**Draft Minutes of the Meeting**

**Of the Whepstead Parish Council on**

**Wednesday March 27th 2019 at 7pm**

Attendees Councillors M Morris – MM

N Aitkens - NA

L Smith – LS

T Smith – TS

G Merrett – GM

D Till – DT

S Durrant - SD

Clerk D Rix – DR

Borough Councillor M Chester – MC

County Councillor K Soons – KS

Councillor for Highways M Evans - ME

Members of the Public S Bonney - SB

Mr & Mrs Richardson

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| 42/1  43/2  44/3  45/5  46/6  47/4  48/7  49/8  50/9  51/10  52/11  53/12  54/13  55/14  56/15  57/16  58/17  59/18  60/19  61/20  62/21 | **Apologies for Absence** None  **Declarations of Interest**  None  **Borough Councillor Report**  Cllr Chester, in his penultimate report, looked back over the past 46 years of St Edmundsbury Council, highlighting some key achievements since 1973. On April 1st, West Suffolk Council takes the reins from St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath Councils. He said it would be up to the new council to decide whether there would be a mayor.  **Public Forum** *(Cllr MM brought forward agenda item 5)*  Cllr MM closed the meeting. Steve Bonney asked about progress regarding speeding on Brockley Road. DR had arranged a meeting with Highways to discuss moving the VAS post and erecting a “pedestrians in the road” sign. She invited him and other councillors to join her for the meeting at 1pm on Friday on Brockley Road.  **Planning Applications** *(Cllr MM brought forward agenda item 6)*  Cllr MM closed the meeting and invited the Richardsons to speak about their planning application for a new dwelling behind The Chestnuts on Brockley Road. They said they wanted to create a smaller more eco-friendly dwelling than the original design, built from more reclaimed materials rather than the large amount of concrete in the original plan. Concerns were raised that while the current application is for a modest property, it could be extended in future. Councillors supported the application.  The consultation period for Whepstead Hall’s application to fell and trim a few trees had expired.  **County Councillor Report** *(Cllr MM returned to agenda item 4)*  Cllr Mary Evans, SCC Cabinet member for Highways, arrived with Cllr Karen Soons. Cllr Soons said that County Upper School – having been awarded an “outstanding” OFSTED rating previously, had just received an “inadequate” one, due to a safeguarding issue, which was being addressed.  Cllr NA grilled Cllr ME on the crazy number of “road closed” and “diversion” signs currently on the B1066, sending drivers on a 3 mile detour, for a road repair that had not closed the road at all. Cllr ME said she was working hard to improve Highways. She said the SCC now received more complaints (+22%) about road closures than potholes. Road closure notifications and the quality of signage needed improving. The penalties for utilities not fulfilling their obligations were also too paltry she said. She agreed with Cllr TS that it was madness when a reported pothole was fixed but one next door to it was left. Cllr ME said they were trialling a new system of fixing potholes which would be rolled out county wide soon. Hopefully the amount of thermal patching - which is very quiet, can be carried out later into the evening and involves no road closures – will increase.  **Minutes of the Meeting held on February 13th**  Cllr NA proposed and it was seconded by Cllr LS that the minutes were a true record.  **Matters Arising from the February 13th meeting**  Cllr MM said that Sue Lawrence at the Old Rectory had cleared the moss and overgrowth from the pavement in front of her property. DR to write and thank her. Cllr NA thanked DR and Cllr MM for another successful Litter Pick.  **Clerk’s Report**  DR questioned the amount set aside in the precept for Councillor training. All agreed it needed to be increased next year. DR had accepted the Vertas grass cutting quote as agreed and would send them the dates of home cricket matches. DR had circulated the Risk Assessment for approval. DR and Cllr MM had checked on the PC’s assets. The noticeboard outside The White Horse had been upgraded by Cllr GM and the bus shelter was undergoing improvements. Cllrs GM proposed and it was seconded by Cllr GM that the risk assessment be approved.  **Finance**  It was proposed by Cllr NA and seconded by Cllr GM that the bank reconciliation for February was correct. DR had submitted a VAT refund claim for £152.45. DR said SALC had not come up with a payslip yet, but she would need to pay her tax bill before the next meeting. It was agreed that he fee, tax and expenses cheques could be signed before the next meeting.  **Bank balance to end February 2019**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Balance in Treasurers Account | £6,538.01 | | Savings account | £10,448.51 | | Total | £16,986.52 | | Less cheques not presented | Nil | | Total | £16,986.52 |   **Footpaths, Byways and Highways**  Cllr MM said the Green Access Team had everything they needed to produce a footpath map but wouldn’t be able to work on it until July. All agreed that the PC should edit the words before it goes to print. Cllr TS said that visiting walking groups who parked at the Community Centre normally paid for the privilege. DR invited councillors to join her meeting with Highways on Friday at 1pm on Brockley Road to discuss speeding concerns there and asked about investing in a mannequin as a speeding deterrent. All approved a budget of up to £100. DR to investigate a second VAS machine.  **Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**  Regarding signs, Cllr LS said that through the Suffolk NW we could get updated stickers to cover our existing signs. She was talking to Cllr Evans about the procedure for getting new NW sign posts up. There continued to be numerous reports of telephone scams defrauding victims out of millions of pounds. Cllr NA apologised for not alerting Cllr LS about an attempted burglary at the Turner’s farm last Friday night. It had been reported on Farm Watch.  **Suffolk Design**  Cllr TS had attended a conference run by SCC and was amazed by the number of parishes under siege by major developments of 40+ properties, often outside their development envelopes. He wondered whether it was time that Whepstead considered a Neighbourhood Plan to protect it from developers. DR to add to the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr NA said that parishes in St Edmundsbury hadn’t suffered as much as those in Babergh and Mid Suffolk but it was important to keep in tune with the local authorities planning plans.  **Election Details**  DR passed a nomination pack to Cllrs SD and NA. She had a meeting at West Suffolk House at 9.45am the next day to submit 3 papers. She urged councillors to spread the word about joining the PC as it looked as if we would be short of nominees. The deadline for submissions was April 3rd.  **APM Arrangements April 12th**  Kala Nobbs asked if the new Nature Group could speak at the APM. DR would approach other village groups (AP of the Doughnut Gang, Lizzie Nutt, Richard Gleed, WCA etc.) and draw up an agenda for Cllr MM to approve.  DR to organise refreshments and to confirm timings with the speaker Simon Parker and ask if he needs the projector.  **Bus Shelter**  Cllr NA said that Nick Hayward had put lead (£121 + VAT) on the two bus shelter ends. The cost to supply and fix 2 capping boards including for staining in black would be £244+VAT. To supply and fix 2 sheets of 4mm plastic with timber battens to hold in place on the 2 end window openings would be £178 + VAT. The Doughnut gang agreed to paint the existing green frame. Cllr NA proposed and it was agreed that the PC would cover the cost of paint, brushes, sandpaper etc.  **Suffolk Association of Local Councils Report**  Cllr TS said that around 20 people attended the meeting and around 2/3 came from villages preparing neighbourhood plans.  **Whepstead Community Association Report**  Cllr TS said the new kitchen was 99.9% finished, though the heating in it was an issue. New hall hire rates would come into effect from June. Quiz night is on April 13th. The AGM is on May 14th when the new kitchen will be unveiled and the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Community Centre celebrated.  **Correspondence**  None  **Chairman’s Comments**  Cllr MM pointed out that this was the last meeting of the current council and that as he had house moving plans, he would not be standing for re-election.  **Any Other Business**  None  The meeting closed at 8.43pm  Signed………………………………..Dated……………… |