

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 11th May 2017

PRESENT: Parish councillors John Whitefield (Chairman), Chris Bliss, Stuart Crosby, Sue Sage, James Wreathall and Chris Stembridge

Also present: Janet Mitson (PCC), Hayley Dalzell (Village Hall), County Councillor Mary Evans, Borough Councillor Clive Pollington and 12 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from parish councillor Steve Child and PC Darren Marshall

The meeting was chaired by John Whitefield from the Parish Council

1. **Approval of the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2016 were confirmed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

2. **Report from Councillor Evans**

• **Speeding in the village**

Although the village has Community Speedwatch and a vehicle activated sign there has been little in the way of speed enforcement by the police. Inspector Danny Cooper, who is based in Haverhill, has said that he will look at speed data if it is sent to him and ask his officers to carry out speed checks when they are on patrol in the area. New changes to speeding fines will see more severe penalties for speeding drivers. Special Constables can carry out speed checks so this is something she will investigate.

• **Education**

Suffolk is now ranked in the top half of all authorities for progress at GCSE level, at 55th out of 151. This is a real improvement since 2014 when Suffolk was ranked 119th for English progress and 108th for maths. Nearly 90% of the county's schools are rated by OFSTED as good or outstanding and our aim is for all our schools to be at this high level. At higher level education, the University of Suffolk has now been granted full university status

• **Suffolk County Council's bid for a fairer funding formula for education from central government**

In the past money was taken from rural counties to put into inner city schools. A child in Suffolk attracts £4,000 of funding whereas a child in Hackney attracts £6,000 of funding. Early years education is also underfunded. From September, the Government is offering free childcare for three and four year olds, but education providers are not going to be paid enough for each child to meet their own costs.

• **Highways**

Although it may not always seem like it, progress has been made. The head of highways is reforming the service, which is taking too long but is now near completion. The aim is to have a true county wide universal highways service. At the moment, there are odd inconsistencies and disparities between the approach in West Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal, Ipswich and Mid-Suffolk. There are now specialist teams to deal with various highways issues like drainage and lighting. The Belt has been added to the list of drainage problems which need to be investigated.

• **Devolution**

Although proposals for a single unitary authority between Norfolk and Suffolk have been rejected, Mary Evans believes it is worth discussing further as it could be more effective and more efficient

3. **Report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team**

Eight crimes were reported in Lidgate in 2016/17, a decrease from 12 in 2015/16. The crimes were as follows:

- Two cases of violence with injury.
- 4 x minor assaults
- 1 x ABH with a minor injury
- An insecure garage in the village was entered and a lawn mower was stolen from within.
- One case of harassment.

4. **Written Report from Borough Councillor Clive Pollington**

Clive Pollington spoke about the following:

- The proposed merger of St Edmundsbury Council and Forest Heath District Council which is currently being discussed.
- He has £330 of his locality funding for the footpath leaflets
- A large amount of crime in the area is drug and alcohol related. Some is taking place in schools with children in care in London being used as drug mules to bring drugs into Suffolk schools.

5. **Village Hall Report by Hayley Dalzell**

- A new committee was formed last September. She thanked Andy Gilmour for all his work as Chair over the last 12 years.
- The race night jointly organised with the church was a success
- There was a successful quiz night. She thanked the quiz master Sally Whitefield for running the quiz. The evening ended with an 'unwanted Christmas presents' raffle which was a real success.

- The Village Hall Committee now has a multi licence to show a variety of films. They held a film day showing films for young children, teenagers and adults.
- Temporary wifi access has been offered by a neighbour for use during events.
- The monthly coffee mornings continue but it would be nice to see a few more new faces.
- The fir tree at the front of the village hall has been removed.
- The swing at the back of the village hall has now been removed.

6. **PCC Report**

The PCC has worked hard and well together this year. There have been some successful fundraising events and the church managed to pay its parish share. She thanked the all those who have helped keep the church running but more volunteers are needed to join the PCC. There have been three funerals, one baptism but no weddings. The church yard is well maintained and is funded by the friends of Lidgate Churchyard.

