

**MINUTES OF THE SILTON PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE
HALL ON TUESDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2018 AT 6 P.M.**

Present: Col. Chris Woodhouse (Chairman)
Mrs Lynda Woodhouse
Mrs Diana Masters
Mr. David Masters
Mr. Hugh Honnywill
Mrs Marian Honnywill
Mr. Charles Peel
Mrs Jill Marsden
Mrs Shirley Rice
Mr. Keith Harris
Mr. George Harris
Mrs Daphne Nugent
Mr. Tom Trouton
Mrs Mary Anderson
Mrs Liz Marriot
District Councillor Peter Williams
County Councillor Andrew Cattaway

1. **Apologies:** Mr. Mike Metcalf, Mrs Michela Metcalf, Mr. David Desborough, Mrs Sandra Menzies, Mr. Ron Harris, Mrs Wendy Harris.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising:** A copy of both the minutes of the AGM held on 15th May and those of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 29th May 2018 had been emailed to all those whose email addresses are known, additionally, copies were on the chairs. It was assumed therefore that the minutes had been read. There were no matters arising and it was proposed by Mrs Liz Marriot, seconded by Mr. David Masters and unanimously agreed that they be signed as a true record.

3. **Accounts:**
 - a. The Chairman reminded the Meeting that it had been necessary to convene an Extraordinary Parish Meeting on 29th May 2018 as a new external auditor had been appointed and the rules had changed slightly. Essentially Parishes whose gross annual expenditure or gross annual income is less than £25,000 are now able to certify themselves exempt from an external audit although there is still a need to carry out a full internal audit as before.
 - b. At the Extraordinary Meeting it was agreed to claim exemption and as a result there were no comments to report from the external auditors. The Chairman informed the Meeting that it would be necessary to claim exemption each year and although this would almost always be granted there is a small chance that the

external auditors would insist on examining the accounts, for which there would be a charge.

- c. Copies of the accounts were circulated and explained by the Chairman who reported that the phone box outside the Village Hall had been repainted by Mr. Dominic Flintan at a cost of £330. This was more than his delegated powers and according to Standing Orders the Chairman asked for retrospective approval to pay this bill. He went on to say that Mr Flintan had subsequently reduced the bill to £300. It was proposed by Councillor Cattaway, seconded by Mrs Jill Marsden and unanimously agreed that the bill be paid in full. The inside of the phone box was currently decorated to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1.
- d. **Precept:** The Chairman explained that the current precept is £2,600 a year half being paid in April and half in September. Present regular annual expenditure is £1000 towards the upkeep of the Village Hall, £800 towards the upkeep of the Churchyard and some £300 for the insurance premium. It was proposed by Mrs Marian Honnywill, seconded by Mrs Lynda Woodhouse and unanimously agreed that the precept for the coming year should remain the same, at £2,600. It was also agreed that the same sums continue to be paid to the Village Hall and the Church.

4. Planning Applications: There had been no applications since the last meeting.

5. Highways Matters:

- a. The Chairman reported that any alteration to the present speed limit on Church Road would need a Traffic Regulation Order which he had submitted in May. This had been considered by Dorset County Council which had scored the request at 74 out of a possible 310 and would cost £4-5,000 for a feasibility study and new signs to be installed. They also indicated that there would be little or no chance of this being funded by DCC. Having circulated parishioners with these details in August the Chairman had received an unanimous instruction not to go ahead.
- b. The Chairman also reported on a meeting with Mr. Roger Bell, Highways Officer, and Ms Vicky Biggs, Community Police Officer, to discuss various Highways matters raised at the last Meeting. Actions agreed were:
 - (1) Additional SLOW signs to be painted on the road leading from Bourton are in hand.
 - (2) Treatment to the bend on the road adjacent to Lower Silton and Silton Lodge to make it less slippery has been completed.
 - (3) The possibility of siting Speed Indicator Devices along the road has been escalated within DCC is still awaiting a decision. Councillor Peter Williams pointed out that they only work to a specific speed limit, which in Silton would be 60 mph. Their utility therefore could be difficult to justify and the cost would be around £3,000.

