



COMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH OF COMPTON
NOTICE OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Local Government Act 1972

Minutes of **THE ANNUAL MEETING** of Compton Parish Council held on
Wednesday 21st May 2014 at 7.00pm
In **Pucks Oak Barn** for the transaction of the under mentioned business.

Present: Cllr F Curtis, Cllr D Haskins, Cllrs P Graham, K Patel, K Stevens,
Borough Cllr J Palmer
County Cllr G Johnson
Sgt S Barwood
2 members of the public

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs J Cadman

- 50/14 **Election of Chairman:**
Cllr Curtis gave a brief resume of Parish Council achievements over the years that she had been Chairman:
Cllr Palmer thanked her for her considerable help to him regarding issues in the village and for all her very hard work in the parish. This was endorsed by Members.
Cllr Haskins was PROPOSED as Chairman by Cllr Curtis, SECONDED by Cllr Graham, with all in favour the exception of Cllr Stevens, who abstained from the vote.
Cllr Haskins thanked the Council for its vote and hoped that he would be able to on the detail of being Chairman as ably as had Cllr Curtis. They had joined the Council at the same time, 5 years ago. He recalled that at that time some tasks had been taken on by sub committees. He hoped to be able to encourage the community to be more involved with local issues in his time as chairman, and to appoint committees to deal with bigger issues, such as the Local Plan.
- 51/14 **Apologies for Absence:** were received from Cllr Parsons.
- 52/14 **Declarations of interest:** none were made
- 53/14 **Election of Vice Chairman:** Cllr Stevens was PROPOSED as Vice Chairman by Cllr Haskins, SECONDED by Cllr Curtis, with all in favour.
- 54/14 **Appointment of Member's responsibilities:**
Allotments: Cllr Haskins
Watts Cemetery: Cllr Haskins
Playing field: Cllr Patel
Planning: Cllr Parsons and Cllr Graham
Village Hall: Cllr Graham
Traffic and Highways Cllr Curtis
Local Plan: Cllr Stevens
- 55/14 **Dates of future meetings:** members reviewed and agreed the current meeting date structure of a full Council meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of each alternate month: January, March, May, July, September, November. The Annual parish meeting will be held in accordance with the Local Government Act. Cemetery Committee meetings will, as far as possible, be held on alternate months to the Parish Council meetings.
- 56/14 **Minutes of Meeting held 19th March 2014:** these were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
- 57/14 **Matters Arising:**
29/14: *WWI:* following the article in the Compton News, several people have asked for and received poppy seeds for sowing near the road. Cllr Stevens commented that the farmer on the Hogs Back hoped to be able to do this and she would talk to the Clerk about obtaining seeds.

34/14: *Annual Parish meeting*: this was agreed to have been a very good event and it was a good idea to use a different venue each year. It would be a great achievement if more people could be encouraged to attend, but acknowledged that the current attendance of between 70 and 80 people was a very good number.

Cllr Curtis' opening presentation was pronounced to be excellent, and she agreed to continue to do this.

It was noted that not all speakers knew how to use the microphone, and this would be addressed. It was agreed that the means of displaying village society literature was not ideal this year, as it tended to be overlooked, although it was not clear how this could be improved.

Street lighting update: the contractors had agreed that they had made a mistake with the installation of non-conservation lighting in a conservation area, and they would rectify this. Cllr Haskins commented that he had been told that the lights would be dimmable.

58/14

Outgoing Chairman's Report:

Cllr Curtis took this opportunity to look back over the last four years, since she had taken on the role of Chairman.

Council recruitment. We currently have a dedicated team of six. Attendance rates are good and we represent most areas of the Parish. Our attempts to encourage younger members have not been so successful and it is an on-going problem for people who are working to be able to commit the time and energy to PC work. We currently have one vacancy.

Registering Land / Community Assets: We have successfully registered some of the PC owned land. This includes the Lodge and the cemetery although we still have to register zone five, which due to an administrative mistake by the Land Registry, is still outstanding. The memorial is also outstanding and is on Joanna's job list. Under the Localism act, we also decided to register the Club and Village Hall as Community assets, a task that has yet to be done but has also been added to the task list. Issues relating to the piecemeal method of consecrating the Cemetery in sections, will also be rectified when the Bishop visits Compton later in the year when the cemetery will be consecrated as a whole.

Agreement with Watts Gallery: CPC has worked closely with the Gallery in order to secure an agreement and prior to this to form a strong working relationship which resulted in us sharing a caretaker and benefitting from increased visitor numbers which saw donations rise from £4k to between £8k and even £11k.

The Chapel Lodge was renovated going from a bit of a wreck, to habitable and the return on investment has been 10 fold. As a Parish asset it would be difficult to sell but as a habitable dwelling in its lovely location, it has helped us to secure an agreement with the Gallery regards the long term management of the Chapel & Cemetery.

The agreement for the long term management of the Chapel & Cemetery has been signed by David and I on behalf of the PC and by Trustees of the Gallery. Solicitors cast their final seal of approval at close of day today (21st May 2014) and the agreement will commence from 1st June 2014.

