

CHEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15th September 2016 in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr A McCormack, Cllr CWJ Thurston, Cllr J Pettit, Mr C Lewis (Clerk/RFO) and Mr D Sweny (who was to pursue an application under item 5). B Cllr A Rushen and C Cllr T Clements also attended.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Thurston declared an interest under item 13(a)

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 28th July 2016

These were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Item 11b – Footpath Warden – Councillors welcomed the appointment of Sue Bruton as volunteer Footpaths Warden. Sue has agreed to accept the position and to give a report on footpath conditions at the Annual Parish Meeting. _

Item 18(2) – Chedburgh Road – need for safety assessment - the Clerk had received an acknowledgement from Suffolk Highways who were expected to carry out a site inspection within the next 3-4 weeks.

5. Vacancies for Parish Councillors

Mr Sweny confirmed his interest in the vacant post for Parish Councillor. In view of the applicant's involvement with the Village Hall Management Committee a formal interview was considered unnecessary. *Mr Sweny's co-option to the Parish Council was proposed by Cllr Thurston and seconded by Cllr Pettit.* The Acceptance of Office Form was signed and the declaration read and witnessed by the Clerk. A personal interests form was also issued. Mr Sweny was then welcomed to the Council.

6. Chairman's report

Cllr McCormack confirmed that Debbie Benfold, had ultimately decided not to take up the appointment of Parish Clerk. It was agreed that next steps to fill the post would be discussed under item 10.

7. Borough Councillors Report

A copy of B Cllr Rushen's report had previously been circulated. This referred to the ongoing discussions on the devolution of certain powers from Government, and to the availability Rural Initiatives Grant (RIG) funding to support capital projects. There is still around £52,000 remaining to support local initiatives. In addition, there was still £500 available in Cllr Rushen's Locality Fund to help community groups fund minor services Cllr Pettit felt it was important that the various groups were made aware of this funding and agreed to draw this to their attention during interactions with the Village Hall Management Committee.

Action: Cllr Pettit.

8. County Councillors Report

C Cllr Clements report also referred to the Devolution debate, and confirmed that whilst the concept was supported, many were sceptical about the need for an elected mayor. In other developments, there was concern about increasing design costs for highways schemes given the reduced budget now available for highway maintenance.

9. Parish Councillor Reports

There were no reports from Councillors.

10. Clerk's report

- (a) Appointment of new Clerk – following Mrs Benford's decision to not take up the post it had been agreed that the present incumbent, Chris Lewis, would remain in post over the summer, pending an expected house move. The date and location of this move was expected to be resolved soon. Should this move take place with limited notice, other options were to ask a Clerk in a neighbouring parish to cover or, seek support from SALC.
- (b) Future arrangements for One Suffolk website - the County Council have announced that due to budgetary constraints they will no longer fund the One Suffolk website after 31 October. Community Action Suffolk will then take over the County's role for the website, subject to an annual charge, which for parish councils, would be £50 + VAT. Councillors were mindful that under the transparency code, they were now obliged to operate a website to publish minutes and financial information and concluded that continuing with the "One Suffolk" site was preferable to operating an independent website. *This was proposed by Cllr Thurston and seconded by Cllr Sweny. -all agreed*
- (c) Future relationship with Community Action Suffolk (formerly Suffolk ACRE) - this body now offers free membership to charitable organisations, community groups and parish councils. However, all current subscribers have been asked to confirm that they wish their membership to continue. Following a brief discussion it was agreed unanimously, that the Council's association with Community Action Suffolk should continue.
Action: Clerk
- (d) West Suffolk Parish Conference – 14 November – Memorial Hall, Newmarket - an agenda for the above event was awaited. Cllrs McCormack and Thurston confirmed that they would be willing to attend.
- (e) Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) meeting – 19th October – it was noted that the PCC would be holding a public meeting at Moreton Hall Community Association, Symonds Road, Bury St Edmunds, starting at 6.30pm -all welcome.
- (f) Renewal of Parish Council Insurance - the Council's broker, Community Action Suffolk had invited renewal of the existing policy with the option of single, 3 or 5 year deal. Councillors noted that the annual cost of the 3 year proposal would be £226.37. (compared to previous year's cost of £241.41). Following a short discussion, it was decided to take up the three year, rather than the five-year option. *This was proposed by Cllr Thurston and seconded by Cllr Sweny. – all agreed.*

