

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 14TH
MAY 2019 AT 6 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Col. Chris Woodhouse (Chairman)
Mrs Lynda Woodhouse
Mrs Diana Masters
Mr David Masters
Mr Hugh Honnywill
Mrs Marian Honnywill
Mrs Jill Marsden
Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks (part time)
Mr Bob Waltham-Weeks (part time)
Mr Mike Metcalf
Mrs Michela Metcalf
Mrs Rita Showering
Mr Keith Harris
Mrs Wendy Harris
Mr Ronald Harris
County Councillor Val Potheary

1. Mrs Adrienne Kimber.

- 1.1 There was a moment's reflection to remember Mrs Adrienne Kimber who died two weeks ago and whose funeral had taken place the previous day. Many remembered that her husband, Robert, was Chairman of the Silton Parish Meeting from 1982 until 1994.

2. Welcome.

- 2.1 The Chairman welcomed Mrs Val Potheary, one of the 3 new Dorset Councillors for the Gillingham Ward, the other two being Mr David Walsh and Mrs Belinda Rideout.

3. Apologies.

- 3.1 Mr Tom Trouton, Mrs Liz Marriot, Mrs Sandra Menzies, Mr David Desborough, Mr Charles Peel, Mrs Jenny Peel, Mrs Angela Ward and Mrs Mary Anderson.

4. Election of Chairman.

- 4.1 There being no others wishing to stand, Mrs Diana Masters proposed that Col. Chris Woodhouse be re-elected as Chairman for the coming year. This was seconded by Mrs Jill Marsden and unanimously agreed. Mr David Masters expressed grateful thanks to him for all his hard work and diligence.

5. Village Hall Field.

- 5.1 The Chairman introduced Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks and Mr Bob Waltham-Weeks reminding the meeting of their time hiring the field to train people's dogs until a couple of years ago. Since then two Cub Scout camps have been held on the field and it is hoped to make even more use of it for wedding receptions and other social events. Mrs Marian Honeywill confirmed that a wedding is being planned using the Village Hall, the shelter and the field in June. The Chairman pointed out that it was therefore in everyone's interest to keep the field clean and well maintained and he drew attention to the fact that Mr Keith Harris has now mown the whole field rather than just part of it in support of this.
- 5.2 The Chairman went on to say that a few months ago Mrs Marilyn Clatworthy of 2 Stroud Common, one of the bungalows next to the Village Hall, had emailed him saying that the field is regularly used by dog walkers, as many as half a dozen every day, and so far as she knows none lived in the village. Worse still, not everyone cleared up after their dogs had used the field.
- 5.3 The Chairman added that a couple of months ago he had been contacted by Dorset Council to see if we wanted to display any "dog fouling" notices in the village. He had emailed all those in the village for whom he had email addresses and it was agreed that notices were needed at both the allotments and at the Village Hall Field and these notices are now up. These are official notices and their presence puts the onus on dog owners to clear up after their dogs where necessary. Now the notices are on display, failure to comply could lead to prosecution.
- 5.4 The Chairman distributed a draft notice that Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks had prepared for the use of the field by dog walkers. These guidelines would apply to everyone using the field even those who live in the village. Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks had agreed to be the Dog Warden although the Chairman used this term loosely as the need is to educate dog owners not initiate confrontation. He asked Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks to explain what she thought might be possible.
- 5.5 Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks explained the draft notice and said she would operate as Warden through a special mobile phone number that people could use to make enquiries and obtain a permit. For dog walkers who are not residents of Silton it was suggested that an annual donation of £20 would be appropriate, Silton residents would not be required to pay. They would then be given a copy of the guidelines and their details; name, address, car registration number etc recorded. They would also be provided with a permit which should be displayed on their car dashboard when using the field. She also demonstrated an improvised bag dispenser for the use of dog owners who had not brought their own to clear up after their dogs and this is now available for use in the shelter.
- 5.6 Mr Keith Harris suggested that permits should be run for a full calendar year, starting each January, and that use of the top end of the field be encouraged. Mrs Marian Honeywell suggested that for the remainder of this year it should be run for just half the year.
- 5.7 It was proposed by Mr Keith Harris, seconded by Mr. Hugh Honeywell, and unanimously agreed that Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks be elected Warden and the draft notice be adopted as attached. Mr. David Masters expressed many thanks to Mrs Nicky Waltham-Weeks for preparing the notice and taking on the role.

