

**HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
ON 26TH JANUARY 2012.**

Present: Cllrs John West (Chairman), Christabel Carr, Michael Harrison, Jayne Robertson
County Cllr Terry Clements, Borough Cllr Angela Rushen
2 members of the public were present.

Apologies: Cllrs Henry Brewis, Clive Robinson, Ros Alexander.
Parish Clerk - Marilyn Bottomley

Minutes: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that, in the absence of the Clerk, the minutes of the meeting would be taken by a member of the public.

Public Forum

Comment was made about the broken wooden barriers in Whepstead Road and on the village hall car park. Suffolk County Council is responsible for the barriers in Whepstead Road.

On a related issue a suggestion was made that parking spaces on the village hall car park be clearly marked to ease congestion at events.

The safety and usage of the well at Melpost was raised. After discussion it was suggested that a grid could be put over the well similar that that covering the well in Bull Lane. (This issue was later discussed further by the PC - see below).

Litter in the ditches around the village and the village green was also discussed. The chairman thanked Charlie Riggall on behalf of the village for his continued litter-collecting activities.

Declarations of interest

None

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 17th November 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November were approved as a true and accurate record and signed accordingly. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Carr. All in favour.

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 15th December 2011

Minutes for this meeting to discuss the precept have not yet been produced.

Reports -

County Cllr Clements

Cllr Clements apologised for the fact that the PC was not notified in advance of the Lawshall Road closure. The oversight had been due to shortage of staff at SCC, which was creating a backlog of work.

'Our Place' officers were now in place and would be meeting at the beginning of February, when they would be dealing with some outstanding issues.

Cllr Clements has flashing 30 mph speed limit signs and wondered whether HPC were interested in having one in Hawstead.

Grants are still available for capital and 'quality of life' initiatives which could include sporting and other activities. Cllr Clements would be happy to put a case forward on behalf of HPC. Leaflets are available for the 'Fit Villages' initiative. (Borough Cllr Rushen distributed a leaflet that she had on the availability of grants).

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Cllr Clements' own role at SEBC has changed. He is now supporting the Council Chief Executive Mark Bee working with districts.

Borough Cllr Rushen

See Cllr Rushen's report attached.

Police

Did not attend

Hawstead Community Council

See 'Jubilee Celebrations' below

Communications

A written report was submitted by Cllr Brewis. This was read to the meeting by the chairman. He reported that the website is up and running and is now 'googleable'. He was embarrassed at omitting to put the pantomime information on the site and would like to make sure that in future all village events are flagged up well in advance. He would welcome suggestions for a robust mechanism to prevent such omissions as well as suggestions for improving the site generally. He is aware that it is not perfect. He expects the website to grow gradually and to become a useful tool as people become more familiar with it.

Environment

The footpaths - Cllr Carr reported that the footpaths are all walkable although the original fence bordering Norman Gibbs' property on the market path needs attention or removal. Cllr Carr will look into repairing/removing this section of fencing.

The village green – mole control continues and the new ferreter has made a good start on controlling the rabbits.

Cllr Carr has had a positive on site meeting with the representative from Natural England, who is happy with the management of the green and the mowing programme. He has no objection to the cutting of the area around the village hall for the village fete, although the area cut should not be so large an area as was cut in 2011.

The question of dog fouling on the village green was discussed. Cllr Carr will look into the provision of "clean it up" signage.

It was agreed that Cllr West, Cllr Carr and the Tree Warden – James Carr – will go round the village together with a view to reviewing the programme of maintenance. Cllr West and Cllr Carr to organise this.

Highways & Safety

The non-notification of road works in Lawshall Road was due to an oversight by the Council. Detour details are now on the PC notice boards.

Suffolk County Council has said that they will not install traffic calming measures at the bend at Larkfield. This will be an agenda item for further discussion in March.

Grit bins – The clerk is procuring high visibility jackets for grit-spreaders although no more people have come forward as volunteers.

Bus Shelter – agenda item for the March meeting.

