**Draft Minutes of the Meeting**

**Of the Whepstead Parish Council on**

**Wednesday October 3rd 2018 at 7pm**

Attendees: Councillors N Aitkens - NA

M Morris – MM

L Smith – LS

T Smith – TS

D Till – DT

G Merrett - GM

Clerk D Rix – DR

Borough Councillor M Chester – MC

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| 1/141  2/142  3/143  4/144  5/145  6/146  7/147  8/148  9/149  10/150  11/151  12/152  13/153  14/154  15/155  16/156  17/157  18/158  19/159  20/160 | **Apologies for Absence** Cllrs Durrant and Soons  **Declarations of Interest**  None  **Borough Councillor Report**  Cllr MC said results from the Boundary Commission review would be available on October 23rd, when it seemed likely that Whepstead would become part of the Cavendish Ward.  He had received a Locality funding request from DR in support of a Bridge Club, in which he had declared a non-pecuniary interest as his wife, Jackie Chester, will be teaching at the club.  Figures from the Department of Transport show that St Edmundsbury has had one of the five largest increases in the country of adults walking at least once a week.  SCC has withdrawn from a housing partnership ‘Barley Homes’ with Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury which has led to a big reduction in land bank and funding.  There is a call to ‘use or lose’ town centre shops after Laura Ashley has closed and Debenhams is struggling.  **County Councillor Report**  Circulated ahead of meeting  **Public Forum**  None  **Planning Applications**  **DC/18/1800/TCA – Whepstead Hall**  Councillors voted to support the application to fell an Irish yew tree and fir tree and replace them with deciduous and evergreen trees. Cllr TS apologised for unintentionally misleading councillors over land ownership at SE Lodge, Plumton at the previous meeting.  **Minutes of the meetings held in August and September**  It was proposed by Cllr TS and seconded by Cllr DT that the August Minutes were a true record. It was proposed by Cllr TS and seconded by Cllr LS that the September Minutes were a true record.  **Matters arising from the August and September meetings**  Regarding the Section 106 agreement governing the lease of Suffolk Housing Association properties to people with a connection to the village, it was suggested that they are advertised in the newsletter. DR to investigate with Kirstie Banham and confirm with her that the PC is happy for a bungalow to be given to a couple from Haverhill.  Cllr NA asked that verge cutting in dangerous spots in the village be added to Jan/Feb agendas. He also suggested that the PC should offer to reimburse the ‘Doughnut Gang’ for the upkeep of their machinery and costs of fuel in keeping the village tidy.  DR confirmed with Cllr GM that she had written to Anglian Water. He said there was now a new leak on Rede Road.  Regarding the Armistice Day Celebrations, Cllr NA said he had told Steve Nutt that if a relative of a villager who died in WW1 wanted to lay a wreath, they could lay the PC’s. He would also speak to anyone with a family connection to see if they would like to lay their own wreath.  Cllr GM raised the issue of purchasing a soldier silhouette. Cllr LS said that the PCC had given Susan Quay the go ahead to buy one, but the images all seemed to be of a soldier with his gun in combat.  **Clerk’s Report**  DR said that she was still chasing Royal Mail about the stolen Post Box in Tuffields Road. Apparently, there are no engineers available and so they can’t give us a timescale.  DR has written a letter of complaint to Anglian Water and copied Matt Hancock and Karen Soons in. She had renewed the PC’s insurance with Came & Co, as agreed at the September meeting and had circulated next year’s meeting dates to councillors and Di Howe. She has also changed the December meeting date back to December 5th from the 12th.  DR has ordered a poppy wreath from Steve Nutt and confirmed she will order 60 champagne flutes from Majestic Wines for the Armistice Day celebrations.  Alongside David Till, she too will contribute 12 bottles of prosecco for the event and will ask villagers for contributions of plates of nibbles for the evening.  She had circulated a letter regarding playground inspections to the WCA and in December will ‘opt in’ to a new scheme whereby inspections will be free for the next few years.  A donation request from Kala Nobbs for Riding for the Disabled was considered. As much as councillors agreed that they admired the organisation, unlike the CAB it did not reach out to the whole community and they felt they could not support it at this time.  **Finance**  Invoices for payment:  Clerk’s fees Jul-Sep £974.43  Clerk’s tax Jul-Sep £96.60  Clerk’s exes Jul-Sep £210.996 (to include unclaimed £90 for Jan-Mar tel/Broadband)  WCA Hall Hire Jul-Sep £22.50  Vertas grass cutting Oct-Dec £501.24  CAS website hosting £60  Gordon Merrett (upgrading the noticeboard) £96.60  DR apologised that she had finally submitted a long overdue claim for a VAT refund of £690.22. She said that as the PC had exempted itself from audit, there was no ‘Issues Arising’ report from the external auditor. She had published all the relevant annual accounting documents on the website.  She was working on the Precept and would circulate it before the next meeting. Last year’s income and expenditure were almost the same and so she suggested asking for the same funding as last year.  Bank forms needed to be updated as a number of former councillors were still signatories.    **Bank balance to end August 2018**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Balance in Treasurers Account | £10,483.79 | | Savings account | £10,445.85 | | Total | £20,929.64 | | Less cheques not presented | Nil | | Total | £20,929.64 |   **Footpaths, Byways and Highways**  DR had circulated Jeff Pyne’s email regarding pavements and overgrown hedges ahead of the meeting. She had taken a photo of the uneven pavement and reported it to Suffolk Highways. Cllr NA asked that the state of the pavements between the Community Centre and Fern Hill and down to the Chapel on Rectory Road be added to November’s agenda. He asked DR to forward Jeff Pyne’s email to Karen Soons.  Cllr GM said the tarmac on Pages Hill Road just before the bridge had fallen away while Cllr TS had noted similar at the bottom of Church Hill.  DR urged everyone to use the Suffolk Highways ‘Report It’ tool and said the more complaints that were received about the same road defect the more likely it was to be fixed. She would add it to the newsletter copy for November.  The overgrown path next to Plovers still needs cutting back.  **Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**  Cllr LS had little to report. There had been some hare coursing arrests. As a member of the Suffolk Association of NWS’s she was to look at signs and the need for planning permission for them. As NWS’s are no longer funded by the police, Cllr NA suggested PCs should consider offering financial support. Cllr LS had emailed our new Community Engagement Officer and the Police Commissioner Tim Passmore, but neither had got back to her.  **Broadband**  The new green box at Three Ways had been operational since mid-August. Cllr MM said his speed had almost doubled to around 33mbps.Incredibly Cllr GM who lives in between the box and Cllr MM and is surrounded by neighbours with good broadband speeds, he still only gets 2mbps. Cllrs LS and TS only get 0.3 despite having satellite broadband while Cllr NA gets similar.  DR to write to Suffolk Broadband and ask why people in the same village with already decent broadband speeds are being upgraded while they are prepared to leave others with nothing.  **Tuffields Road Post Box** *(see Clerk’s Report)*  **Bus Shelter**  Nothing to report. DR to thank Jean and John Grigg for the flower boxes they put on the shelter.  **Suffolk Association of Local Councils Report**  None  **Whepstead Community Association Report**  The kitchen is progressing much slower than hoped and won’t be ready for the 90 people being fed Harvest lunch at the Community Centre on Sunday which means the cost to the caterers has gone up. Cllr NA thanked Cllr TS for his commitment to the WCA.  **Correspondence**  None  **Chairman’s Comments**  Cllr NA said that although he was happy to remain a parish councillor at next year’s AGM he would like to step down as chairman and urged others to consider the role.  **Any Other Business**  The meeting closed at 8.35pm  Signed………………………………..Dated……………… |