

**COMPTON ABBAS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES of**  
**MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

**In Attendance: Cllr. C McHenry (Chairman), Cllrs T Clements, S Ryan, C Owen  
M Owen and J Coupe  
M Wheatley (Clerk), Cllr. G. Carr-Jones (County Councillor)**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no Public Questions.

**MINUTES**

- 19/12/01 Apologies for absence** – There were apologies for absence from Cllr. C Langham (District Councillor).
- 19/12/02 Declarations of Interest** – There were no declarations of interest. J Coupe confirmed she would like to re-join the Parish Council and was unanimously co-opted to the Parish Council.
- 19/12/03 Approval of Minutes held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018** - The minutes had been circulated to the Councillors and were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 19/12/04 Matters arising from previous minutes that are not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda**

- a. Fingerpost** – The Chairman confirmed he had been in contact with DCC Highways who had confirmed the requirements regarding the siting of the sign. The Clerk had contacted the insurers who have confirmed that the sign would be covered by the insurance and that the premium should not be increased when this is added to the insurance. The Chairman also confirmed he had been advised that the cost of erecting the pole will be either £295.00 or £307.00 excluding VAT depending on the diameter and height of the pole required. This would need to be checked with the supplier. The above prices were based on there being clear and unrestricted access to the site with all setting out to be agreed on site before the work commences. No allowance had been made for the alteration or excavation of any buried services. This cost included standard traffic management and control, however should the classification of the road or location of the proposed site require additional traffic management i.e. Manual Stop and Go / Temporary Traffic Signals the prices would have to be adjusted to reflect these costs.

It was agreed that Cllrs Clements and McHenry would check the dimensions and confirm with Highways that the post could be erected at the corner of Chapel Hill. Assuming it was do-able Cllr. Coupe confirmed she would ask Highways whether this could be done without charge. Cllr. Coupe expressed her concern with regard to the escalating costs. The Clerk explained the tax base of the precept. This year the tax base for a band D property was £108.80 which means that an increase in the precept of £500 would mean approximately an additional £5 in Council Tax for a Band D property.

- b. Footpath by the Church** – The Chairman confirmed that there was still no news as to when the proposed works would be done. The Chairman also commented that the DCC Rangers had thought it was a good idea to erect a sign indicating where the footpath was to avoid people walking along the A350. It was agreed that the Clerk would continue to chase and would ask about the sign.
- c. Neighbourhood Plan** – The Chairman confirmed that at the last meeting a planning consultant who had been assisting Fontmell Magna with their Neighbourhood Plan had come to speak to the Parish Council. Following that discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would discuss this further at this meeting. The Chairman confirmed that

he did not think a Neighbourhood Plan was applicable to Compton Abbas. The County Councillor commented that it would require commitment from a number of people within Compton Abbas. It should also be noted that following the formation of the Unitary Authority the planning team would be working on putting together a Dorset wide Local Plan and therefore any assistance from the Unitary Council was likely to be limited. The Parish would need to find someone who was driven to work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Clements commented that he had not realised that the Parish could just have a Plan dealing with the planning issues. Funds would be available to put together a Plan dealing with just the planning issues. At the moment there was a precedent for knocking down existing buildings and replacing them with larger dwellings. This meant that there were less affordable homes in the Village. Public support for a Neighbourhood Plan was untested at present. The County Councillor commented that if what was required was affordable housing if there was some land available the Parish Council could approach the Community Land Trust who would assist with identifying potential housing associations to help develop affordable housing. The Chairman asked how many houses there were left to develop in the Village. The County Councillor confirmed that once the new Local Plan was in place things could change.

Cllr. Coupe suggested that the Parish Council should undertake a survey to ask the residents what they would like done in the Parish including whether they wanted to have a say in the way any development took place. She commented that at present the plan was to expand into the South West of Dorset. The plan was also to develop Gillingham and Shaftesbury. If there was going to be any development the healthcare and other services for the area would need to be considered. At a meeting the Business Manager for Shaftesbury Town Council had been asked whether the Town Council were going to speak to the surrounding parishes who feed into the infrastructure. It was agreed that if a survey was going to be put together it would need to be done both on-line and by way of a leaflet drop. It was agreed that the Councillors would meet in February to discuss the compilation of a survey and who would do what. Cllr. Coupe also suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held separately from the Annual Parish Council Meeting and that what the Parish wanted could be discussed more fully at that meeting. The County Councillor suggested that the Parish Council could have a look at the questionnaire prepared by Fontmell Magna for the purposes of their Neighbourhood Plan.