- (4) Additional bollards to be installed outside Foxford Cottage to help protect the verge and the house – this work is complete.
- (5) SLOW signs to be painted on the road at the junction of Church Road and Grimsey Lane and possibly at the junction of Church Road and Dunns Lane have not yet been completed.

6. Allotments:

- a. The Chairman reported on the Annual Allotment Meeting on 10th March, attended by 15-20 people. All 44 plots are currently rented out at £10 per plot per year and there is a small waiting list. £505 had been taken in rental fees; £440 for the current year and £65 for the previous year. The Allotment Inspection took place on 19th August 2018.
- b. There had been a fire on the allotments in August when a compost bin had burst into spontaneous combustion and this had spread to another 5 bins. Fortunately, one of the allotment holders had been on site when the fire started and had raised the alarm. The fire brigade from Mere had attended and put out the fire and very kindly left sufficient water to tackle any further problems, which fortunately had not arisen.
- c. Mr. Tom Trouton thanked Mr. Keith Harris for all the work he does supporting the allotments, mowing, hedge cutting etc. and the Chairman for going to the allotments when he himself does not have the time.
- d. Mr. Charles Peel enquired as to responsibility for the maintenance of the track to the allotments and was informed that as it was a bridleway it was DCC. Mr. Trouton did not think the condition of the road had worsened in the last twelve months, but that it did need some scalplings put down. Councillor Cattaway said that Mr. Roger Bell was the man to contact and that there should be scalplings available at the depot.

7. Village Hall Field:

- a. The Chairman reported that there had been a successful Cub Scout camp in the summer using the field and shelter for which Mr. Keith Harris had kindly loaned his portable toilet block.
- b. Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks also paid for the occasional use of the field for her personal dog training and had informed Mrs Marian Honnywill that other dog owners had expressed an interest to doing likewise.
- c. Mrs Marian Honnywill informed the Meeting that the field has already been booked for a wedding in 2019.
- d. Mr. Keith Harris had googled Rent-a-Field and wondered if the Silton field should be registered at a possible cost of around £100.

8. Data Protection Officer:

- a. The Chairman reported on an amendment currently with the House of Lords to exempt Parish Councils and Parish Meetings from the necessity of appointing a

Data Protection Officer. Meanwhile compliance has to be made with the rest of the GDPR requirements.

9. Parish Footpaths:

- a. The Chairman reported that the kissing gate adjacent to Silton Mill had been repaired by the landowner.
- b. He reported that the footpath map showing Footpath N70/10 which joins Church Road between Anstey and 1 Taylor Hayes will be corrected when the Definitive Map Modification Order is completed. At that stage the location of the stile/gate will be known which is likely to be where the current 5 bar gate is located. It will be the land owner's responsibility to maintain the stile or gate.
- c. The footbridge over the River Stour on Dunns Lane was currently being replaced and should be completed by 16th November. Until that time the ford is closed to all traffic.

10. Himalayan Balsam.

- a. The Chairman reported that Mr. Mike Burroughs who was to take over the coordination of the clearance of Himalayan Balsam in the Parish had been unable to undertake these duties this year due to commitments in London. Additionally, the Chairman had been unable to cover due to a shoulder operation and so little of the balsam was cleared this year.
- b. It was thought that there had been much less than in previous years by those landowners who had cleared their own areas, however, it is clear that a major effort will be required next year,
- c. Mrs Mary Anderson warned that she had contracted a nasty allergy to the pollen from the Himalayan Balsam which had caused serious blistering and soreness.

11. Commonwealth Day 11th March 2019:

- a. It was agreed that this should be marked again – about 30 people had gathered in the churchyard last March - before retiring to the church for a glass of bubbles or a coffee.
- b. It was recommended that Canon Peter Greenwood be asked to officiate.