6 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising.

- 6.1 A copy of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th November 2018 had been emailed to all those whose email addresses were known, a copy was on the Village website and copies were distributed to the Meeting. The Chairman did not read them out as he assumed everyone would have had the opportunity to read them. There were no matters arising that were not included on the agenda.
- 6.2 It was proposed by Mr David Masters, seconded by Mr Mike Metcalf and unanimously agreed that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record.

7 Accounts.

- 7.1 The Chairman reminded the Meeting that last year there had to be an Extraordinary Parish Meeting on 29th May to determine whether or not the Parish wished to certify itself exempt from having an external audit carried out. This was due to new regulations coming into force and a new external auditor being appointed.
- 7.2 He explained that the criteria for being able to claim exemption from an external audit is that the Parish's gross income or expenditure is less than £25,000. Last year the Extraordinary Meeting voted to certify the Parish exempt and following an explanation of the accounts the Chairman would ask for this to be voted on again this year.
- 7.3 He explained that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return would still have to be completed but only the Certificate of Exemption need be submitted to the external auditors, not the whole Return. The advantage of this is that if the parish requested a limited assurance review by the external auditors it would automatically incur a bill for £200 plus VAT but if it was decided to exempt the Parish it would cost nothing.
- 7.4 The Chairman explained that there are essentially 4 elements to the accounts that need to be voted on:
- a. The Certificate of Exemption on page 3 which has to be agreed by the Meeting and signed by both the Chairman and by the Responsible Financial Officer, Mr Rob Dyer. Mr Dyer has already signed the original document.
 - b. The Annual Internal Audit Report has been carried out by Col. John Houchin who has satisfied himself that we comply with the relevant financial procedures and controls. His signature is on page 4.
 - c. The Annual Governance Statement has been completed by the Chairman but needs the Meeting's approval that a sound system of internal control is in place. This is on page 5.
 - d. The Accounting Statement is on page 6 and is a summary of the income and expenditure incurred by the Parish during the last 12 months. This has been audited by Col. John Houchin, found to be correct and agreed by Mr Rob Dyer.
- 7.5 Copies of the accounts were distributed and explained by the Chairman and comments were invited.
- 7.6 Approval was then sought for each of the 4 elements in para 7.4:
- a. The Certificate of Exemption – Mr David Masters proposed, Mrs Marian Honnywill seconded and it was unanimously agreed.
 - b. The Annual Internal Audit report – Mr Mike Metcalf proposed, Mrs Rita Showering seconded and it was unanimously agreed.

- c. The Annual Governance Statement – Mr Hugh Honnywill proposed, Mrs Lynda Woodhouse seconded and it was unanimously agreed.
- d. The Accounting Statement – Mrs Jill Marsden proposed, Mr Hugh Honnywill seconded and it was unanimously agreed.

8 Election of Responsible Financial Officer.

- 8.1 Mr Rob Dyer is willing to stand for re-election if nominated. There being no other nominations it was proposed by Mrs Jill Marsden, seconded by Mrs Michela Metcalf and unanimously agreed that Mr Rob Dyer be re-elected.

9 Risk Assessment.

- 9.1 This was updated by Mr Keith Harris, Mr Tom Trouton and the Chairman on 31st March 2019 and copies were distributed. It was proposed by Mr David Masters that the register was a true reflection of the risks within the Village, seconded by Mrs Marian Honnywill and unanimously adopted.

