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| **DRAFT MINUTES** |

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on Thursday 5th April 2018 at the village hall where the following items were discussed.

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| **Attendees** | | Mr D Stannard (Chairman) | Mrs M MacPherson | |
|  | | |  | | --- | | Mr G Bloomfield | | Mrs S Yeomans (Parish Clerk) | | |  | | --- | | Mrs K Shearer (Vice Chairman) | | Mr A Yorke | | |
|  | | Cllr C Bull  Ms L Robinson | Mrs N Yorke  Mr P Penn (Tree Warden) | |
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| **Apologies** | | Cllr J Spicer |  | |
|  | | Mrs R Vernon |  | |
| There were 16 members of the public present  Mr D Palgrave gave a very interesting and informative talk on The Origin and Development of Surnames before commencement of the meeting. A donation of £50.00 was made to his chosen charity The Churches Conservation Trust. | | | | |
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| **1.** | **Welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council**  Mr D Stannard, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting | | | **Action** |
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| **2.** | **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 18 May 2017**  The minutes were confirmed as a true record | | |  |
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| **3.** | **Chairman’s Report**  The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Pleased to report   1. Relaunch of the village magazine, now named The Hepworth Herald 2. Our digital contribution of the village website which is now up and running, with thanks to Kath and Neel Shearer for setting this up. 3. Purchase of a Speed Indicator Device which will shortly be operational 4. Installation of a Defibrillator, kindly donated by Richard Argent of Wup Doodle. Training sessions to take place on Saturday 5th and Thursday 17 May.   Thanks go to the members of the Parish Council for their attendance and contribution over the last year. Thanks to John and Margaret Beales, who left the Parish Council this year, for their hard work on behalf of the council and their many years of service to the community. Welcome to our new councillors Louise Robinson and Nicola Yorke who have “hit the ground running”.  Thanks to Joanna Spicer our County Councillor and Carol Bull our Borough Councillor for their help and advice to the Parish Council and their support and advice to individual members of our parish.  Thanks to Perry Penn, our Tree Warden, and John Horridge who voluntarily keeps many areas of our village tidy. Finally a huge thanks from me as Chairman, and I am sure on behalf of the Parish councillors, to Sue Yeomans, our Parish Clerk, who has done sterling work since taking over the role.  The ongoing problem of flooding at Reeves Hall is being addressed both by the Parish Council and Cllr Spicer and Cllr Bull, and we will all continue to pursue this. | | |  |
| **4.** | **Report by Maureen Bacon on behalf of the Parochial Church Council**  I am representing St Peter’s Church and I am the Parochial Church Council Secretary, and at the present time Treasurer. Financially we are just about holding our head above water but with of £6,000 to pay the diocese each year it is a struggle. On average we have only 5-7 people in the congregation, more at festive times i.e. Easter, Christmas.    We have two services a month – Morning Prayer or Songs of Praise, taken by Mr Chris Anderson, and Holy Communion on the forth Sunday. At the present time we have no Vicar, so the retired Vicars around the Parish take Holy Communion. Last Sunday Keith Lewis, a Lay Reader, took Holy Communion. When Rev David Messer was here we didn’t have Holy Communion all year, and only one service a month. Now at least we have two services a month.  We do need a Church Warden and a Treasurer. The Treasurer does not have to attend church but it helps for them to be on the Parochial Church Council. | | |  |
| **5.** | **Report from Cllr Joanna Spicer, read by Cllr Bull in her absence**  Firstly, may I say how sorry I am not to be at Hepworth this evening but I have a horrid virus that is now thought to be shingles so I am not going out anywhere. I was particularly looking forward to the displays and community gathering that the Parish Council have arranged.  I would like to thank David Stannard and all the Parish Councillors very much for their welcome to me at meetings. Sue Yeomans has been an excellent clerk and I thank her for keeping me in touch with issues in Hepworth.  The year that has just come to end started with county council elections in early May and I was honoured to again be elected as your county councillor. The main work I do now at the County Council involves sitting on fostering and adoption panels and assisting with constitutional work and scrutinising the increasing outsourcing that the county council is involved with. Last week I was elected chairman of the West Suffolk Community Safety Partnership. This will involve bringing together local authorities, the Police, the NHS, Probation and the voluntary sector in establishing joint community safety plans.  The County Council have appointed a new Chief Executive, Nicola Beach, who is currently a director with Essex County Council. She will start in June.  