7. **Update on Community Speedwatch and the Vehicle Activated Sign by Chris Stemberidge**

- The VAS records and collects speed data which is passed on to the Police. It is shared with Wickhambrook. The signs made by children have been very successful.
- The CSW volunteers record the speed of vehicles at a given time. If the speed is in excess of the speed limit, it gets reported to Suffolk Police who will send the driver a letter asking them to respect the communities they drive through and had it been a policeman standing there, they would have been served with a penalty notice. If a driver receives more than three letters, firmer action will be taken which often involves a visit by the Police.
- The group needs more volunteers so leaflets were made available to anyone who may be interested.

8. **Presentation by Yasmin Sultan about the benefits of buying a defibrillator**

As Lidgate is a long way from an ambulance station, it would be beneficial to have a defibrillator in the village. Urgent action is required in the event of a cardiac arrest. The sooner action is taken the greater the chance of survival as intervention is required within five minutes. Chest compressions help but a defibrillator can save lives. She explained how a defibrillator works. If someone suffers a cardiac arrest, a bystander will dial 999. The operator will explain how to give CPR and where the nearest defibrillator is. She is willing to give training if anyone wants it, but it is designed to be used by an untrained operator. The cost is approximately £2,000. She has a list of recommended defibrillators from the Ambulance Service.

9. **Presentation by Anthony Foreman about his latest book**

Anthony Foreman presented his latest book 'Two Thousand Years of Lidgate History'. He has also published a book about men from Lidgate who died during the war and some of whom survived.

10. **Presentation of Community Awards**

Clive Pollington presented two awards to Janet Mitson and Anthony Foreman for their service to the community. Janet for her work on the PCC and Anthony for his work on the history of Lidgate.

11. **Chairman's Report by John Whitefield (Parish Council Chairman)**

John Whitefield introduced all the parish councilors. He thanked Chris Morley for his service to the Council and for producing the village newsletter. He also asked for volunteers to join the Council if a vacancy arises. He spoke about the following:

- He explained the role of the Parish Council. He thanked the clerk, Joanne Kirk, for making the councillors' role easy. He explained the role of the Council which includes dealing with planning applications, reporting highways issues, tackling speeding, rights of way and footpaths.
- The Lidgate footpath walks have been submitted to Suffolk County Council but unfortunately the leaflet will not be ready until spring 2018. There will be an inaugural walk on 29th May.
- The playing field. There are cricket nets and play equipment and everyone is welcome to use them.
- The wooden posts around the pond have recently been replaced.
- The Parish Council is trying to raise £2,000 for a defibrillator. Clive Pollington agreed to donate some money.
- 60 bags of litter were collected during a recent litter pick.
- He thanked Bob Hall for producing the village welcome packs. On production of a welcome pack at The Star, a free drink will be given.
- The Parish Council is trying to get a Pilates class organised. At the moment, Fit Villages is trying to find an instructor.
- There is an ongoing problem with parking in Orchard Close. Havebury is looking in to this but it will not be resolved quickly.
- The Parish Council continues to give financial support to the PCC and the Friends of Lidgate Churchyard.
- He thanked Mary Evans and Clive Pollington for their support.
- The Parish Council's role is to represent the village. Residents are welcome to come along to the Open Forum at the start of the meeting.

12. **Financial report**

The clerk presented the Council's financial report. No questions were asked.

13. **How can residents support each other during an emergency?**

The Parish Council has revised its emergency plan leaflet which will be delivered to residents shortly.

14. Future of the village newsletter

Chris Morley has stepped down from the role of editor of the newsletter. Bob Hall offered to take on the role.

15. Any other village issues which residents would like to raise

- There are some asbestos pipes on the road to Upend. They have already been reported, but the clerk agreed to contact St Edmundsbury Borough Council to find out when they will be removed.
- A pile of rubbish has been dumped on The Belt. The clerk agreed to report this.
- There is a problem with dog fouling on the footpath around Pippin Park and up Church Hill. The clerk agreed to produce a flyer reminding dog walkers of their responsibility to clear up after their dogs or at the very least flick it off the path.

16. Ceremonial locking of the village hall gate

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Signed

Dated.....

DRAFT