10 Assets Register

- 10.1 The Chairman explained that the Assets Register includes the Village Hall field shelter, the telephone box and also a projector, screen and the necessary electrical connectors for the projector. As seen in the accounts he had paid £25 for the projector and screen and £36.95 for the necessary connectors to make it work from a laptop. On the plus side £20 of that outlay had already been recovered by hiring it out to the Society of Friends of Silton (SOFOS) for the recent presentation by Col. John Blashford Snell in Bourton Village Hall and it is available for anyone in the village or indeed elsewhere to hire also.
- 10.2 Mr Hugh Honnywill said that he had an overhead projector that anyone could use for free. Mr Keith Harris felt that although the phone box had only cost £1 it's value was far greater and Mr David Masters commented that if there was an insurance claim affecting the phone box, the Assets Register should show its actual value. The Chairman said that he would look into this.

11 Precept

- 11.1 The precept for next year was discussed. It currently it stands at £2600 annually, £1300 paid every 6 months. The last increase, of £200 per year, was approved at the AGM in 2016.
- 11.2 As was seen from the accounts, annual payments are made to the Village Hall of £1000, to the PCC £800 for the upkeep of the church yard and some £300 for the Parish insurance premium. The Chairman asked if the precept needed to be increased and invited comments on the basis that approximately only £600 was left at the end of each year. This was discussed.
- 11.3 During discussion Mrs Diana Masters asked if would be possible for someone to be contracted to spray the grass that grows in the kerb on the road leading from Bourton. Mr David Masters said that owing to ongoing clearance work in the churchyard it was likely that an increase in the amount given to the church towards upkeep may be requested in the future as there would be a subsequent increase in maintenance work. The Chairman agreed to investigate the cost of spraying the grass in the kerbs and noted the possible increase in the amount given for the upkeep of the church yard. However, it was unanimously agreed that the precept remain unchanged.

12 Planning applications and correspondence.

- 12.1 Application to install solar panels at Lower Silton. This was approved on 5th February 2019 and construction is now underway.
- 12.2 Application to build a single storey extension and sun room and a detached garage and workshop at Brookacre Barn in Waterloo Lane. No complaints had been received from those living near the proposed dwelling and agreement was passed to Dorset Council on 10th May 2019.

13 Highways Matters.

- 13.1 The Chairman has spoken to the Highways representative, Mr Roger Bell, who informed him that they will be adding new SLOW signs in the area of Fitz Farm shortly. He was also chasing up the need to repaint the lines where they have faded and will let them know when he has more information.
- 13.2 The Highways Department has already been marking the road in this area prior to some repairs being carried out and it was reported that some of the work had been done that day.

14 Allotments.

- 14.1 The Chairman reported that the annual allotment meeting was held on 9th March 2019 with about 50% of allotment holders in attendance. A major outcome of that meeting was that a new Deputy Warden, Mr John Bilby, was appointed to take over from Mr Mike Suter.
- 14.2 There are 44 plots in total and presently all bar one are rented out at £10 per plot per year. As seen in the accounts more than £500 in rental fees was taken last year and Mr Tom Trouton has been busy extracting this year's fees, totalling £430.
- 14.3 The annual inspection will take place on 11th August 2019.
- 14.4 The Chairman reported that all the horse manure was now finished and asked if anyone knew of a new source that could be used. Mr Keith Harris agreed that he would be able to haul the manure to the allotments provided it was not too far away.

15 Data Protection Officer.

- 15.1 The Chairman reported that it has now been confirmed that Parish Meetings do not have to appoint a Data Protection Officer. However, the Meeting is still subject to data protection legislation and must ensure that it has sufficient resources to discharge its obligations under GDPR.

16 Footpaths.

- 16.1 The Chairman reported that the new foot bridge over the river on Dunns Lane is now fully operational.
- 16.2 The Chairman had been in correspondence with Mr Andrew Martin, the late Mr Gerald Martin's son, about the footpath that runs between Ansty and 1 Taylor Hayes, footpath N70/10. To clarify the situation, Mr Graham Stanley, the Senior Ranger for Dorset, has confirmed that the reason there is an issue over this footpath is that there was a drafting error when the original footpath was diverted, presumably when Taylor Hayes was built, and the map does not show

where the footpath joins Church Road. This will be corrected when the Definitive Map Modification Order is amended.