11. Arrangements for deployment of VAS flashing speed

Cllr Pettit is to contact Nick Melero to obtain details of contacts in Chedburgh and Whepstead, to establish when the sign will next be available to Chevington. Once VAS is received, Cllr Pettit will ask Nick for fixing and take down instructions and how data obtained from the device should be processed.
Action: Cllr Pettit

12. Community Council update

Cllr McCormack reported that the Chevington, Chedburgh Depden and Rede Community Council were meeting that evening to discuss a proposal for refurbishing the Erskine Centre. It was recognised that whilst Chevington had its own village hall, the Parish Council was also a trustee for the Erskine Centre and accordingly, it needed to do everything possible to ensure the Centre's future was safeguarded. Further details about the extent of the refurbishment proposals were awaited.

13. Planning cases

- (a) A Tree Preservation Order application had been referred for comment. This envisaged shortening the branches of a London Plane tree at 1b Barnfield by up to 2 metres (DC/16/1857 /TPO) It was noted that an earlier application to achieve a 50% reduction to the overall crown of the tree was refused by the Planning Authority due to concerns that this would cause harm to both the tree itself the amenity of the area. Councillors considered that the same arguments could be deployed against this current application and recommended it be refused.

(b) Removal of public pay phone – Hargrave Road, Chevington. (DC/16/1995/TE3) – BT had lodged an application under Section 4 of the Communications Act 2003 to remove a number of public pay phones in the Borough of St Edmundsbury, including the one sited in Hargrave Road. In view of the very poor mobile phone signal in the area, Councillors felt there was a strong case for retaining the telephone box, for emergencies. Its central location in the village also made this a viable proposal. It was resolved that the Parish Council should object to the proposal. – all agreed **Action: Clerk**

14. Obstruction of Footpath 2 near Redbrick Cottage, New Road

Cllr Thurston reported that walkers had complained about an obstruction along the line of footpath no 2 near Red Bridge Cottage. The landowner had apparently put fencing up with stiles to allow access. However, disabled walkers and those with dogs were having to take long de-tours because they were unable to use the stiles. It was thought that the landowner may need to seek a footpath modification order but in the first instance, Cllr McCormack would inspect the path and report back at the next meeting. **Action: Cllr McCormack**

15. Parish Council Finances

(a) The receipt of the following payment was acknowledged: -

Ref	Invoice date	Payee	Activity or Service	Cost (£)
2016 D	09/09/2016	Fulchers	Cemetery charge – interment of late John Robert Ollett	500.00

(b) The following invoices were approved for payment: -

Ref	Invoice date	Payee	Activity or Service	Cost (£)
16.	15/09/2016	Chris Lewis (Clerk/RFO)	Clerical and admin services from 29 th July – 15 September 2016 including non-taxable expenses.	347.03
17.	15/09/2016	HMRC	PAYE income tax on Clerk's Salary	73.25
18.	31/07/2016	McGregor Services	Grass cutting – Parish Cemetery (July)	180.00
19.	31/08/2016	McGregor Services	Grass cutting – Parish Cemetery (August)	180.00
20.	14/09/2016	Business Services CA:Suffolk	Renewal of Parish Council Insurance Policy (first year of a 3-year deal)	226.37

(c) **Lloyds TSB Bank Treasurer's Account** balance on 31/07/2016 amounted to £30,608.26

(d) **Internal audit 2016/17** - it was hoped that Christine Fitzgerald would agree to act as the Council's auditor for the accounting period 2016/17. Clerk to contact Mrs Fitzgerald and advise. **Action: Clerk**

16. Governance Committee

It was agreed that the Committee's next meeting would follow on from the Budget meeting on 10th November.

17. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated for information, after the meeting: -

- (i) Suffolk County Council - Notice of temporary traffic order *For information only – works now completed.*
- (ii) Suffolk Year of Walking *Newsletter - For information*
- (iii) Suffolk Sport – Community Funds *Information on funding available through Suffolk Sport to support community spots initiatives.*
- (iv) Suffolk County Council -Highways *Newsletter no 8 -for information*
- (v) West Suffolk Council -Planning enforcement *Copy of a letter confirming the need for a boundary fence at 21 New Road to be reduced in size.*
- (vi) Community Action Suffolk *Update on recent developments mainly concerning the voluntary and community sector in Suffolk*

18. Any other business/ urgent matters

There were no urgent matters.

19. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place slightly earlier on Wednesday 26th October, subject to the Village Hall being available.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.12 pm.

Chairman