You may have read in the press about “unitary” councils again being discussed. As with previous reviews I would very much support the principal to save money and create efficiencies – but I am not sure the time is right with the new West Suffolk Council coming in to being next summer  The newly elected Council has had to continue the relentless search for savings with the continuing cut in our grant from Government and with some reluctance we have put up the Council tax this year – the first rise in the basic rate for 7 years. We have made more than £236million savings since 2011 and some of the changes have been tough.  The biggest budget pressures continue to be adult care services and child protection. It is interesting that whenever we do surveys although the people of Suffolk recognise the importance of our statutory duty to protect the vulnerable and elderly they continue to suggest highways should be our highest priority.,  Which leads me on to highways ! The contract the SCC have with Keir is considered to be working better now but it seems very cumbersome and clunky to get responses. Specifically in Hepworth :   * I am still trying to get confirmation of replacing the 40 MPH VAS on the A143 which has died. SCC engineers don’t seem keen on solar ones but I am not accepting that * The biggest worry over the last few months has been the flood near reeves Hall. Firstly I really would like to that the local farming family who have all worked so hard to try and help clear water in to the ditches. The continuing flooding is absolutely nothing to do with them or the adjoining fields. County Council engineers believe there is a broken drain pipe underneath the road. They seem unwilling to do the urgent investigation it needs. Meanwhile flood warning signs are in place and I would be interested to know if people would like the road closed formally ?   Another big issue on the horizon for Hepworth is the possibility of a significant development on the Shepherds Grove Park involving houses and light industry and a new spine road to the A143. I am actually meeting the developers with County Council officers next Wednesday and will keep the parish council in touch. | | |  |
| **6.** | **Report by Carol Bull – Borough Councillor**  The last 12 months seem to have flown by very quickly. So much has happened both at local and Borough level and I had to have a quick glance through all the parish council minutes to remind myself of exactly what had been going on!  The parish council has clearly been very busy and working hard on behalf of all it residents and I find it particularly helpful to come along to the meetings and listen to all the discussions and must thank the committee for always making me feel very welcome and able to participate. It also enables me to get involved when residents have issues or concerns where I may be able to help.  I know that there are reservations and concerns about the new Data Protection Legislation which all parish councils must get their head around and I am attending a seminar in a couple of weeks about this and if you have any questions you would like me to raise for clarification please let me know.  A lot of residents also contact me direct for advice and help on a wide variety of matters and I am always happy to talk or visit if necessary. I am talking to a number of residents on planning and enforcement issues at the moment. Rubbish and fly tipping is another issue that has been raised with me and I am following it up and indeed the Borough council will be installing a litter bin in the lay- by on the 143 which it is hoped will resolve the particular problem there. With regard to fly tipping – this can be reported on the council website and they are very good at coming out to collect it, sometimes even when it has been dumped on the edge of farm land which strictly speaking it is not the Borough’s responsibility as it is private land.  Some other successes this year include: getting the car parking improved at Willow Green; the purchase of a VAS sign from my locality budget; discovering that Hepworth has over £3,330 S106 with the Borough which can be released for things like green areas, play ground or sports equipment. Unfortunately, it cannot be used to support the community bus.  I am saddened by the lack of progress on the flooding issue despite Joanna’s sterling efforts with some support from me.  At a Borough level it has been a very busy and interesting year as there is so much going on. The council face huge financial challenges as government funds are cut and are looking at alternative more commercial ways of balancing their budgets. They have lots of new exciting projects such as Barley Homes, which has been set up to build houses and also the old Post Office development in the Cornhill which it is hoped will link the centre of the town to the Arc and regenerate St Andrews Street. Work on the Waste Hub at Barton Hill has also finally started.    On a personal level I am Chair of the Future Governance Steering Group which is the body which is moving forward the coming together of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council to form the new West Suffolk Council and I was invited onto the Cabinet with a new Portfolio - Future Governance. This new West Suffolk Council which will hopefully come into effect in May 2019 will be one of the largest in the country and as such will offer huge opportunities for growth and development in the area.  A Ward boundary review is also being carried out. In part this is because it was long overdue and in part because the new council will have fewer councillors, 64 rather than the 72 the two councils now have. St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath after consultation with members and parish councils has prepared a number of warding options which will shortly be submitted to the Boundary Commission. They will consider all the options and submissions and come up with a proposal which will go out for full consultation. Having considered feedback from this, the Boundary committee will prepare a final warding plan and will be the one that is implemented. You will be pleased to hear that Barningham ward is very unlikely to change. Could I urge you to respond to the Boundary Commissions consultation if only to say you are happy with it. If only one person responds and suggest changes then this could be taken into consideration despite everyone else being content.  With all this going on we are looking forward to very interesting and busy next 12 months.  Data Protection – Cllr Bull ask if there were any questions we would like her to take forward to a forthcoming seminar  Fly tipping can be reported on the Borough Council Website and they will come and remove items. | | |  |
| **7.** | **Report by Police**  No police representative attended and no report was submitted | | |  |
| **8.** | **Reports from Hepworth Community Groups**  **Hepworth Art – Wendy Summerell**  The club was formed by me 8 years ago this June. We currently have 21 members (a diverse group of people with a common interest), with 6 on our waiting list. The club is run on a co-operative basis with every single person having a say in how it is run. To enable this there is a semi-formal discussion every quarter when current arrangements are reviewed i.e. key holders (who also put out tables and chairs), refreshments and treasurer. Current subscription is £20 a quarter which includes tea and biscuits.  When funds allow, we commission a guest artist to facilitate a session for us. This amazing group of people swing into action each year and deliver an annual art exhibition – usually in October. Without fail, we are always amazed and humbled by the number of people who visit and give us such positive feedback – and also buy our artwork!  We are also lucky to have one member who, together with her husband, has arranged a couple of trips to Art Galleries in London. We visited the David Hockney exhibition last year and are looking forward to another trip this month to see the Monet exhibition (so popular that a larger coach has been booked!).  One of the very real benefits is the way we coach and encourage each other. I feel we are all uniquely fortunate to be sharing Mondays together. We have learned a lot over the years – and have laughed a lot too!  A selection of Art Work is on display.  **Hepworth Book Club – Katherine Shearer**  I set up the group 10 years ago and during that time we have read 100 books. We meet once a month, on a Wednesday evening, to discuss our latest book and catch up over refreshments. This month we are reading the autobiographical novel ‘I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings’ by Maya Angelou. We currently have 10 members, so we are full, but will happily take names of interested parties for the future. Call Kath on 01359 250594  **Hepworth Angels – Clare Jones-Davies**  The Hepworth Angels are singing their little hearts out and enjoying every Monday evening at 7.30 pm in the Church where we sing for about an hour, have coffee, then go home feeling rejoiced (at the moment not all that warm in the Church!) nevertheless we are enjoying ourselves and are trying to learn some new tunes with altos and sopranos. None of us can read the music but we try and make a good sound, with the help of Olivia on the piano. If anyone would like to record a piece of music that we could sing along to that would be great, really any song. Do come and join us, just turn up, no pressure just lots of fun. It would be lovely to see you.  **Bee Co-operative – Kath Shearer**  Set up 2 years ago with 3 to 4 sites in the village. Honey has been produced! We have some spare hives available if anyone has a piece of land where they could site it. Lots of advice and support available.  **Hepworth WI – Celia Simms**  As in previous years we have enjoyed a full programme of events and also various Federation events.  The monthly meetings have been very varied and interesting from talks from covering life in Turkey, Thomas Gainsborough, Cigarette Cards, Medical Detection Dogs, to a view of life as a big house gardener in the early 20th century and an emancipated female traveller from the 18th century, Celia Fiennes. (Yes she is a member of that family). The Group Meeting was another enjoyable occasion with an excellent speaker, Sean hedges-@Quin, well known for his sculptures including Captain Mainwaring. The sculpture competition produced a number of interesting items but Stanton WI swept the board.  Members also attended the Federation Annual Meeting and had a very good day with excellent speaker Gyles Brandeth, who was extremely funny especially with the Apex fire alarm going off before he finished. The evening Autumn Meeting was both hilarious and musically and equinely informative.  