUNCILLOR ANGELA RUSHEN**

Due to ill health, Cllr. Rushen, who has been Borough Councillor now for three years, was unable to attend, so her report (attached) was read out by Cllr. Mike Morris. Highlights included the fact that Council Tax has not been raised for four years and that she has a Locality Budget of £2,500 to spend in the Chedburgh Ward and urged anyone with a project they wanted to get off the ground to get in touch. She mentioned that the Tourist Information Office was closing later this year and that Vision 2031 was now in the final stages of consultation.

**6. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR TERRY CLEMENTS**

Cllr. Clements (report attached) said that the Council would be saving £38.6m a year to meet a budget gap caused by on-going Government grant cuts and that Council Tax should be frozen until 2017.

Important projects, he said, included raising aspirations in education, where Suffolk has moved up five places to 137th out of 151 local authority areas for GCSE results, investing in apprenticeships, supporting the development of 10 new state-of-the-art care homes and rolling out superfast broadband across the whole of Suffolk.

He said that he was very happy to be supporting WPC for the new permissive footpath.

Stephen Cousins complained that the roads generally were in a terrible state. The clerk said that potholes she had reported on February 26th were still not fixed and that she had been told by Mick Baker that they were unlikely to be a priority as May Kier Gurney, the contractor which had taken over highway maintenance last October, were being performance monitored from April 1st, so work orders issued after then would take priority. Cllr. Clements agreed that it was wholly unacceptable and said that SCC was under pressure to turn things around. He suggested the clerk complain again.

**7. REPORTS BY POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS RYAN WILSON AND CLAIRE FULLER**

The PCSOs happily reported that there were only four crimes in Whepstead last year, compared to 14 the year before. These included theft of a catalytic converter from Brockley Road, the theft of 2 staddle stones from Tuffields Road, for which two males will appear in court on May 9th and the theft of an agricultural baler from a farm in January. They said that between March 12th and June 11th last year, Whepstead had been a priority village for speeding. However due to issues surrounding a suitable location to conduct a speed check, only one partial check was started and interrupted after 10 minutes, so no tickets or verbal warnings were issued. Three checks were carried out between June 11th and September 10th when two tickets were issued and four verbal warnings given. They said the next priority setting meeting was on June 10th at Bury Police Station. Cllr Morris thanked them for attending and they left.

**8. REPORT BY STEVE NUTT, EMERGENCY PLAN CO-ORDINATOR AND OWL BOX MONITOR**

Mr Nutt said that the emergency plan was in the process of being updated to ensure accuracy of the information we have so far. In the event of an emergency Nigel Aitkens will be the future Emergency Coordinator as he was standing down.

After Suffolk Wildlife Trust offered the WPC free owl boxes, the parochial parish council was approached as the churchyard was seen as a suitable site for them. Following training, Mr Nutt, is now certified to inspect the boxes, though no owls are nesting in them at the moment. He urged anyone interested in owls to get in touch. Cllr Morris thanked Mr Nutt for all his hard work.

**9. REPORTS BY PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Nutt said that although Speed Watch volunteers had reduced to six, they were all fully trained, equipped and ready to take action once the schools were back, following the Easter holiday. Whepstead Walkers had welcomed new members and their dogs and enjoyed walks each month of the past year, including pub walks to local hostelries. Footpaths not on the cutting schedule had been monitored and trimmed where possible by members in an effort to keep them open for everyone to enjoy. She happily reported the reopening of The Swan at Lawshall as a potential pub to walk to. A waiting list has been established for the What the Dickens Book Club, which meets every other month to discuss a book over wine and nibbles.

Cllr Aitkens said that the WPC had approached Theo and Rosemary Cutting about the possibility of a permissive path at the bottom of their field at the bottom of Church Hill and possibly diverting the path which went across the field.

He happily reported that the Cuttings are happy to make it a permanent path. He said clearance work would be required, but he hoped everyone agreed that it would make a great addition to the village’s network of footpaths. He said there were administrative and advertising costs involved, but that Cllr Clements and the Cuttings had offered to cover most of those. Once we had the new footpath confirmed on a map, we would hold an open day. He also added that his family had decided to offer a permissive path from the Haverbury homes on Brockley Road to Tuffields Road on the B1066, which was at the moment a grass strip that ran behind the hedge.

Cllr Morris reported that the handover of affordable homes on Rectory Road should happen mid-late July and that the builder would give six weeks notice to the Housing Association. So he urged people who hadn’t already registered an interest to do so via the Homelink website.

He explained that, following a rejection by the council of the suggested name ‘Chapel Fields’, the WPC had chosen ‘William Flack Place’ as the name for the new development. William Flack was the first soldier from the Suffolk Regiment to die in action at the Battle of Mons in August 1914 – 100 years ago – and he had lived in Mickley Green, near the new development. Cllr Morris credited Cllr Aitkens with coming up with the idea and researching it.

Regarding Broadband, Cllr Morris said that new funding had been confirmed and that we hoped to get an upgrade by late summer. Stephen Cousins said that BT had replaced the copper wire from the road to his house and his broadband had improved by 1 mbps. The engineer told him it was 30 years old technology.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**11. CHAIRMAN’S SUMMARY**

Cllr Morris thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.