

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF COOMBE BISSETT AND HOMINGTON HELD  
IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 20th MAY 2021 AT 6.30 pm (unconfirmed).**

**Present:** Councillors: S Gledhill (Acting Chair), C Chelu, A Bird, K Byatt and L Reed. Councillor D Hobson joined the meeting via Zoom.

**Apologies for Absence:** Mrs N Heron (Clerk) due to illness.

**In Attendance:** R Clewer (Wiltshire Councillor) and two members of the community.

Cllr S Gledhill welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Minutes of the last meeting:** The Chair explained that due to the Corona Virus pandemic the 2020 Annual Meeting had been cancelled. The Minutes under consideration were therefore those from the 2019 Meeting. They were proposed by Cllr C Chelu, seconded by Cllr A Bird and carried unanimously.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**Vote of Thanks**

The Council unanimously passed a vote of thanks to Derrick Rattue as Chairman, Pippa Crosthwaite and Gerald Bundy, for the work they had done over many years for the community. All have recently stood down from the Parish Council.

**Chairman's Report - D Rattue:**

During the year we have held 6 Council Meetings. Because of Corona Virus restrictions the 6 meetings were all held virtually. Your Representatives also dealt with 24 planning applications.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan continued its preparation and over the past 12 months has made significant progress thanks to the efforts of the Steering Group under the leadership of Christine Cooper. Currently we are waiting for the Strategic Environment Assessment to be confirmed which will be in approximately two months' time.

There is one Capital Project outstanding, namely the Donkey Field fencing which has been delayed due to the wet conditions on the field. It is hoped to make a start during the next few weeks.

The Financial Accounts continue to be in a strong position which has again enabled the Parish Precept to be kept at just a 1.3% increase from the previous year.

The CHAVS continued their excellent work in carrying out various small maintenance and improvement schemes which have been much appreciated by all the community.

During the past year we have seen the Parish Clerk Debbie James, Councillors Philippa Crosthwaite and Gerald Bundy all stand down from the Council after giving excellent service over many years.

This will be my last Chairman's Report as I shall not be standing in the May 2021 Council Elections. Over the 22 years as a Parish Councillor, I have been fortunate to have worked with so many dedicated people and it has been a privilege to have been a part of your group. A special thankyou to Nicola Heron who took over the duties of Parish Clerk during August last year and has slotted into the role so well. Thankyou also to Richard Clewer our Wiltshire Council Representative whose attendance at our meetings and valuable advice have proved so beneficial to our community.

**Annual Report from Representatives**

**Police Report - D Rattue:**

After 8 years as Police and Crime Commissioner Angus Macpherson will leave his role after the May 2021 elections. Chief Constable Keir has had his contract extended to November 2023 following exceptional performance during major incidents in Wiltshire. Over the past two years Wiltshire Police have been able to increase its front line staff through additional finance from local tax and Central Government. In 2018/2019 Wiltshire had 934 Police Officers and 131 PCSOs. In 2019/2020 an additional 41 Police Officers were made available. The number of Police Officers in 2020/2021 will increase further to 1050 whilst maintaining the number of PCSOs at its present level. Wiltshire continues to be one of the safest counties to live and work in and Wiltshire Police is one of only four forces to see a reduction in overall crime. Knife crime continues to be a major concern for the public,

though in Wiltshire knife crime has shown an 18% reduction since 2017. In the Salisbury area over the period March 2020 to February 2021 the following crimes were recorded

|                           | <i>Number</i> | <i>% of Total</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Anti-Social Behaviour     | 1706          | 28.7%             |
| Bicycle Theft             | 67            | 1.1%              |
| Burglary                  | 268           | 4.5%              |
| Criminal damage/arson     | 621           | 10.4%             |
| Drugs                     | 183           | 3.1%              |
| Other Theft               | 327           | 5.5%              |
| Possession of weapons     | 56            | 0.9%              |
| Public order              | 405           | 6.8%              |
| Robbery                   | 23            | 0.4%              |
| Shoplifting               | 218           | 3.7%              |
| Theft from person         | 30            | 0.5%              |
| Vehicle crime             | 232           | 3.9%              |
| Violence & sexual offence | 1706          | 28.7%             |
| Other crime               | 104           | 1.7%              |

The four main priorities in 2021 for Policing in Wiltshire are confirmed as:

1. Prevent crime and keep people safe.
2. Protect the most vulnerable people in society.
3. Put victims, witnesses and communities at the heart of everything we do.
4. Secure a quality police force that is trusted and efficient.

#### **Coombe Bissett CE Primary School – 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.

Ash Class (Year 5 & 6) - 13 boys & 19 girls = 32  
Fir Class (Year 3 & 4) - 18 boys & 12 girls = 30  
Elm Class (Year 1 & 2) - 17 boys & 10 girls = 27  
Oak Class (Reception & Year 1) - 12 boys & 10 girls = 22

The school are delighted to have welcomed several young families who have moved into our catchment area over the last couple of years bringing the number of children within catchment to 28 with 3 local families choosing the school for their children this September.

