

Community Connection, 09.03.18.

Our Parish Council meeting of last Monday (5 March) was much affected by the emerging news of the death of Liz Handy that morning. There were some twenty members of the community and parish councillors present and, deeply affected, we observed together a quiet moment to think of Liz and her family. Liz was a former member of the Parish Council, a guiding light in many areas, including the establishment of our website, and she was someone who valued and energetically supported all members of our community. We will miss her very much.

From the items of the previous meeting: we continue to investigate best practice and management for the defibrillator (stationed at the Village Hall); we had investigated the issue of drainage in the area of Common Road and the allotments, and were strongly of the view that the allotments' ditches and associated water-courses were maintained in effective working order. We have made arrangements to respond to the Greater Norwich consultation: the pro-forma provided for this purpose does not appear to show issues of specific relevance to our parishes.

Beverly Spratt, our County Councillor, presented his report to us: he accepted concerns about the rise in Council Tax this year: we passed on the frequent expression that whilst the tax went up, services seemed to reduce and that 'value for money' was possibly going to be a future issue.....Beverley also said that he was hoping to involve senior NCC officials in a review of the problems of the A1066 – especially over the matter of access to Harvest House.

Barry Stone, our District Councillor, is still not well enough to resume his duties and was not present: he writes a monthly report, which will be published here when available.

We discussed the perennial issue of highways: three areas were on the Agenda: a parishioner's letter about the erosion of Darrow Wood Lane, heavy traffic through Fersfield and the safety of the A1066, due to flooding. Debbie Gosman addressed the meeting concerning the Fersfield issue, and after some discussion it was agreed Vice-Chairman Karl Traynier will convene a sub-committee designed specifically to deal with Fersfield traffic problems. The A1066 flooding is a major concern, and responsibility for combatting this appears to generate issues between NCC and the owners of the fields that border to road. We hope this is soon resolved, as there have been accidents, especially when the water freezes, and we want no further accidents whilst this disagreement is sorted out. The Parish Council has been in contact with our area NCC road engineer, and he is very actively involved.

Somewhat inevitably, the proposed A1066 access to Harvest House came into our discussions. We have had considerable and frank with district and county council officers, all of whom refuse to reconsider the matter of width of access/turning lanes for the proposed development. There is considerable public disquiet about this and Bev Spratt agreed to involve the NCC officers appropriate to this. The Parish Council asked the District Council to refer the whole matter back to committee: this has just been refused by the Leader of SNDC. Barry Stone has been asked to use his good offices. It now seems that the SNDC and NCC fully intend to 'sign off' the proposals as they stand.

On a more positive note, we received a good 'within budget' financial report, and unanimously agreed a £500 grant to help protect the precious village shop during the 'water-main disruption'. A member of the community generously gave another £500 towards the support our shop. The

meeting was reminded of the website items concerning Broadband and Neighbourhood Watch/Community Support, and heard that we had been awarded £500 towards the cost of a special 'Remembrance Sunday' project to honour the one-hundredth anniversary of the 1018 Armistice. Please support this and take part in the organisation if you can – more details will follow concerning this important all-age event!

Richard.