16.3 Mr Stanley has also recommended that the footpath should end with a self-closing pedestrian gate adjacent to the field gate that could then be kept locked to prevent unwanted vehicle access. This proposed location corresponds with the location of the footpath sign on the ground at present. The one point of which the Chairman had not been fully aware until recently is that the maintenance of any gate or stile on a public right of way is the responsibility of the landowner, even if Dorset Council agrees to supply the gate or stile and to install it.

16.4 The Chairman had no other updates on the state of footpaths and invited any comments.

17 Himalayan Balsam

17.1 Due to a number of issues last year there had been no coordinated attack on Himalayan Balsam last summer in the village. The Chairman feared that there could be quite a large task ahead this year although a cursory look around last week revealed little or no evidence of it so far.

18 Commonwealth Day

18.1 This was celebrated on 11 March 2019 and in common with all the other celebrants across the Commonwealth the Flag was raised at 10.00 a.m. that morning on the church tower. The Chairman read out the message from the Commonwealth Secretary General and the Rev Tim Heaton read out the Commonwealth Affirmation. With the permission of the PCC everyone then retired into the church out of the wind and celebrated with a glass of bubbles and coffee. Some 25 people attended the service.

18.2 There are pictures of the ceremony on the Village website.

19 Broadband.

19.1 The Chairman reported that for some time Mr David Desborough had been trying to improve the state of our broadband coverage, particularly on Church Road. In February he had emailed all those living on Church Road and beyond, giving details of where he had got to with the various options available; a Community Based FTP project, County funding, Vodaphone, Wessex Internet etc.

19.2 However, what is abundantly clear is that if any headway is to be made at all the Village needs a Broadband Champion, someone who can co-ordinate all the options, liase with the various customers and suppliers and advise on the way ahead. Mr Desborough has now decided he can no longer devote any more time to this and to date the Chairman has not identified anyone else on Church Road to take on this task and no one at the meeting volunteered.

19.3 The Chairman threw the subject open to the floor for comments.

20 Local Government Reorganisation.

20.1 The Chairman reported that the new Dorset Council went live on 1st April 2019 and the local elections were held on 2nd May 2019. Of the original 230 councillors only 82 were elected, 3 of whom will be representing Gillingham Ward, Mrs Val Potheary, Mrs Belinda Rideout and Mr David Walsh.

20.2 Mrs Potheary reported that there was not much to say at this stage; the first full Council Meeting was to be the next day when a new Leader, Chairman and Cabinet would be elected. She said it was an exciting time and she was hopeful that the whole culture would be good, right from the beginning, with not too much politics so they could get on with things for the benefit of the community.

21 Clinical Commissioning Group Consultation.

21.1 The Chairman had nothing further to report about the future of Westminster Memorial Hospital in Shaftsbury.

22 Parish Website.

22.1 The Chairman reported that the website is now up and running and looking good. He hoped much more information would be posted on it in the future.

22.2 Mr Mike Metcalf is the Web Master and all requests and queries should be directed to him at admin@siltonvillage.co.uk. and he encouraged people to submit items. He said the pages were fairly basic at the moment owing to the astronomical cost of improving them, but that his daughter, Natasha, had some new gismos on her Lyme Disease charity website that might be able to be transferred to improve the look of it. Mr Metcalf welcomed any suggestions for improvement.

23 The Battle's Over.

23.1 The Chairman reported that on 11th November 2018, the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1 was celebrated by the lighting of a beacon and a BBQ party at Manor Farm. Joined by Milton on Stour the event was open to all residents, their friends and families.

23.2 Some 200+ people of all ages attended the evening and the beacon was lit by Lilly Hacker who had won the competition set for Milton on Stour School and the Last Post was played brilliantly on the trumpet by Mr Tom Malleson. In addition the church bells were rung as the beacon was lit as part of a synchronised national peal organised by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.