This means that from that date we will no longer be responsible for managing the cemetery or chapel (and associated buildings). They will be maintained and conserved by the Gallery who will in turn increase their marketing portfolio and raise funds. Funds from cottage rental and the donations box (and the Restoration Fund) will go to the Gallery, who will make an annual payment of £5k for the lease, which will ensure the net gain (presuming CPC were fully maintaining) remains the same. Reviews will be periodically carried out to ensure the donation is in line with inflation. CPC will continue as the Burial Authority and will continue to be responsible for all matters relating to burials and will receive income through this.

The agreements are the result of many many meetings with various parties and solicitors and it would be remiss of me not to thank Ken Miller and Ex Chairman, Martin Foran for their work and Joanna who has had to put up with my over zealous attention to detail on most things.

Village Hall: After a great deal of difficulty, CPC finally cleared up the issues relating to the agreement between the village hall management and ourselves. This resulted in the hall being removed from the asset register.

Funds: In 2009 CPC funds were at an all time low, due, in part to a very expensive legal battle and a particularly low precept. The precept was raised and the combination of the rise, the increased income (by reducing caretaker costs, renting the cottage and wider marketing of the Chapel) and reduced spend due to negotiation over asset management, meant funds rose steadily, from £4k to over £90k.

Key projects have been earmarked.

Administration: Most files have been digitized and most of the important docs are now in DropBox. A central cloud storage ensures we have a copy of all important docs, it also ensures transparency in that we can all see exactly who is doing what, spending what and allows us to track activity to make sure projects don't fall off the radar. **I would ask, for the sake of continuity, that this is maintained, whether it is your cup of tea or not.**

Joanna, David and I have also worked hard to digitize the cemetery data. This was a big project, with Joanna and I trudging through the paperwork (Joanna more than me) to cross reference against the existing database by the late M Palmer. I produced a map, which references all 1000+ plots and David pulled all this onto an on-line database, which is now available under <http://www.ubiubi.org>

Various: David continues to facilitate the 'Compton Clearance' with a principal interest in the Common areas. A great example of making a difference.

The Cemetery Committee can be proud of their work over the years, which has been recognized by English Heritage who listed the cemetery Grade II*.

James & Peter keep tabs on the ever changing world that is planning. For example, we have seen the highly controversial Monks Hatch Garden Farm go from a myriad of enforcement notices to a horse sanctuary, and garden grabbing, which was once frowned upon is now called infill in many areas and is permissible. Peter is also a Trustee of the Village Hall Committee and James' planning background helps us see that not all development is objectionable.

Kanak's long service on the Council is to be admired and Kanak has been particularly helpful at the recent bus stop survey and Annual meeting. We have had three Annual meetings to date, with attendance rates of 65, 90 and approx 85. These are now a great social event as well as a source of information and well-attended events such as this help keep the community spirit alive well.

Karen has only been with us a few months and has already demonstrated a fountain of knowledge of the Local Plan which we will all benefit from and now has one litter pick under her belt as well as more planning meetings than most of us have notched up altogether!

All Councillors work hard in their own specialist areas, all of which have levels of bureaucracy however the Local Plan is all encompassing involving, tourism, economy, infrastructure, housing, environment, transport, to name just six! So I am very grateful that we have had someone prepared to take a lead on this huge topic.

Our Councillors, James Palmer & George Johnson and sometimes Neil Ward attend our meetings and it is reassuring to know that they have a good working understanding of what matters to us in Compton. Recent successes have included securing funding for a safety initiative in Down Lane, a review of our ditches and drainage in and around Polsted / Green/ Withies and replacement of the street lighting with conservation lighting. Unfortunately, we have not been as successful in obtaining any real solutions for the volume and speed of vehicles using the B3000, this being a key issue for most residents in Compton.

CSW and regular management of the VAS by Nick Palmer & David Haskins is the only traffic management we have, as well as occasional speed checks by the Police, which when carried out, make a noticeable difference.

Over the years there have been many changes in policing, in terms of police remit, numbers and area covered and we have seen many faces. The relationship between CPC and the police has generally been very good.

We employed a village caretaker, which has been a great success.

As a Parish Council we have not shied away from subjects that are difficult to deal with and continue to look at the fairly controversial topic of parking on the Green and how best to understand and inform residents about the importance and consequences of the Local Plan.

There are many community minded people in this village, some of whom received the award by the Mayor for Services to the Community. This year the award went to two people. Nick Palmer and David Haskins.

The 4 years in the Chair and the year as a Councillor before that, have been an interesting ride. I am staying on as Councillor and look forward to working with you all and with the new Chair person.

59/14

Reports from Borough and County Cllrs:

County Cllr: Cllr Johnson said that the previous year had been a period of learning for him, helped by people like cllr Curtis, who had made him feel at home. He sat a number of committees in addition to the Local Committee: Planning and Regulation, Transport, and Adult Social Care, and his main area of work had been Highways, with a number of issues brought to his attention. Flooding had been a problem across the county, and flood risk management was high on the County's agenda. He hoped

to receive a flood risk map for each parish shortly.

