

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF COOMBE BISSETT AND HOMINGTON
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 14th MAY 2019 AT 6.30 pm (unconfirmed).**

Present: Councillors: D Rattue, D Hobson, C Chelu, P Crosthwaite, S Gledhill, A Bird and G Bundy. Mrs D James (Clerk). Wiltshire Councillor R Clewer. Mr A Turnbull, Mr R Maycock, Mr and Mrs P Buckley, Mr D Simmonds, Mr and Mrs M Wardroper.

Apologies for absence: Mr and Mrs J Speirs.

D Rattue welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting: G Bundy proposed, C Chelu seconded and it was carried unanimously that the circulated minutes be confirmed and signed.

There were no matters arising from those minutes.

CHAIRMAN REPORT Cllr. D RATTUE:

As is the practice of the Council at the Annual General Meeting we shall each report on our area of responsibility. During the year we have held 6 Council Meetings and 1 Special Meeting and your representatives have dealt with 25 planning applications.

The Neighbourhood Plan has continued to make good progress and our thanks to the hard working committee for making this possible. Questionnaires were distributed to all households prior to Christmas and 97 were returned to be analysed by an independent specialist. In March the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee gave a public presentation of the details received with a Community Feedback Meeting programmed for June.

The proposed boundary revision for Wiltshire is likely to come into force following the council elections to be held in May 2021. The Parish Council has objected to the proposal, which will mean we shall no longer be in the Southern Area Board where important links had been established over many years but will now come under the more remote South West Wiltshire Area Board.

Road Safety continues to be a concern and in partnership with Wiltshire Council White Gates have now been installed on the A354 on both the Salisbury Road and the Blandford Road approaches to Coombe Bissett. On the C12 approach into Coombe Bissett white lining and 20 mile road markings have been updated.

The speed watch team urgently require new members in order to continue the important work in ensuring speed limits are not exceeded in the villages.

The Parish Council has continued to improve local footpaths with footpath 6 the latest to be completed in this financial year. In addition many smaller improvement schemes and general repairs have again been undertaken by the CHAVS and the community greatly appreciate all their efforts

The Parish Council has ensured by good financial management to keep the precept below last years figure with a 0.2% reduction whilst other sectors of the Wiltshire Council Tax show an increase of between 3% and 13.2%.

The overall financial accounts continue to be in a good position and the money received from the Solar Park project is largely unspent with £16000 remaining for a suitable project to be undertaken.

I should like to record my appreciation to all the Parish Councillors for the many hours they freely give to the community, ensuring the Parish is such a desirable place to reside. Our Parish Clerk Debbie continues to amaze us on the volume of work she undertakes which enables the Council to function so efficiently. A thank you also to Cllr. Richard Clewer our District Councillor whose advice and support has been so beneficial to the villages.

POLICE REPORT Cllr. D RATTUE:

This year saw the appointments of Keir Pritchard as Chief Constable and Paul Mills as Deputy Chief Constable confirmed in these positions after previously been on a temporary basis. It was also good to see Detective Sergeant Nick Bailey return to work after being taken seriously ill during the investigations of the Novichok terror attack in Salisbury.

The recent National Survey on Police Forces saw Wiltshire Police named as the best in the country for acting on public concerns a marked improvement from the 29th position of the previous year. Wiltshire Police came 2nd in the country when it came to public confidence in the Police, up from 20th last year. The force was 3rd placed for residents' satisfaction that Police do a good or excellent job, compared to 12th in 2017.

Wiltshire Police officers are subject to an increasing number of assaults and last year this amounted to 296. Injury to officers has increased from 55 in 2016/17 to 103 in 2017/18. Police officers have also been subject to 49 instances of being spat at in the last 12 months. Front line staff is being trained to use spit guards, protecting them from this kind of abuse and the diseases associated with it.

Wiltshire Police will also be introducing more Tasers to officers who volunteer to carry them. As even just producing a Taser in a confrontational situation on its own with a warning can be enough to de-escalate a situation.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire has promised to increase the number of Police Officers by 32. This will be paid for by an average increase in the Police component of the Council Tax of £24 per year on each dwelling. For a considerable time the public has asked to see more visible presence of Police Officers in the community and this will go some way in achieving this need.

Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 sets out the four key priorities for Wiltshire Police to focus on to help:

- Prevent Crime and keep people safe.
- Protect the most vulnerable people in society.
- Put victims, witnesses and communities at the heart of everything we do
- Secure a quality police service that is trusted and efficient.

CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION FIELD REPORT Cllr. A Bird:

The play park has had new boards round the perimeter to replace the rotting old ones. Ongoing maintenance keeps the play equipment in excellent condition.

Last May, the Parish Council took the decision to ban dogs from the playing field from April to October in order to reduce the incidents of dog fouling. The Parish Council recognizes that there is some opposition to this from responsible dog owners, but evidence suggests that the ban has significantly reduced dog fouling during the summer months. Furthermore, there is now support from some villagers who were initially against the proposal. The ban will therefore be implemented in the summer permanently.

The field continues to be maintained to an extremely high standard by the Cricket Club.

The new piece of adult exercise equipment was installed last year, and from the wear of the grass around the base, appears to be well used.

COOMBE BISSETT C E PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

There is much information about school activities available bi-monthly in the Express and on the school website, where details of Ofsted inspections can be accessed.

The class numbers are now as follows:

Ash Class (Year 5 & 6) - 13 boys & 17 girls = 30

Fir Class (Year 3 & 4/0 - 12 boys & 18 girls = 30

Elm Class (Year 1 & 2) - 12 boys & 10 girls = 22

Oak Class (Reception & Year 1) - 13 boys & 7 girls = 20

Of the 102 children on roll, only 33 live within the catchment area which still results in a large number of vehicles coming into Coombe Bissett twice a day, many of which park up at the village hall and in the Homington Road.

VILLAGE HALL REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

The Village Hall continues to be used by a variety of village organisations. The Bowls Club has closed, but bowls is still organized for a group of people with Parkinsons.

Revenue from weddings is still a useful source of income and there are regular enquiries and visits from prospective hirers. Profits from the film club, together with a grant from the Parish Council, enabled the installation of an electrically operated wide screen, which facilitates the setting up of the monthly film nights. The running of the hall depends upon the hard work of a number of volunteers on the management committee for which we thank them. New members are always welcome.

HIGHWAYS AND STREET SCENE REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

The Parish Council managed to get a grant from the Community Area Transport Group to install village gates at each end of the A354 entry to the village. It is hoped that this will encourage drivers to obey the speed limits. CATG has also enabled the reinstating of various white lines in Coombe Bissett and the provision of an additional 20 mph roundel near the shop. After recent requests by a parishioner the council have asked Wiltshire Council to consider the implementation of double white lines throughout the village limits on the A354 and also to extend the 30mph limit into the 40mph limit. The Parish Steward is asked to do various jobs every month, but since this is a discretionary service and the parish steward can be called away for more urgent jobs elsewhere in the county, completion cannot be guaranteed. Gulleys and grips continue to be a problem as mud quickly builds when it rains heavily. For some, one clean out a year with the vacator is not enough. Blocked gulleys likely to flood houses can be cleaned on request. All issues can be reported by the general public via the My Wiltshire App on the web.

SNOW WARDEN REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

The snow experienced this year was again short lived, and our thanks go to the volunteers who managed to clear and salt the main footway within the village. The Parish still has ample supplies of salt ready for next winter and more can be requested although we may have to collect it ourselves, The parish snow advice was put up on the website to give advice during this period and is still available.

FLOODING REPORT Cllr. P Crosthwaite:

There have been no instances of serious flooding during the last year in the Parish, however concerns remain that in the event of extreme rainfall leading to groundwater flooding areas of the village are still vulnerable. In particular, rectifying the drain issues that have been identified on the A354 have not advanced during the year although we have heard in the last few days that WC will be undertaking a CCTV survey of the A354 drainage system later this month. This is part of the investigation work to determine the cause of the slow drainage in the area of concern.