23.3 Thanks were expressed to both Sue and Keith Harris for hosting the event at their home and for all their work in making such a success of the evening.

23.4 The Chairman drew attention to having already been asked if Silton would light their beacon again on 8th May 2020 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Comments were invited.

23.5 It was agreed that the Village should participate and details will be agreed in due course.

24 DAPTC AGM.

24.1 The Chairman had attended this meeting in November last year because he had requested that Parish Meeting Chairmen be provided with their own copy of their Parish Electoral Register. Currently Parish Meetings are not permitted to be given a copy of their own Parish Register for rather obscure reasons which can lead to confusion when a motion is put to the vote at a Meeting.

24.2 He reminded the Meeting that only parishioners whose names appear on the Parish Register may vote at a Parish Meeting but if the Chairman does not have a copy of the Register he cannot be sure who might be eligible to vote.

24.3 However he was recently informed that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) will lobby for this change and the information he had submitted would be added to their case.

25 Litter.

25.1 The Chairman stated that from time to time the roads through the village and the “main” road between Bourton and Milton on Stour in particular are disfigured by litter, probably thrown out of cars. Currently there is no policy as to how to deal with this and he wondered if there should be one.

25.2 One possible solution that had been suggested to him was that parishioners “own” a section of the road and clear up that section whenever necessary. Alternatively litter picking parties could be organised, as other villages do, possibly once a month or every other month but clearly that had its draw backs if the road is littered just after it had been cleared.

25.3 The Meeting decided that a DIY policy be adopted and the Chairman agreed to propose areas that would be “owned” by members of the Parish.

26 Any other Business.

26.1 3 Taylor Hayes:

a. The Chairman reported that on 20th April 2019 a bunch of “hoodlums” from the village gathered at 3 Taylor Hayes to cut a hedge for Mr Paul and Mrs Heather Nugent and that there were pictures on the village website showing before and after. He thought that it would be agreed that a considerable difference had been made and thanked all those involved.

26.2 2 Stroud Common:

a. On 3rd March 2019 a select group from the village put up a 6 foot fence to separate the back gardens of the cottages at Stroud Common to afford some privacy for Mrs Marilyn Clatworthy. For some time she has been frightened by the attitude of her neighbour and was afraid to even go in her back garden. Hopefully the fence will now give her the privacy she requires.

b. The Chairman said he mentioned these incidents specifically, firstly to publicly thank all those who had given up their time and energy on both these occasions and particularly to thank Mr Keith Harris who provided much of the equipment and materials to enable these tasks to be carried out.

26.3 Speed Restriction Notices.

a. The Chairman pointed out that speed restriction notices on waste bins are not supported by the Dorset Waste Partnership, nor by the police. Additionally, the bins are the property of DWP and from time to time they are moved around which causes area specific notices on the bins to be unhelpful.

b. He said that the bottom line is “Don’t do it”.

26.4 Any Other Business from the Floor:

- a. Mr David Masters reported that when he had been Church Warden he had been a Trustee of the charity owning the part of the Village Hall field nearest the road and including the car park of the Village Hall, as had been Mr Edwin Harris when he was Churchwarden. Now he had retired as Church Warden he had drawn up a Deed of Retirement and Appointment to enable Col. Peter Williams to take over his trusteeship together with the Chairman and this had been duly signed and completed.
- b. Back in 1974 when the land had been acquired those organisations that were specifically entitled to use of the field included the PCC, the Parish Meeting, the Cricket Club, the Football Club, the Archery Club and the WI, of which currently only the PCC and Parish Meeting are still in existence.
- c. Mr. Hugh Honnywill informed the Meeting that originally it had not necessarily been a requirement for one of the Trustees to be a Church Warden but this had developed over time.
- d. Mr Keith Harris thanked the Parish for their contribution of funds towards the Village Hall.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.17 p.m.