#### **Village Hall – Cllr C Chelu:**

The Village Hall has been largely unused since the 1st lock down last year with a brief use during the summer by Pilates and Parkinson Bowls. A grant was obtained to enable Covid precautions to be set up in the hall and sanitising and cleaning equipment was purchased, together with suitable signage and QR code. The hall is all prepared for hiring when the regulations are relaxed subject to hirers carrying out the advice provided by the government. The hall website gives details of the requirements. The running of the hall depends upon the hard work of a number of volunteers on the management committee for which we thank them.

#### **Highways & Street Scene – Cllr C Chelu:**

The major works to highways locally have been recently carried out by Wiltshire Council. The road has been resurfaced and re-white lined from the 40mph limit on the Salisbury Road to the 30mph limit on the Blandford Road. This has resulted in the repair of many areas which had been patched up over the years. These faults had been repeatedly reported over the 8 years that I have held this role. The road is now smoother and quieter, but may result in some speed increases. Adrian Turnbull has been moving the speed indicator device around the Parish on a regular basis during lockdown with the help of his wife and the data is available on the Parish website. We thank him for his continued enthusiasm for the SID and running Community Speed watch which has recently restarted. The Donkey Field has been very wet this winter prompting Wessex Water to suspect a leak and dig up an area close to the churchyard. No leak was found but the digging seems to have uncovered a spring which was seen pouring onto the field. Now it has dried out mowing has been able to be carried out and it is hoped that the planned low rustic fence can be installed soon.

#### **Snow Warden – Cllr C Chelu:**

The snow experienced this year was again very short lived, and our thanks go to the volunteers who cleared and salted 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 information during this period and is still available.

#### **Coombe Bissett Planning - Cllr C Chelu (vice Pippa Crosthwaite):**

During the last year there have been 17 planning applications and 7 tree applications. The most concerning application was for a development in the chalk pit which resulted in over 50 objections from local residents. This application is yet to be determined. The Wiltshire Council planning website has recently been updated and this should make it easier to directly send in comments.

#### **Playground and Recreation Field – Cllr A Bird:**

Use of the playground and recreation field were severely restricted in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. Only a very limited number of cricket matches were able to be played, and social distancing rules were implemented. The 2021 season has begun, still with some restrictions in place, but hopefully these will be lifted soon.

The playpark had to be closed to the public for several months during 2020 to comply with covid restrictions. It was re-opened in line with Government advice and following a risk assessment. The annual RoSPA inspection on the park only highlighted some minor issues, including increasing the levels of the bark surface. This work is planned for summer 2021 when covid restrictions allow for volunteers to help.

The field continues to be maintained to an extremely high standard by the Cricket Club. The Parish Council was able to purchase a hedge trimmer, which the cricket club groundsman (Ian) uses to keep the hedgerows neat and tidy. A massive vote of thanks goes to Ian for the amount of time and effort he puts into keeping the field looking immaculate.

#### **Homington Report – Cllr S Gledhill**

**Planning Applications** - Two Planning Applications have been considered over the past year. These have involved a residential property extension and agricultural buildings demolition. This was a relatively small number of applications – five to nine is a more usual figure. Neither of the applications were controversial and as a result it was not necessary for the Parish Council to ask our Wiltshire Councillor to 'call in' an application for consideration by the Southern Area Planning Committee.

**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 work with Wiltshire Council to ensure minor works to improve drainage are completed. The Wiltshire Council Parish Steward has been particularly effective in the clearance of a number of drainage grips around the village.

**Traffic** - A Homington Community Speed-Watch is not currently in operation. However, the Parish Speed Indicator Device (SID) is on rotation deployed on the C12 through the village and on occasions supported by the Coombe Bissett Community Speed Watch. If any villagers are interested in re-opening Speed-Watch they are asked to contact one of the village's Parish Councillors.

#### **Councillor Vacancy:**

Cllr S Gledhill briefed the meeting that the Parish Council should have seven Councillors. At the recent election six candidates stood and were 'elected'. There is a vacancy on the Council which can be filled through a volunteer being co-opted onto the Council. If anyone would be interested in joining the Parish Council they should speak to the Clerk or a current Councillor. The vacancy will also be publicised on Noticeboards, in the Express, on the Parish Website and Facebook Group.

#### **Parishioner's Questions:**

Derrick Rattue thanked past and present Councillors for their work and for the support they provided to him during his time as Chairman of the Parish Council. He also expressed his thanks to our Wiltshire Councillor Richard Clewer for the support he has provided to the Parish Council.

Date of the next Annual Parish Meeting: Tuesday 10th May 2022.

**The meeting closed at 6.58pm.**