In the summer suggested projects to alleviate flooding in the area were submitted as part of the AONB's bid for funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. There may be opportunities for work to restore the water meadows, old ditches and banks, which may have historically added capacity to the flood plain or aided flow dynamics, which might provide benefit to the frequency of surface flooding in the village. On 10th May it was announced that Cranborne Chase AONB were awarded £1.68 million for the Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley Partnership project, and we look forward to hearing more details.

The Environment Agency continues to collect data from three telemetered loggers to help them understand the relationship to permanent gauging stations, both upstream and downstream, to assist with the development of flood warning systems and flood alleviation options. The data will also be used for model calibration in understanding the distribution of flows through the arches of the bridge and the backwater effect at the bridge. Data will also help the EA to understand the balance flows between millstream and main river.

A priority list of gullies and drains, which need regular clearing, was compiled and submitted to WC highways and drainage.

COOMBE BISSETT PLANNING REPORT Cllr. P Crosthwaite:

We have dealt with 14 applications during the year, the most notable and controversial being the current application for converting The Glebe, a 5-bedroom house into 6 x 2- and 3-bedroom flats.

RIGHTS OF WAY REPORT Cllr. G Bundy:

Again this year I have walked all of the rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) within the Parish, many of them much more than some of the others and on many occasions armed with my secateurs to do the odd little trim back!

The majority are in good passable condition but one should always remember that if you are walking a right of way particularly when we have had rain then you should be prepared for some parts of the route to be muddy.

As reported last year Footpath 6, where it passes through the wooded area below Homington House, has been reviewed and has now been widened to make it safer and easier for walkers and the improvements have also included the provision of steps at the Marsh Lane end (replacing steps which were there many years ago). The work carried out has retained its natural appearance and there have been many favourable comments from local resident walkers.

COOMBE BISSETT CEMETERY REPORT Cllr. G Bundy:

I consider this to be an excellent village asset and this past year I have visited every 2 weeks or so to ensure that it is always looking in good order. Without being disrespectful I regularly remove flowers that have died and holly wreaths normally placed there at Christmas time as many are put in place by relatives who may not then return to the cemetery on a regular basis.

In this past year we have received a total of £160 in cemetery fees. As to expenditure we paid £100 to John Hopkins for bin and litter clearing (a sum considerably less than the previously employed Wiltshire Council contractors). The grass cutting for this year cost £605 but there will be a small increase for the next two years to £628 per year. The hedges were cut at a cost of £460 paid to the same contractors who carry out the grass cutting.

As already mentioned I consider the cemetery to be an excellent village asset as it creates a peaceful location for those visiting to remember their loved ones.

HOMINGTON REPORT Volunteer Cllrs. D Hobson and S Gledhill:

Planning Applications

Nine Planning Applications (including four Variations) have been considered over the past year. These have included, residential property re-development, house extensions, agricultural buildings and one Planning in Principle Application. On three occasions the Parish Council has asked our Wiltshire Councillor to call applications in for consideration by the Southern Area Planning Committee. In one particular recent case, a controversial application for development on the 'Spinney' was rejected by the Planning Committee, at least in part due to the objections raised by the Parish Council.

Flooding

The risk from flooding in the village, particularly from run-off following heavy rain has continued to be monitored. The Parish Council has continued to lobby Wiltshire Council to clear grips and conduct other minor works to improve drainage.

Homington Triangle Seat

A replacement seat on the village 'Triangle' has been put in place. The new seat and materials were funded by the Parish Council and the fitting was kindly undertaken by members of the 'CHAVs'.

Traffic

Due to a lack of volunteers the Homington Community Speed-watch is not currently in operation. If any villagers are interested in re-opening the scheme they are asked to contact one of the village's Parish Councilors.

Appreciation and thanks to Derrick Rattue for his work as chairman was expressed by D Hobson and supported by other members of the Parish Council.

Parishioner's Questions:

D Hobson reported that there had been excessive herbicide spraying of the verges up to Great Yews and the parish boundary. He commented that there will be a short term effect on the nettles but wild flowers will be gone forever. D Hobson asked if anyone knows who has carried out the spraying and if so he would address the issue with whoever concerned.

Date of next Annual Parish Meeting: Tuesday 12^h May 2020.

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm.