

# **WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Community Projects Committee**

Minutes of the Community Projects Committee held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.30 at Peel House, 8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY.

**Present:** Cllr Mrs Mayor, Windle, Whitwell, Gerstner, Mockett, Nawaz

**Officer in Attendance:** Mrs Sue Piergianni – Town Clerk & RFO

### **CP31/19 – To Elect a chairman.**

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for the position of Chairman for the next year. Cllr Whitwell proposed Cllr Mrs Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr Gerstner, there were no other nominations, Cllr Mrs Mayor was elected as the Chairman until May 2022 by a unanimous vote.

### **CP32/19 – To Elect a Vice Chairman.**

Cllr Mrs Mayor asked for nominations, Cllr Mrs Windle proposed Cllr Whitwell, seconded by Cllr Mockett, there were no other nominations and therefore Cllr Whitwell was elected as Vice Chairman until May 2022 by a unanimous vote.

### **CP33/2021. To receive apologies for absence from members.**

Cllr Davies & Munns gave apologies due to work commitments.

### **CP34/2021. To confirm and sign minutes from the last meeting of the Community Projects Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

Ratified: The Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were approved and signed as a true record.

### **CP35/2021. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item.**

Cllr Gerstner declared a pecuniary interest in item CP36/2021 he is the Chairman for Whittlesey Neighbourhood Watch.

### **CP36/2021. Presentation by Mr Robin Sutton – Dog Watch Scheme (Neighbourhood Watch)**

#### **Where are we currently?**

There is no doubt Green Dog Walkers has been successful at reaching out to responsible dog owners in Whittlesey. Monitoring of the Manor has shown that the problem of dog fouling has been reduced and that many dog owners who have signed the pledge pick up not their own but other dog fouling. The free poo bag dispenser is used sensibly and regularly by people dog walkers who have said they appreciate the quality of the bags and find it useful if run out of their own or if they are picking up after others.

During Covid the number of dog walkers has increased but the modelling of correct behaviour seems to have kept issues to a low level. There are of course exceptions generally related to a small minority who walk the same route daily. Complaints generally appear on social media but are seldom properly reported. Non-dog owners rarely take time to clear the problem and this can lead to further issues. Covid suspended the publicity we wanted to make, and we have about another 100 badges for a booster campaign later in the year when things settle.

Currently there are 199 dogs with 150 owners on the database and support continues via Sue in the Council Office and through Parkers Newsagents.

The Doggie Bag dispenser at the Manor – has been kept supplied and is very sensibly used and popular.

The number of bags in dog waste and other bins show that there is a wide acceptance by the majority of owners that they should pick up after their dogs.

## Next Steps

*A reminder campaign later in the year.*

*Move to phase 2 – the start of a Neighbourhood Dog Watch*

## Neighbourhood Dog Watch

Neighbourhood Dog Watch would be open to anyone aged 16 or over. They would not need to join a street watch but would become part of National Neighbourhood Watch and would have access to Alert secure messages from the Police and Neighbourhood Watch. They would also be insured when taking part in Neighbourhood Watch activities and have access to the planned privilege discount scheme.

A Neighbourhood Dog Watch, is a way of extending the Neighbourhood Watch network to the wider community. As we have already developed a successful Green Dog Walking scheme in Whittlesey, it would appear that harnessing this potential membership, as a starter group of proven community minded people, would be a sensible starting point.

The scheme would recognise that those who walk their dogs, are often the first to spot something unusual or amiss, such as criminal damage or an incident of anti-social behaviour, providing valuable eyes and ears for the community.

It is a fact that the missing links in many crimes are often in out of the way places in our countryside, or areas without passing traffic. Dog walkers are often how vital evidence is found, as dogs stray into areas not normally frequented by passers-by.

It has been shown that the a 'Dog Watch' scheme, not only has the potential to discover evidence, which may help to solve a crime, it can also make a difference to the surrounding

## Support from the PCC

The newly appointed PCC, Darryl Preston, has shown his support for Whittlesey to be the pilot for a scheme which could be expanded County wide in the future.

*"As the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough I often have conversations with residents who have been victim of or fear the theft of their dog.*

*As a dog owner myself I understand that dogs are beloved family members and the theft of one can be truly devastating.*

*I am enormously supportive of any community scheme which can prevent dog theft and provide information of what owners should do if the worst should happen.*

*I hope that Whittlesey Council will be supportive of this pilot operating in their area which will be of benefit to residents. "*

*Darryl Preston*

## The Scheme Outline

This is an initiative that encourages dog owners to be proactive and vigilant whilst walking their pets in their area.