- d. Speed Watch** – Cllr. Clements had sent out an email asking for volunteers. 7 people had volunteered and they could use the lay-by by the Church. Training was going to take place sometime after Christmas. One of the problems was with motor cyclists. The number plates were often difficult to see. A local photographer had been approached who confirmed he could take better shots. It was also proposed to have a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss the enforcement of the speed limits. Cllr. Owen asked how effective Speed Watch was. Cllr. Clements confirmed that the Police and Crime Commissioner had confirmed that 13% of people speeding received letters and were then rarely seen to be speeding in the same place again. If someone was going 30/40 miles over the speed limit this was in any event a reportable offence. The speed camera was just additional evidence in such instances. The Speed Watch in Iwerne Minster had reduced the number of people speeding through the village especially when the team were out in their yellow jackets. On bike nights a marked police car parked in a layby would slow the traffic down. Speed Indicator signs were available and could be borrowed once the Speed Watch was up and running.
- e. Council owned farms** – The County Councillor confirmed that the Council owned farms were currently a net contributor to the DCC funds and advised that at present there were no plans to sell off farms in North Dorset.

**19/12/05 Vacancies** – Cllr Coupe having been co-opted to the Parish Council there was still one vacancy on the Parish Council.

**19/12/06 Reports from County/District Councillors** – Reports had been circulated to the Councillors. The County Councillor confirmed that the Boundary Commission proposals had now been finalised and formally adopted. He confirmed that he would not be standing for the new Beacon Ward but would be standing for the ward that included Stalbridge. At the next meeting he hoped to introduce the Parish Council to Jane Somper the candidate for the Beacon Ward who was currently a District Councillor for another ward and lives in Sutton Waldron. At present most of the work being undertaken by the District and County Councils was towards the formation of the Unitary Authority. The County Councillor was asked whether the gulf between the Unitary Authority and the Parish Council was going to be wider. The County Councillor confirmed that the intention was that the Unitary Authority Councillor would act as a conduit between the Unitary Authority and the Parishes. It had been suggested that there would be Area boards but it was not clear how effective these would be if they did not have a budget. This was something for the new Council to decide. The new term for the Unitary Authority and Parish Councils was 5 years which was a long commitment and accordingly it was expected that Councillors would be lost at every level. The Unitary Authority was a huge opportunity for Dorset but nothing was going to happen overnight – any changes would be decided by the new Authority.

**19/12/07 Finance**

- a. Bills to be paid** – It was agreed that the following bills should be paid:
- M Wheatley £315 salary for October to December 2018
  - Planning Training £35.04
  - Hire of Church Hall £100
- b. Bank account** – The Clerk confirmed that the bank and cash balance as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018 was £6289.62. which includes the £400 grant from Campaign for the Protection of Rural England for the fingerpost.
- c. Precept & Budget** –The Clerk had circulated a precept plan together with the budget for next year. The estimated balance for 2018/19 was £3370.10 which was £501.90 less than the anticipated budget balance.

The anticipated costs for the remainder of this financial year included the full cost of the fingerpost £1707.00 less £300.00 to be contributed by the Church. The figures already include the grant received from CPRE in the sum of £400.00.

Cllr. Coupe asked whether it was proposed to earmark the reserves for particular projects. The Clerk confirmed that given that the precept for Compton Abbas was so small this was not necessary. The rule of thumb was that the reserves should not be more than 1 year's precept however as the precept was so small if there was an emergency expense for example if a tree needed to be felled this would significantly reduce the reserves and accordingly it was not necessary to specifically earmark any reserves. What the Parish Council needed to decide was whether the Precept needed to be raised to meet the anticipated expenses for next year. At present the anticipated balance for 2018/19 was £3370.10.

This year there were extraordinary expenses incurred in respect of the mirror at the end of Hawkcombe Lane and in relation to the tree works in Fanner's field in the total sum of £554.74. However no grants have been made and the £150.00 budget for the play area was not used and these budget items can be vired to offset the extraordinary expenses. With regard to the fingerpost again the additional sums can be offset by the £350.00 from the reserves which was earmarked for the play area. The Parish Council will also need to contribute to the cost of the footpath up to a maximum of £150.

Cllr. Clements asked if a separate reserve of £100 could be earmarked as a contribution to the costs of the A350 Community Group expenses. It was agreed that the contingency included in the proposed budget could be split so that the general contingency was £400 and that there was a separate reserve of £100 for any such costs.

Having discussed the Precept Plan it was unanimously agreed that the Precept for 2019/20 should be increased to £3500.00.

