

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY PARISH MEETING HELD REMOTELY BY
ZOOM DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC SECOND LOCKDOWN, ON
TUESDAY 10TH NOVEMBER AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Col. Chris Woodhouse (Chairman)
Mrs Lynda Woodhouse
Mrs Diana Masters
Mr David Masters
Mr Keith Harris
Mr Rob Dyer
Mrs Jackie Dyer
Mr Mike Metcalf
Mrs Michela Metcalf
Mr Mike Hall
Mrs Sarah Hall
Mr Bernie Paul
Mrs Sarah Paul
Mr Charles Peel } part time
Mrs Jenny Peel }
Col. Peter Williams (Zoom Host)

1. Apologies.

- 1.1 There were no apologies for absence received.
- 1.2 The Chairman apologised for calling the meeting so soon after the last one which was held on 5th August 2020. He explained that his and Lynda's personal circumstances had changed since then and they had put their house on the market for sale.
- 1.3 Once it had sold they will be moving away from Silton, possibly to the Salisbury area, although that is not yet confirmed, and it would not be possible for him to carry on as Chairman. The principal purpose of the meeting therefore was to elect a new Chair.
- 1.4 As there was a quorum present it was also an opportunity to update those present on a number of other matters relating to the village and take a vote on a number of important issues.

2. Conduct of Meeting.

- 2.1 The procedure was very similar to the last virtual meeting on 5th August. Apart from the Chairman and Diana Masters, who would be recording decisions made, everyone else was muted initially with questions and comments being able to be made at the end of the meeting. During the

course of the meeting there were requirements to vote on a number of motions and at each stage the Chairman asked for a proposer and a seconder and for a show of hands both for and against.

3. Election of Chair.

- 3.1 When the Chairman first informed people on 5th September that a new Chairman would be needed to be elected he had asked for nominations.
- 3.2 Only one person had agreed to take over, if elected, but before it was put to the vote he asked if there were any other volunteers to take over this really quite enjoyable and not very onerous post.
- 3.3 There was no response and he confirmed that Jackie Dyer had agreed to stand as Chair of Silton Parish Meeting, and would take over if elected.
- 3.4 This was proposed by Mike Hall, seconded by Mike Metcalf and unanimously carried.
- 3.5 The Chairman then handed over to the new Chairman of the Parish to complete the meeting as detailed in the agenda.
- 3.6 Jackie Dyer thanked the meeting and she expressed the hope that she could continue the work of Chris Woodhouse who had put a great many things in place. She thanked him for all he had done during the time of his chairmanship.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting.

- 4.1 A copy of the minutes had already been emailed to all those whose email addresses were known at the time. There was to be an opportunity to discuss any matters arising not included on the agenda later during the open session.

5. Accounts.

- 5.1 A copy of the accounts had been circulated by email together with the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda. The accounts could be seen to be in a healthy situation with some £12,250 in credit in the bank.
- 5.2 Traditionally the Parish Meeting provides annual payments of £1,000 to the Village Hall and £900 to the PCC as a contribution towards the upkeep of the graveyard. It was proposed by Diana Masters, seconded by Bernie Hall and unanimously agreed to continue with these payments.

6. Appointment of the Parish Responsible Financial Officer.

- 6.1 The new Chairman explained that as she had now been elected as Chair of the Parish Meeting it would be no longer appropriate that her husband Rob Dyer to continue as the Parish Responsible Financial Officer.
- 6.2 Bernie Hall has kindly agreed to take over this appointment, subject to being elected. Other volunteers to take over this post were invited to come forward but none did.
- 6.3 It was proposed by Rob Dyer, seconded by Chris Woodhouse and unanimously agreed that Bernie Hall be appointed as the Parish Responsible Financial Officer.

7. Allotments.

- 7.1 Tom Trouton, the Allotment Warden had now moved to Castle Cary which makes it impractical for him to carry on as Warden.
- 7.2 An Allotments meeting was held on 20th October to determine the way forward and the following appointments were made: John Bilby will take over as Warden from Tom Trouton for at least a year, possibly two, and he will then hand over to Bernie Paul who has expressed an interest in taking an allotment once he has moved house.
- 7.3 To provide continuity throughout this period Kevin Lane who has had one of the allotments at Silton for the last few years has taken up the post as Deputy Warden.
- 7.4 Thanks were recorded to Tom Trouton for all the work he had put into managing the allotments for the last 5 years. When he took over as Allotment Warden the income from the allotments was less than £40 a year, it is now more than £400, a tenfold increase.

8. Footpaths.

8.1 Doctors' Surgery Footpath

- 8.1.1 The Chairman reported that the "A Team" who had cleared the footpath leading to the Doctor's surgery on 10th October had done a fantastic job which should keep the footpath open for at least 12 months.
- 8.1.2 This had been noted by Graham Stanley, the Senior Ranger for this part of Dorset and he had already tasked his Rangers with clearing the Fantley Lane footpath on both sides of the A303, a job that was long overdue.
- 8.1.3 The "A Team" comprised Keith Harris, Bernie Paul and Bernie Hall, Mike Metcalf and Mike Hall, Peter Williams, Rob Dyer, Chris Woodhouse and Ken Downie from Milton.

8.2 Manor Farm

8.2.1 The Chairman pointed out that should anyone use any of the footpaths across Manor Farm in the next few months they may well come across notices stating that a “Landowner Deposit” has been applied for.

8.2.2 This has been done to prevent new footpaths being created following long term use by the public. It was emphasised that this would not affect any existing footpaths, it seeks to prevent new ones being established.

8.3 Footpath Gate at Silton Mill N70/16 and N70/15

8.3.1 The Chairman reported that the original kissing gate was broken about 12 months ago and a replacement had been obtained from Dorset Council. Unfortunately it had languished in the farmer’s farmyard ever since but on 30th October a team of intrepid volunteers from both Silton and Bourton had braved the elements, the cattle and dog walkers and installed the new gate which it is hoped will now keep the cattle off the footpath.

8.3.2 The cost of the gate had been covered by Dorset Council but a payment of just over £20 for the cost of concrete to secure the gate posts had been made.

9. Commonwealth Day 2021.

9.1 This takes place next year on Monday 8th March 2021. For the last several years a short ceremony has been held to celebrate Commonwealth Day by raising the Commonwealth Flag on the flag pole at the church, followed by some welcome refreshments in the church.

9.2 This year it had been held on 9th March and was the last time it had been possible to collectively hold any social event before the coronavirus pandemic struck.

9.3 The Chairman pointed out that clearly what would be possible next March would depend on the regulations in place at the time, but at this stage it was proposed by David Masters, seconded by Chris Woodhouse and unanimously agreed that the Parish would want to continue with this ceremony.

10. Parish Website.

10.1 The Chairman wanted to record a vote of thanks to Mike Hall and his team for building on the excellent work that Mike and Natasha Metcalf had initiated in building the Parish website.

10.2 Mike and Natasha Metcalf had produced a perfectly workable Parish website that suited our needs. However, new legislation had been introduced

recently that required all Parish websites to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 and this became law on 22nd September.

- 10.3 Fortunately Mike Hall and his team had been able to copy all the content from Mike and Natasha's website and repurpose it into a responsive website that is compatible with mobiles, tablets, desktops etc and also meets the guidance on accessibility which has to be complied with.
- 10.4 A virtual meeting had taken place on 22nd October to discuss this and it was hoped to have the new website operational very soon.

11. County Matters.

- 11.1 Cllr Rideout was not able to be present but had provided a briefing note that had been circulated on 26th October. The Chairman would take note of any comments on her briefing note at the end of the meeting.

12. Any Other Business.

- 12.1 The floor was opened up by un-muting those present for questions and comments.
- 12.2 David Masters warmly thanked Chris Woodhouse who had held the office of Parish Chairman for 6 years, since 2014. He said that during that time he had always acted in the best interests of the Parish with unwavering commitment, much commonsense, and great leadership, as with his redoubtable "A Team" and annual attacks on the dreaded Balsam - usually involving an involuntary dip in the river.
- 12.3 He had organised various working parties, quite apart from the Balsam ones, had frequently liaised with highway authorities, put together and run hilarious quiz nights in both the Village Hall and more recently by zoom and had dealt with innumerable emails on what seems to be an increasingly overwhelming number of topics. He had managed Village affairs and, with the advent of Coronavirus, kept everyone in touch with what was going on at County level and lightened spirits with cartoons and sayings.
- 12.4 David Masters emphasised how very grateful everyone was to him for all of this, and that he and Lynda and their friendship would truly be missed in and beyond the village when they both leave.
- 12.5 It nearly went without saying that Chris will be a hard act to follow but everyone is also very grateful to Jackie for picking up the baton. He said that he could not think of a better person to do so and expressed very many thanks to them both.
- 12.6 Mike Hall gave an update on the website following a virtual meeting 2 weeks ago. His team were working on tweaks and updates and it was hoped to go

live in the next week or so. He hoped that it would be a resource that people in the village would use. Input from parishioners would be relied upon, and he would be open to suggestions for improvement.

- 12.7 Keith Harris, Village Hall Chairman, thanked the meeting for the grant for the Hall and Chris Woodhouse for all his support for the Village Hall when he was Chairman.
- 12.8 Peter Williams thanked the meeting on behalf of the Church Wardens for the generous donation towards the upkeep of the churchyard, which he reported was currently looking terrific.
- 12.9 Chris Woodhouse reported that on Remembrance Sunday he had laid a wreath at the Bourton War Memorial on behalf of Silton where there had been a moving short service that had been attended by about 40, all suitably socially distanced. A wreath had also been laid in Silton church by Anne Bridge which had been open for private prayer that Sunday.
- 12.10 David Masters pointed out that Silton Church would also be open for private prayer the following day, Remembrance Day.
- 12.11 Mike Hall wondered if there would be any carols prior to Christmas outside, as it was not allowed to have singing in church during the pandemic, and only limited numbers in church. He suggested the possibility of doing this at the Woodhouse next to the Village Hall, which received warm support.

13. The meeting closed at 5.57 p.m.