**Draft Minutes of the Meeting**

**Of the Parish Council on**

**Wednesday November 2nd 2016 at 7pm**

Attendees: Councillors N Aitkens - NA

M Morris - MM

A Robertson – ARR

N Mann – NM

D Till – DT

L Smith – LS

S Durrant - SD

Clerk D Rix – DR

Borough Councillor A Rushen - AR

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| 1/152  2/153  5/154  6/155  3/156  4/157  7/158  8/159  9/160  10/161  11/162  12/163  13/164  14/165  15/166  16/167  17/168  18/169  19/170 | **Apologies for Absence** None  **Declarations of Interest**  None  **Public Forum** *(Cllr NA brought forward agenda item 5)*  None  **Planning Applications** *(Cllr NA brought forward agenda item 6)*  There were no new planning applications. DR said that the Cages Farm application had been approved and there were no objections to the Beechwoods TCA request. There were non-material amendments to a Pattles Grove application (to enlarge and re-orientate an office building and relocate a horse walker) and to the Old Post Office application (to enlarge the lobby and change the roof tiles).  Stuart Hill had been in touch regarding the Nunwick Farm application. He said that West Suffolk planning department had admitted maladministration in not consulting or communicating with his aunt about the applications. The Ombudsman also agreed and is looking into the matter further, while the development is being assessed and reviewed by the enforcement team to see whether it goes beyond what could be considered a conversion. Pending that review, works on the barns have been halted.  **Borough Councillor’s Report**  Highlights included news that the Arts Council has awarded SEBC with £108,000 to implement improvements at West Stow and Moyse’s Hall, while £40,000 has been awarded for a Conservation Management Plan for the Abbey precinct in Bury. SEBC is joining with the Cathedral to oversee the work.  The Government’s deadline for Council’s decision regarding Devolution is now November 24th. As a result, an extraordinary meeting will convene on November 21st to consider giving consent to an Order establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk.  Every household will soon receive a letter highlighting the importance of recycling properly. Cllr AR said that Steve Wood, Head of Planning, was retiring, but would return part time for three months to complete a few jobs he has been working on, including Nunwick Farm. His role would be replaced by two people ranked a level below him.  Cllr NA thanked Cllr AR for all the work she does especially for her input in getting Highways to implement a safer and more sensible diversion route away from Pages Hill Road when work was taking place on Church Hill. Cllr NA also raised the development of Roseville and how none of us had realised how the new build would dominate the landscape. *(Cllr AR left the meeting)*  **County Councillor’s Report**  None  **Minutes of the Meeting held on October 5th 2016**  Cllr ARR proposed and it was seconded by Cllr DT that the minutes were a true record.  **Matters Arising from the Meeting on October 5th 2016.**  Cllr NA had not yet spoken to Mr & Mrs Cutting about planting a wild flower meadow, but the Whepstead Volunteers had said they would be very happy to get involved if the Cuttings give the go ahead.  Regarding the churchyard, he said someone had come out from SEBC and said that they would deal with everything. Apparently they put a note on the headstone and if a family member comes forward and gets in touch they then try to recover any costs of maintenance/repair they have incurred.  **Clerk’s Report**  DR said she had been granted an extension by CAS to discuss the website hosting options, which she had circulated to councillors. She had asked neighbouring parish clerks for their views too. Cllr ARR proposed and it was seconded by Cllr NM that the PC use CAS’s service which will cost £50 a year + VAT with a view to reviewing the contract after 12 months.  DR to thank Deborah Stratford for all her hard work in editing the village newsletter. She said that Graham O’Dell had offered to revamp the village noticeboard outside the pub, but would like to be reimbursed for hinges, wood etc. Councillors agreed. Mr O’Dell apologised that it was a job he had said he would do when on Parish Council. Steve Nutt has ordered a poppy wreath for Parish Council which costs £17.  DR urged anyone interested in helping repaint the community centre on November 12th and 13th to let Di Howe or Jeff Pyne know. As of October 30th they only had three volunteers. Cllr NA said that it was an ongoing problem getting volunteers involved in helping with village events. Cllr ARR said that Jeff Pyne had organised a feedback survey for Bonfire Night, which would include the question of whether people would be willing to help at future events.  The potholes mentioned at the October meeting had already been reported to Highways. DR to report a pothole just beyond Saxham House on the right hand side towards Chedburgh and at a field entrance opposite Hugh Maddever’s house.  Jane Alfred would buy more bin stickers for Old School Road and said that the police had ordered a Community Speed Watch sign for Chedburgh Road.  **Finance**  There were two invoices for payment:  £17 Royal British Legion (poppy wreath)  £18 SALC (six months payroll)  Cllr NM proposed and Cllr ARR seconded that the bank reconciliations for the end of September be approved and the cheques signed.  DR had received the tax base figure for 2017/18 which was 29p lower than last year at 215.28. Based on that figure, DR circulated a draft precept of £8,380 that would involve the average Band D council tax payer in the village paying £38.93 a year - only 32p (0.83%) more next year. She urged councillors to look at all the figures. Approval of the estimates needs to be made before the January 27th deadline for submission.  