12. Broadband:

- a. Councillor Peter Williams was asked to report on a meeting that had been held in the Village Hall on 9th July 2018 to review the situation as it affects Silton. This meeting also considered options to improve broadband provision throughout the village. Councillor Williams informed the Meeting that the current situation, based on evidence from the meeting held last July, and subsequent developments provided the following options:
 - (1) Option 1. BT/Openreach provides copper wire based broadband. This is the means of broadband service provision for the majority of Silton residents. Based on the experiences of Mr Tom Trouton and Mr Keith Harris (before he switched to Wessex Internet), current provision appears to provide 10mbps - 14mbps download speeds. This may be adequate for many residents, however, experience suggests

that the level of service provision fluctuates depending on the level of demand elsewhere.

(2) Option 2. BT/Openreach provide Fibre-To-The-Premises (FTTP).

- (a) The FTTP fibre cable in question is linked to the Bourton cabinet (East). It is serving Foxford Cottage and Bagmore Farmhouse and is available to others close to Bagmore Farm (etc.). This delivers Superfast broadband provision with download speeds of around 70 mbps.
- (b) A spur emerges from this fibre cable to service Waterloo Lane. This has the ability to provide FTTP provision to Wyndham Farm and Waterloo Mill although neither Mrs Mary Anderson nor Mr Mike Burroughs have elected to avail themselves of this facility yet. (Mrs Mary Anderson said that in her case this was because she could not get a realistic price from BT.)
- (c) This fibre cable currently ends at the bridge by Waterloo Mill. Mr Keith Harris has been engaged with BT/Openreach with a view to the latter extending this fibre cable to Wyndham House. A few months ago they assured him that installation would commence on 4 July 2018 but nothing has happened yet.
- (d) This is regrettable as this is probably the key to unlocking FTTP to residents living on Church Road. Assuming consent from respective land-owners can be obtained the solution envisaged would entail self-help trenching across land owned by Mr Keith Harris and Mr Hugh Honnywill to extend the Waterloo Lane fibre cable from Wyndham House across to Church Road. Once there, it should be possible to roll-out FTTP provision to all dwellings along Church Road by stringing fibre cable from existing telegraph poles.
- (e) Although take-up by residents will undoubtedly be patchy, it would mean that a Superfast service would be available to all. This would be of comfort to any residents contemplating selling their properties in the future as a good broadband service will be an essential requirement for many prospective purchasers.

(3) Option 3. Wessex Internet - Microwave-based provision.

- (a) Mr Keith Harris switched to Wessex Internet over a year ago to secure an adequate broadband service. This is being provided via microwave which is delivering a very stable 30 mbps download speed. The new occupants of Valhalla have also signed up for this service, as have residents of Church Cottage. The microwave signal is being received by all three properties direct from the Wessex Internet antenna at Shaftesbury.
 - (b) Unfortunately, profusion of trees complicates system architecture, hence this option has its limitations in relation to more extensive roll-out of microwave-based broadband along Church Road.
- (4) The current optimum solution for residents seeking Superfast provision (who do not have FTTP fibre running past their homes already) would appear to be an extension of the Waterloo Lane fibre cable, via community self-help, from Wyndham House to Church Road.
- (5) Councillor Williams recommended that Silton residents agitate with BT/ Openreach and with Dorset Superfast (based in Dorchester) to press for access to Superfast broadband throughout Silton.

13. Local Government Reorganisation:

- a. The Chairman reported that the new Dorset Council will come into existence on 1st April 2019 and presently both our Councillors are members of the Shadow Dorset Council. However, this does not mean they will automatically become members of the new Council as elections for these posts will be held on 2nd May 2019.
- b. New electoral ward boundaries are being created, and the final recommendations by the Boundary Commission which were published last month, indicate only 82 new councillors being elected next May, down from about 230, with only 3 in the Gillingham Ward. However, representatives have to come to all Parish Meetings and Councillor Cattaway said that he would prepare a list of people to lean on to ensure this continues to happen.

