

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**  
**10th May 2018**

**PRESENT:** Parish councillors John Whitefield (Chairman), Stuart Crosby, Steve Child and Chris Stembridge

**Also present:** Janet Mitson (PCC), County Councillor Mary Evans, Borough Councillor Clive Pollington and 10 members of the public.

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from parish councillors Sue Sage and James Wreathall

**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 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were confirmed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

**2. Report from Borough Councillor Clive Pollington**

Clive Pollington spoke about the following:

- The amalgamation of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council.
- Boundary changes in West Suffolk. He supports option 2, which is for Cowlinge, Great and Little Bradley, Wickhambrook, Ousden, Lidgate and Dalham to form the Wickhambrook Ward
- SEBC has bought the Old Post Office in Bury. The proposal is to convert it into more shops and flats and improve the link between the Arc.
- New GDPR regulations.
- He has locality funding of £500 for the village.

**3. Village Hall Report by Chris Stembridge**

He spoke about the following:

- The past twelve months have been a good year financially for the village hall with income and expenditure both fairly even
- There have been a number of new additions to the events calendar, including film nights, a folk night and a brunch
- The quiz attracted record numbers of participants
- New windows have been installed in the village hall
- Two of the VHMC's longest serving members, Hayley Dalzell and Chris Bliss resigned at the last AGM. Chris Stembridge thanked them for all their hard work and support
- New people have joined the VHMC with new ideas, but more new members would be welcomed.
- There is currently no chairperson.
- He thanked everyone who turned up for the annual clean-up and for the residents who support the events they organised.
- They are organising an event to celebrate the Wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle.

**4. PCC Report presented by Janet Mitson**

- Lidgate is currently interregnum after Rev'd Brin Singleton left.
- There have been a number of successful fund raising events, including the Farm Walk and Cycle Ride
- She thanked all the volunteers who support the church.
- The church is now locked because of recent thefts
- The PCC is undergoing safeguarding and data protection training
- The parish share was paid in full last year, but this has left them with very few funds
- The responsibility for maintain the closed churchyard has been taken over by St Edmundsbury Borough Council
- The Friends of St Mary's Church yard will continue to fund the grass cutting in the new churchyard
- She thanked Vanessa Watchman for all her hard work as church warden and for her efforts to raise funds for the flint wall round the church yard.

**5. Report from Councillor Evans**

- She thanked the parish council for the invitation to the Annual Parish Meeting
- She was re-elected as county councillor last year
- She has been appointed as chair of the scrutiny committee
- Highways
  - She is trying to get Highways to look at the drainage in Lord's Lane
  - The procedures for topping up grit piles is going to be reviewed this summer. They are going to move away from grit piles and parish councils will need to provide grit bins. She will find out when this change will take place.
  - Potholes will be filled but this will take time. Central Government gave Suffolk County Council 2.5 million pounds for road repairs and SCC is investing 21 million pounds. Highways has purchased a new machine which should improve the quality of repairs. If there is a particularly bad stretch Highways will come out and repair a whole stretch of road rather than just isolated potholes.

- There have been mixed reports of the quality of work carried out by sub-contractors. Suffolk County Council is keeping a close watch on Highways because of the number of problems in the county.
- Education is improving in Suffolk. 80% of schools are now good or outstanding, however it is a challenge recruiting school governors.
- Children's Services received a 'good' in the latest inspection. There are over 800 children in care in Suffolk.
- Suffolk County Council has appointed a new chief executive, Nichola Beech.

The following issues were raised:

- The blocked drains on The Belt

**4. Update on Community Speedwatch and the Vehicle Activated Sign by Chris Stembridge**

- The adverse weather made it difficult to run Speedwatch during the winter for health and safety reasons.
- The speed gun was re-calibrated during the winter.
- There are two teams carrying out 4-5 surveys a month, but new volunteers would be very welcome
- It is not unusual to clock vehicles travelling over 40mph.
- Lidgate shares a VAS with Wickhambrook. The machine records the speeds of vehicles.
- 15% of vehicles are travelling over 50mph. This data is used by the Police to allocate speed checks and a couple were carried out in Lidgate last year.

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

John Whitefield introduced all the parish councillors. He thanked Chris Bliss for his long service as a parish councillor. He spoke about the following:

- He thanked Chris Bliss for cutting the grass on the playing field
- Paul Watchman has been co-opted onto the Parish Council
- If anyone would be interested in enjoying the Parish Council, he asked them to speak to one of the councillors
- He thanked the clerk for all her hard work.
- He spoke about two controversial planning applications in Lidgate, both of which the Parish Council has objected to.
- The Three Villages Walk and the village walk over the May Bank Holiday.
- There are now new swings on the playing field which were largely funded by grants and donations.
- The purchase of a defibrillator which was also funded by grants and some very generous donations from residents.
- The village is setting up a Village Emergency Telephone System
- 50 – 60 bags of rubbish were collected in the recent litter pick.
- He thanked Bob Hall for his excellent work on producing the village newsletter and welcome packs
- The Parish Council continues to support village organisations with annual donations
- The Lidgate Castle Topographical Survey which was carried out when new power lines were installed recently.
- Parish council meetings take place six times a year and members of the public are welcome to attend. Agendas are displayed on the noticeboards and the Parish Council website. Minutes, financial documents and policies are also published on the website

A resident thanked the Parish Council for all their hard work supporting the village.

**6. Financial report**

John Whitefield presented the Council's financial report. No questions were asked.

**7. A possible village project to clear a section of The Street opposite Chapel Cottages to improve the area**

It was agreed that this would be a good idea and that the work would be carried out after September.

**8. The Lidgate Village Emergency Telephone System to provide support in an emergency**

Stuart Crosby spoke about the defibrillator and how to use it. He explained the importance of giving CPR which is only possible if more than one person is present. The VETS scheme will enable a person to obtain additional help in the event of an emergency.

**9. Should Lidgate try to set up a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme?**

Keith Hogan explained what it would involve to set up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The feedback from residents was that it would be a good idea .

An email was also received from a resident supporting the scheme and thanking the volunteers who delivered the flyers advertising the Annual Parish Meeting.

**10. Any other village issues which residents would like to raise**

No issues were raised.

**11. Ceremonial locking of the village hall gate**

**The meeting closed at 9.40pm**

Signed .....

Dated.....

DRAFT