Regarding Earmarked Reserves, DR reminded councillors that at the end of March 2016, the PC had £16,761.37 in the bank. It was proposed by MM and seconded by LS that as well as Earmarked Reserves of £200 in an Emergency Plan Fund and £1,000 in a Future Capital Projects Fund, the s106 monies of £2,700 needed to be set aside in an Open Spaces Fund, while £1,500 should be set aside in an Election Expenses Fund and £1,000 for a Repair to PC Assets Fund.  Cllr NA mentioned that he had received a quote from a professional roofer for work on the bus shelter of £600 to replace the felt and £2,000 for a new roof. DR to ask Mark Warnes to quote for the work.  DR explained that the amount of annual reserve should be annually risk assessed and approved by Council.  **Bank balance at end September 2016**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Balance in Treasurers Account | 11,808.58 | | Savings account | 10,435.89 | | Total | 22,244.47 | | Less cheques not presented | 31.98 | | Total | 22,212.49 |   **Footpaths, Highways and Byways**  Lizzie Nutt said the footpath that runs from the bottom of Fern Hill around Seb Sander’s land was very overgrown. Cllr NA said he had not had a chance to walk it, but suggested that once a year parish councillors take it upon themselves to walk all the village’s footpaths and report on them and for the PC to make it a priority to do them up and help with costs (eg: hiring of machinery) incurred. Cllr LS said that the Whepstead Volunteers – which now had eight regulars - had cut back overgrowth on the Plumpton Footpath today.  DR to report a broken Public Footpath sign on the footpath next to Cllr DT’s house.  Regarding steps to the river at Harram Bottom, Guy Smith said that Highways would be happy for the landowner to construct them. Cllr NA to speak to Hugh Maddever. Cllr NA urged councillors to bring any signs relating to road works that had been completed to the Community Centre. Highways said they will collect them.  **Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**  Cllr LS reported on a meeting with Police Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore on October 19th. She said that he was trying to redress the closure of the Magistrates Courts and aceepted that the Police 101 service for non-emergency calls to the Police was “not good”. She said the Police have installed a new website and new technology and a new telephone system was coming in. Redundant PCSOs had been offered the chance to join the Control Room Staff some months ago, but following a restoration of funding for PCSOs they were now being taken back from the Control Room and new staff were having to be trained. Cllr NM said when she used 101 she was cut off and had to ring back, which Cllr LS was a common problem. Cllr NM was also surprised that she had to pay for the call.  Cllr LS said the Police were still working with local authorities with a view to them taking over the collecting of parking fines, but there was a lot of red tape in Whitehall. She said if the local authority agrees to collect the fines then they have been told they can keep the money which currently goes to Central Government.  Cllr NA said that there seemed to be hardly any traffic enforcers in Bury with people regularly parking on double yellow lines.  Cllr LS said that local policing priorities included dealing with “boy racers” on Skyliner Way, beggars in the town centre and parking issues.  London drug gangs are trying to gain access to Bury with hotspots in the Cemetery and St John’s Street, while hare coursing has become a major issue for game keepers on local estates.  **Broadband**  Suffolk Better Broadband said that additional poles and some heavy tree cutting is required, which should start later next week as the noticing for it has been submitted. Once that is done, it is hoped that superfast broadband will go live mid-November.  **Trees**  Nothing to report.  **Suffolk Association of Local Councils**  Cllr SD reported on a SALC meeting in September. He said there appeared to be little interest in devolution, but that there were lots of complaints about speeding and the lack of finances to deal with it. It was suggested that to attract a better turnout at AGMs, essentials included the offer of food, drink and a controversial subject for discussion. Cllr NA said that if anyone felt that there was anything interesting in the plethora of emails from SALC, forwarded by the clerk, then to raise them for discussion.  **Whepstead Community Association Report**  Cllr ARR said there was a lower than usual turnout at the Jumble Sale probably due to the Bury Free Press failing to print our £30 advert. Takings were only £200 (usually £500). Di Howe was seeking compensation for loss of income. Fun, Food & Fireworks takes place on November 5th. Tickets £7 for adults, £2 for children. “Whepstead’s Got Talent” has been cancelled due to a lack of contestants. The redecoration of the hall starts on November 12th from 10am. More volunteers are required. Quotes are still being sought for the kitchen refit, while it appears Di Howe has agreed to take on the post of Newsletter Editor for the time being. The next meeting is on November 15th.  **Correspondence**  None  **Chairman’s Comments**  Cllr NA had looked at Lawshall’s Neighbourhood Plan and said that while Lawshall is a very different village to Whepstead, if anyone felt that we should have one then the parish council would be supportive.  **Any Other Business**  The next meeting is on December 7th will be at 7pm.  The meeting closed at 8.20pm  Signed………………………………..Dated……………… |