14. Clinical Commissioning Group Consultation:

- a. The Chairman reported that the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group had changed its mind last September and recommended that the 15 beds at the Shaftesbury Memorial Hospital remain in being largely as a result of the pressure they came under during the public consultation period.
- b. However, it is clear that the future of the buildings themselves in Shaftesbury cannot be guaranteed indefinitely as more than one person has declared that they are approaching their sell-by date and the long-term future is therefore doubtful.
- c. The Chair of the Shaftesbury Hospital Working Group has stated that there is a need to focus on the long-term sustainability of beds in Shaftesbury to ensure we retain an NHS-run community hospital in this rural area. The problem has not gone away therefore, it has merely been postponed.

15. Parish Website:

- a. The Chairman reported that the website is now up and running, it looks very good and will prove to be extremely useful in the future. Mr. Mike Metcalf is the web master and all requests and queries should be directed to him at admin@siltonvillage.co.uk.
- b. In September Mr. Metcalf was approached by the Woodland Trust and informed that the Wyndham Oak had been shortlisted as one of only 10 trees in England to be Tree of the Year for 2018. The website was used extensively to get this information out for public voting and the Wyndham Oak was placed 3rd in the order of merit in England with £500 being awarded towards its upkeep. The prize money will be under the control of the nominator of the tree and it was thought that a fence around the tree to stop sheep rubbing on it would be appropriate.
- c. Mr. Hugh Honnywill wondered why the memorial to Judge Wyndham had been removed from Sherborne Abbey. Councillor Cattaway suggested Canon Bede Cooper might make enquiries. Apparently a statue of Lord Digby had been put in its place.

16. 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day 11th November 2018:

- a. The Chairman ran through arrangements for this event. Mr & Mrs Harris had kindly allowed the use of their barn at Manor Farm for this celebration and parking would be on hard standing around the farm, with people being encouraged to share cars where possible. The BBQ would be ready to serve food and the bar opened at 5 p.m. The Last Post would be sounded at 6.55 p.m. and the Beacon lit at 7 p.m. Shortly afterwards the church bells would ring out a peal coordinated by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.
- b. As for the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations, pupils from Milton on Stour Primary School had been asked to take part in a simple competition, the winner of which, Lily Hacker, will actually light the beacon and her entry will be displayed at the Beacon Party for all to see.
- c. A small financial loss had been made at the previous Beacon Party so a small charge will be made for both food and drinks this time with a view to breaking even.
- d. It was not possible to determine how many people would turn up so the organisers were catering for between 150 and 200.

17. Any other Business:

- a. Copies of a Royal Mail circular on the problem of Scam Mail were circulated.
- b. Mud on Church Road.
 - (1) There had been two complaints this year regarding mud on the road at the junction of Church Road and Grimsey Lane caused by cattle crossing the road. The Chairman had spoken to Mr. George Harris and Mr. Tom Malleson, and he had been assured that with a new herd manager in post, it would be swept up as soon as possible and usually by 10 a.m. Mr Harris informed the Meeting that with winter approaching it is unlikely that there would be a need for the cattle to cross the road again for some time.
 - (2) The Chairman reminded the Meeting that if there was an accident at this junction and there was mud on the road the Police would almost certainly regard this as a contributory factor. Mr. George Harris thought that an accident would probably be caused by speed, particularly in the case of young drivers. He also pointed out that there are signs warning of "Mud" on the road and SLOW signs painted on the road itself
 - (3) Mrs Daphne Nugent produced as copy of a cutting from the Blackmore Vale Magazine, "Police Warning to Muddy Farmers". A copy of this article is reproduced as an annex to the minutes for information.

18. There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Annex A to Minutes of the Silton Parish Meeting held on 6 November 2018

Police Warning to Muddy Farmers

1. Dorset Police are warning farmers and contractors to make sure they clear mud off roads – or they could have to pay out.
2. The responsibility lies with the landowners to ensure they, or anyone acting on their behalf, clear roads after farming.
3. Hazard warning signs should be positioned to give maximum warning to all road users and flashing amber beacons should be used on all agricultural vehicles.
4. A Police spokesman said failure to clean roads properly could compromise insurance policies in the event of a third party claim.
5. Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980 gives the Highways Authority the power to clean roads and recover the cost from however caused the obstruction.