Emergency Plan - Cllr Harrison will ensure that the plan is brought up to date.

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Litter – The clerk has reported that litter-picking equipment is available at Chedburgh. It was thought that it would be useful to have this in Hawstead village hall although it was felt it could be shared.

Achieving excellence

Cllr Robertson mentioned that she would be willing to be part of a team to work towards producing the Hawstead Journal.

Planning & Legal matters

Nothing to report

To consider-

Grant application form

It was agreed that the grant application form will be uploaded onto the PC website. Proposed Cllr Robertson, seconded Cllr Carr - all in favour.

Working party report in respect of easements issue

It was agreed that the letter in respect of the easement issue be sent and that this letter should be signed by Cllr West. Proposed Cllr Robertson, seconded Cllr Carr. All in favour.

Risk assessment on triangle of land owned by SCC in Whepstead Road

Cllr West has chased up SCC again but has received no response as yet. Although the well cover has been repaired, Cllr West will arrange for SCC to carry out a safety inspection on the well to confirm it is safe. SCC has approved to a bench being placed on this site. Cllr West will obtain the licence and Cllr Robertson will provide details of suitable wooden benches.

Future usage of Millennium Field

To be an agenda item for March meeting

Working party report in respect of village green registration

Nothing to report

Bylaws review – update

Cllr Carr has sent copies of the previous bylaws and the proposed new bylaws to The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) – the organisation whose responsibility it is to approve the bylaws. DCLG will compare the two copies and make comment. Cllr Carr to progress this.

Parking in Whepstead Road and Bull Lane

Agenda item for the March meeting.

Jubilee celebrations

Cllr Harrison reported on the Community Council's plans for the Jubilee – afternoon event for children including games and races, punch and judy and refreshments, followed by an evening event for adults, possibly a village cabaret. The PC will work alongside the CC to ensure this event is a success. The purchase of commemorative mugs for the village children under 16 years old was discussed. It is understood the mugs cost approx. £7 each with a minimum

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order quantity of 36. Cllr Harrison is to provide further information on these commemorative mugs.

It was suggested that the proposed bench at Melpost have a plaque to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee.

To receive any Planning Applications & Approvals to date of meeting.

None

Finance

The chairman advised the meeting he understood there was only one outstanding item for payment. This will be an agenda item under finance at the next meeting – clerk's expenses.

Chairman's summary

As minutes have not yet been produced for the PC meeting held on 15th December the chairman felt it appropriate to verbally update everyone present. The most important item discussed at the December PC meeting was the setting of the Precept for 2012-13. This was agreed at £8,000. This compares with £7,000 last year, £8,000 in 2010-11 and £8,800 in 2009-10. The vast majority of our precept is already allocated every year and goes towards maintaining the village open spaces and the clerk's salary. The remaining amount does not allow huge scope for major projects but we will continue to use the money as effectively as possible.

As you are aware our clerk is unwell at present. We all wish her a very speedy recovery. A bouquet of flowers from HPC has been delivered and she has expressed her thanks to us all. Councillors will have received the short report sent, containing a number of worthwhile suggestions, following the appraisal in December. An Employment Panel will be formed at the March PC meeting.

An estimate was obtained from SEBC for erecting the Christmas tree and putting on the lights. Their estimate was £425 + VAT. Using village volunteers, the total cost of doing this work came to just £30. My thanks go to all volunteers and to Rebecca and Graham at Oak Lodge, Lawshall Road, for very kindly donating the tree.

Street light at junction of Whepstead Road and Bury Road is not working - reported to SCC 23/1/12

Village surgery date needs to be set. Chairman suggested end February and will contact Cllr Brewis to publicise the date on the website.

Finally we have been asked by the Philip Metcalfe Almshouses Trust whether we wished to nominate a councillor to replace Malcolm Cornwell as the Parish Council representative at the Trust with a current member of the Parish Council. I have let them know that we are happy for Malcolm to continue in this role.

Correspondence & circulars

None

Date of next meeting

29th March 2012

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