- 19/12/08 Fanners Field** – The Chairman confirmed that the Village seemed to have lost the impetus to sort out the play area. The question was whether the play area needed to be professionally decommissioned. At present it was not clear who was using the play area and it was agreed that the question of the repair or removal of the play area should form part of the proposed survey. Cllr. Coupe commented that at present there was an asset of the Parish Council which had not been maintained and questioned whether the money put aside for the fingerpost was better used to maintain the play area. With regard to the decommissioning of the play area Cllr. Ryan confirmed that Basil Lane (who currently cuts the grass and maintains the hedges in Fanners Field) had confirmed he would be prepared to take away the equipment without charge save for the scrap value. If the Parish Council went down this route the play area would have to be left in a safe state. Cllr. Ryan had confirmed that she had taped off the play area but the tapes had been removed. The Clerk confirmed that insofar as possible the tapes should be replaced and that signs should be put up confirming that the equipment should not be used. She would supply laminated signs to be put up. There was then a discussion as to whether it was still the intention to plant a Cherry tree and buy a plaque in memory of Mrs Honour who had donated the field. It was agreed that this would be done once the plans for Fanners Field were finalised.
- 19/12/09 Planning/Tree Works** – There have been no applications which the Parish Council had been consulted on since the last meeting.
- 19/12/010 Footpaths/Rights of Way** – As above the Clerk is waiting to hear from the Rangers as to when the works on the footpath by the Church are likely to start.
- 19/12/011 Highways**
- a. Roads through Compton Abbas** – Cllr. Owen had been speaking to DCC Highways regarding the run off on Drones Lane. They have permission to go ahead with the work but to date the Parish Council had not been advised of the commencement date. It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr. Owen would continue to chase. Cllr. Coupe suggested that Rolly Skeats and Matthew Pyles of DDC Highways should be copied in on any emails.
- b. A350/C13** – The A350 Community Group had met on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Cllr. Coupe confirmed that Highways had recently been awarded additional funds and that some of the funds were being used to repair the tarmac on the rural roads round Compton Abbas and further tarmacing was going to be undertaken in the New Year. At the moment the north/south route being considered by the government was the A350 to Warminster and then A36 to Salisbury and the A338 to Bournemouth. This would hopefully take some traffic away from the A350. With regard to the A350/C13 nothing would be decided until the new Authority was in place. Works were however due to commence in January 2019 to improve the C13. Cllr. Owen commented that the route to Salisbury was not logical. Cllr. Coupe commented that DCC were responsible for the major road network and the government were responsible for the strategic road network. The strategic roads in Dorset were the A31/35 and the A303. The development of the major road networks was usually through the Local Enterprise Partnership. North Dorset currently had no representatives on the LEP but with the new Authority hopefully there would be more representatives on the LEP. Cllr. Coupe also confirmed that the A350 had a higher number of accidents than other major routes through Dorset.
- 19/12/012 Travellers** – The Clerk had written to Paula Clover the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer and had asked her to move the travellers to the agreed areas. Ms. Clover had visited the Travellers and informed them they were not on the designated stopping areas. They had replied that the designated stopping areas were too boggy for the winter months and they would not be prepared to move to them. They said if they moved the only place they would go to would be Five Bridges layby. They had only just moved from there. The locals and the Parish were not happy with them being there accordingly she had told them not to move so

soon to that location. This group of travellers constantly just ping pong from St James Common to the Five Bridges layby. Ms. Clover had commented that the obvious solution would be to find them a permanent site which would not have to be very big. She also confirmed that DCC are currently exploring various ideas including asking the County Farms for spare land. However due to the nature of the group the responses they have received so far have not been very encouraging. Ms. Clover had confirmed she would continue to monitor the group and had asked the Parish Council to contact her if there were any problems or any land suggestions. Cllr. Ryan confirmed that the travellers were parked in better places than they had been previously. Cllr. Ryan would let the Clerk know if they were any problems in the future.

**19/12/013 Correspondence/A.O.B** – The Clerk had received a communication from Healthy Homes Dorset:

**Healthy Homes Dorset** – is a service provided by Dorset County Council. Healthy Homes Dorset provide free, impartial advice about keeping your home warm, using your heating system, understanding your energy bills and making energy saving improvements – if you're eligible for loft or cavity wall insulation it will be free. They will also register you for power cut support, a handy service to be on if you experience a power cut in your area. The advice can be given through home visits as well as over the phone. Fire safety alarm and appliance checks can also be organised in partnership with Fire and Rescue for eligible residents. If you think you might benefit from this service please contact Healthy Homes Dorset on:

Phone: **0300 003 7023**

email: **help@healthyhomesdorset.org.uk**

Web: [www.healthyhomesdorset.org.uk](http://www.healthyhomesdorset.org.uk)

**19/12/014 Date of next Meeting** – The next meeting will be on 27<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm in the Church Hall. The Clerk is away from 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 she will however be monitoring the emails whilst she is away.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm

Signed.....  
Chairman

Dated.....