Although we have lost a couple of members this year we have also gained one. We would warmly welcome any woman to our meetings as a visitor to see if the WI is for her, as every WI is different and we are no longer just “Jam and Jerusalem”.  **Hepworth Speedwatch Team – Richard Hinton, Co-ordinator**  Our team is overseen by Suffolk Police with a liaising Community Police Officer, who deal with the information we provide to them. We have 7 active members, all civilians and volunteers. We hold one hour speedwatch sessions once or twice a month using a radar gun. Our aim is not to record as many vehicles as possible but to act as a deterent to reduce speed on our village roads and make them safer. We have various official wet ups along The Street, highly visible to traffic, so no jumping out from behind hedges! We would welcome, and need, new members. We are a friendly bunch and certainly not a polka-faced authority. To join there is a short training session and some forms to fill in, but really it is minimal. If you think you have to be model and unblemished driver to apply you don’t.  A Speed Indicator Device has been purchased (on display) for the village and will be installed along The Street in the next few weeks. I would like to thank Cllr Bull for her donation of £739 from her Locality Budget and Hepworth Parish Council for their donation of £1700 towards the purchase.  If you would like to join our team contact me on 01359 251484 or Sue Yeomans, Clerk.  **Café Hepworth – Jenny Webster**  We meet every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 10.30 am to 12.00 noon in the Village Hall. We have proper filter coffee and nice biscuits and good company. Everyone is welcome.  **Hepworth Herald – Katherine Shearer**  The Editor is Neel Shearer. The magazine is currently distributed every 2 months. Content always welcome – stories and news, and advertising space is available. We are also looking for your pictures to use on the front cover. Contact Neel Shearer on 01359 250594.  **Tree Warden – Peregrine Penn**  It is over a year now since I took on this title, in this time I have attended two events, the annual East Anglia Tree Warden regional forum at Cockfield and a Forestry Commission Tree Health event at Sapiston village hall, I found both events informative and well worth attending.  From my article in the Hepworth Herald issued in March, I received several correspondent’s, one a suggestion to replant the Oak trees in Wood Lane, the land owner Stephen Hatten had previously granted permission for the original plantings some time ago to Russel Kemp, this has now been completed, Russel and I planted twelve, ten purchased from Sandy Lane Nursery at Wattisfield and David Harwood the owner of the nursery kindly donated the remanding two to this project. Other plantings with smaller trees supplied by OVO energy ‘I Dig Trees’ free, have also taken place in lands at North Common, Westerbury Lane and Dunhill Lane.  I hope this report will show that we are making **a** little progress in improving Hepworth’s green infrastructure and hope this work will continual in the years to come. Shorty I will be sending feedback and thanking OVO energy I Dig Trees for supplying the free trees. | | |  |
| **9.** | **Parishioners Comments**  The following ideas were collected from our ‘Post-it Suggestion Board’:-  1. Internet in the Pavillion please 2. More storage facilities in the Pavillion for clubs (selfish request from Art Club) 3. Pathway down Market Weston Road for walkers and dogs 4. Centrally placed notice board to advertise village events 5. New play equipment – but please keep swings 6. A raised wooden walkway built over the stream by the bus shelter to act as a safe place to walk off road 7. Extend and renovate the Pavillion 8. Lets have some allotments 9. Cut the trees behind the Pavillion to give light to the playground 10. More flowers along verges 11. Mobile phone mast on church  The Parish Council will be reviewing all the above suggestions over the next few months.  **Defibrillator update– Louise Robinson**  Thank you to Richard Argent for supplying the defibrillator for use by his staff and everyone in the village. The defibrillator is situated inside the entrance to Stimsons Yard, The Street in a locked box. The code will be made available at the training sessions. The aim of the defibrillator is to stop the heart and put it back into normal rhythm. It is so important in rural areas where there is likely to be a delay in an ambulance attending.  Our thanks to Stuart Turner, who works as ambulance crew, for giving up his time voluntarily to provide training sessions on the activation and use of the defibrillator. The free session will take place in the Pavilion/Village Hall on Saturday 5th May and Thursday 17th May both starting at 1.30pm and lasting about 1.5 hours. To book onto a session contact the Clerk on 01359 250037.  Cllr Bull informed us that she has funds in her Locality Budget for any local organisation planning a special project. Contact her direct or through the Clerk for more details.  A request was received for an internet connection in the Pavilion. Cllr Bull may be able to help with installation of the internet but not the running costs. | | |  |
| **10.** | **The meeting closed at 9.05 pm** | | |  |