

**Minutes of Poslingford Parish Council
meeting on 21st February 2018.**

Present: Cllrs Martin England, Jim Rucklidge, Marc Allison, and Derek Nichols
CC Mary Evans, BC Peter Stevens, and Chris Turner-Clerk

1 Apologies for absence- Cllr June Mansfield

2. County Councillor Mary Evans Report- Locally, CLASP from Clare are willing to pick up people from Poslingford and take them to such places as the hospital etc. No costs but a donation would be gratefully received, they are also on the look out for more drivers. There is no direct bus service to the hospital, a survey is to be carried out to ascertain whether enough people would use the service. Mary confirmed that the Council Tax increase for the County Councils portion would be 4.99%, they decided against increasing it by a further 1%, which they were allowed to do. There was a Rights of Way meeting in Clare recently apparently there are 3500 kms of footpaths in Suffolk. The County Council are aware of the poor state of many roads in Suffolk, the winter weather this year hasn't helped. They hope that come Spring, these will start improving. Confirmed no closures planned for our libraries, in fact Clare are intending to open for more hours.

3. Borough Councillor Peter Stevens report- Peter confirmed that the Borough Council are not to raise their portion of the Council Tax this year and are unlikely to need to increase it until 2021 at the earliest, as they have an expected balanced budget until then. In the Spring the two Councils, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath will be merging and will then be known as West Suffolk Council. It will mean a reduction in Councillors from about 73 to 64 each with around 2000 parishioners. There is to be a consultation on the "warding" in March, and will probably take effect from the next elections in 2019. The new "locality officer" has been shown around the village. Peter does have some locality budget available if we need assistance in anything, BBQ etc.

4. Minutes of our last meeting- There were found to be two errors in the draft minutes, one regarding "proposer" and one being the footpath at "sheeps field". Agreed that the minutes would be revised and would be signed at our next meeting. Proposed Cllr England, Seconded Cllr Allison. Matters arising-The steps to the War Memorial have been removed and will be re-laid.

5. Financial Report- The accounts to 21st February 2018 were presented and agreed. Proposed Cllr Nicholls Seconded Cllr England. Agreed our charitable gifts this year would be £25 each to Sudbury Newstalk and Suffolk Headway with £50 to Suffolk Neighbourhood watch.

6. Internal Audit review- We are required to adopt policies annually for Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Copies had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting and they agreed that these should be adopted, and copies were signed by Cllr England. We also reviewed the "risk assessment" and this was agreed and signed by the chairman.

Regarding the Asset Register this is to be changed and the values based on our Insurance values. We would also need to change the previous year's figures.

7. Council Vacancies- Cllr Fewell had sent an e mail to Cllr England apologising that she was unable to continue on the Parish Council and had to resign. Cllr Allison is to see Cllr Fewell before we accept her resignation as circumstances have changed. There is another vacancy which we hope to fill with a past councillor.

8. Issues re Planning/Highways etc.- There is blocked drain on The Street, on the hill from Hillside approx. opposite to our grit bin, clerk to report. The questionnaire was completed regarding "self-help" on Highway issues.

9. Grass Cutting- We will continue to use our current contractor

10. Data Protection.- We are to appoint Chris Turner as our DPO. We hold little if any Personal Data and feel this can be dealt with by the clerk in his capacity as a Data Protection Officer not as a clerk.

11. AOB- Notice Board at Hillside needs attention. A litter pick is being held on 4th March. Suggested we obtain a defibrillator and place in phone box. To be discussed at next meeting.

Next Meeting 16th May for the AGM

Meeting finished at 7.50

C Turner-Clerk