The Whittlesey Dog Watch scheme would encourage dog owners and walkers to be the extra eyes and ears within the community as they have the opportunity to spot anything out of place or suspicious while walking their dog – and report it. Because of their local knowledge, dog walkers will notice unusual or suspicious activity and anti-social behaviour.

Typically this would include:

- suspicious activity or vehicles
- graffiti and vandalism
- nuisance vehicles and speeding
- antisocial behaviour
- dog fouling
- hare-coursing
- dog-related incidents
- abandoned vehicles
- fly-tipping



Neighbourhood Watch would provide advice on crime prevention including specific advice for dog owners such as information on what to do if a dog is stolen and how to report concerns in the local community e.g., things a dog walker sees, and can report, and how to report them. Members would have access to the Neighbourhood Watch Alert System, which would update them with news and events direct from Cambridgeshire Police and Neighbourhood Watch.

Cllr Mrs Mayor thanked Mr Sutton for his update and asked if all members if they were happy to support this new initiative, all members were in favour. Mr Sutton was asked to produce some documents and come back to the council for discussion.

**CP37/2021. Public Forum.** - To allow members of the public to address the Council. Time Allowed 15 mins total.

**CP38/2021. Agenda items for discussion.**

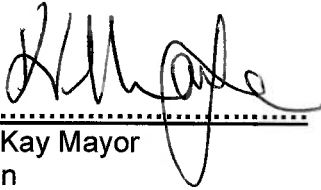
1. Green Dog Walkers and Dog Watch Scheme – This was covered under CP36/21.
2. Allotments
  - a. Waiting list – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised there were 24 people on the waiting list and three payments outstanding, the Clerk is confident the other two have now paid but has not yet completed the June bank reconciliation.
  - b. Allotment path and tree update – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised the Mares tail has been sprayed twice, the last spray being Monday evening. The Clerk was asked to chase Mr Dale to ascertain if he has carried out the works to the two trees that need removing.
  - c. Allotment Boundaries – The Western boundary of the allotments that borders Debdale and Stafford Road is overgrown and impassable in places, The Clerk was asked check who is responsible for the Boundaries, if it is the allotment holders, she will write to all who border this side of the site and request they clear the area not to extend their allotment to the fences as this should be an access route. Allotment holders should also keep the paths clear between their allotments. Members discussed asking the community payback team to cut back the hedges. The Clerk will follow up this request and report back to the Chair.
  - d. Allotment Inspections – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised members the allotments had been inspected 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Future inspections will be as detailed below, after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inspection Mrs Gill Lawrence will be asked to judge who wins the allotment award.
    1. Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July at 9.am – Cllrs Whitwell & Mockett
    2. Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 10.30 am Cllr Mockett and Mrs Windle
    3. Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> August 9.00 am Cllr Mockett & Mrs Mayor
  - e. Whittlesey Allotment & Garden Society – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised members the 'Whats App' group is beneficial for all allotment holders. A barbecue has been organised by the WAGS for 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Food is provided but people need to bring their own drink. One item which has been brought up on the App is security at the site. Cllr Mrs Mayor this is discussed at the next Community Projects Meeting.
  - f. WAGS Allotment – Cllr Mrs Mayor checked with FDC regarding the beech hedging as it was funded by donation and confirmed this could be lifted and relocated to another organisation. Members suggested that it go to Whittlesey Athletic Football Club, proposed by Cllr Whitwell, seconded by Cllr Mockett, the criteria being the football club will be responsible for lifting and relocating the hedging.
3. Sakura Cherry Tree project (Pondersbridge location) – Cllr Whitwell advised after speaking to representatives the village hall grounds were viewed as an ideal location for a Sakura tree Members. Cllr Whitwell also suggested Thornam Way or Eastrea Village Hall, the Clerk to email

a contact at the village hall and see if acceptable to have one planted in the garden of the village hall.

4. Music Events 2021 / 2022 – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised members their toilets behind The George Public House are still out of order and she is chasing FDC for a resolution prior to the music events. Cllr Mrs Mayor confirmed The Contacts have already been booked for July 2022. Cllr Mrs Windle suggested the Mr Pino Soccio from the Young Technicians be invited to the October meeting when discussions will take place regarding 2022 music festivals and what assistance they may be able to offer.

**CP39/2021 Date of next meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

**Meeting closed: 19.15.**



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Cllr Mrs Kay Mayor  
Chairman  
Community Projects Committee