He was also involved in safety of schools and school travel plans, and all schools would have travel plans in place.

Regarding this village, *Network Rail* planned to replace the bridge on a like-for-like basis, and it had been hoped to replace the current bridge with one which included a footpath and a cycle lane, but they said that they were not prepared to pay for this. Cllr Palmer advised that he had spoken to Anne Milton concerning this, and she had said that she would pursue this. Currently it is planned for the road to be closed between the 6th and 7th September and the 4th and 6th October to carry out this work. Cllr Curtis suggested that it might be a good idea to postpone the bridge improvement until funding was resolved.

The *conservation street lighting issue* has now been satisfactorily resolved.

Cllr Johnson expressed his wish to continue to support this Council's aspirations for the village.

Cllr Haskins advised that the VAS showed that *traffic* through the village had increased by 30% in two years, probably as an effect of the Hindhead tunnel. Air pollution was now becoming a big issue because of the tail to tail traffic and Cllr Haskins asked if it would be possible to use the air pollution monitoring equipment to establish the extent of the problem. Cllr Johnson would progress this.

Cllr Stevens said that 10 years ago, when Manor Farm was taken out of the Green Belt, one of the conditions of doing so was that traffic should not increase more than 5% in the Manor Park area. She had been trying to find out whether traffic had in fact increased. The university had not responded to her request for information, and GBC documentation on this does not help. She had written to SCC, but had not had an answer. She was anxious to have an answer to this, as the university plans would result in 6,000 more cars.

Borough Cllr: Cllr Palmer reported on the *Local Plan*, as follows: the draft was published on the 7th May and the most important item was the draft housing number, at 650 per year and 13,000 in total over the period of the Local Plan. This number is still going through the scrutiny stage and councillors have asked for this number to be reviewed and, hopefully, reduced. The Council is currently waiting for some figures from the Office of National Statistics on migration figures.

It is hoped that new housing will be put in the town centre and existing urban areas, but it will be necessary to also look elsewhere, including some sites in the Green Belt, one of which is Blackwell Farm. Gosden Hill Farm, Wisley Airfield, and Ash are also being considered and it was estimated that each of these sites would accommodate about 2,000 homes. The university proposal would be for a bigger settlement, of around 3,000 homes. The cathedral is also proposing to build some housing on their land. Although the Council wants to keep numbers down, they consider that some development is necessary in these areas, as they don't want the town to become overcrowded. They are also considering some areas of housing in the villages.

The Council is also looking at the infrastructure, and the implications of the AONB, which are reasons why Blackwell farm is not ideal. They are also in discussion with the university about the large amount of surface car parking area on their grounds, which could be put to better use for housing.

The draft Local Plan will go to full Council on the 19th June and a 12 week formal consultation period will follow, commencing on the 1st July. A new draft will be issued early in the new year and submitted to the Government Inspector by March 2015. Cllr Palmer asked that people are encouraged to get involved and to put forward their views, as there is still a long way to go.

Cllr Curtis asked the percentage of houses that would be built on brown field sites, and was told that this was 50%. She also asked if the council would have the migration figures before them when they considered the draft Local Plan in June, and was told that Cllr Palmer was not sure, as it had to go through central government. She asked how wide a comment base the Borough Council could use when considering housing numbers and Cllr Palmer replied that he would use any argument which would help reduce the number of houses in the Local Plan. [explanation - there were very few comments in support of large scale housing in the issues & options consultation, the few comments of support being from developers or those with a pecuniary interest, who, in the main, live outside the borough]

Settlement and Hierarchy questionnaire: Cllr Curtis commented that some parish councils had just referred to the settlement area only, some had referred to the village centre and others the Parish.. This council had responded by the Parish. She questioned whether this had been the correct approach and Cllr Palmer responded that the data gathering exercise was under review.

The Guildford town Transport study had been completed towards the end of April. The conclusion was to try to dissuade through-traffic: 20% of the traffic is moving from one area of the town to another. A route is needed through the town where people can walk, cycle or take a bus. Work is also being carried out in conjunction with the Highways Agency to try to improve junctions and the flow along the A3, which would hopefully reduce the traffic in the town centre.

A new Mayor has been elected, Cllr David Elms, who has been a councillor since 2011.

Cllr Haskins commented that the Council would like to improve the bus service in Compton and a bus station near the railway station would help enormously. Lots of visitors come to Compton by bike, or walking and the footpath network needs to be improved. He believed that the next few years would see many more people cycling if it was more possible.

60/14

Report from the Police:

Sgt Barwood reported that PC Stephens is not well at present.

The police had conducted a number of patrols in the area recently, following on from a spate of shed break-ins, although none of these had been within the parish of Compton and a number of warrants have been executed in the last few days. There is a section on the police website which gives advice on how to protect property.

A vehicle in Compton had suffered criminal damage, and there had been a dwelling burglary where entrance had been effected through the patio doors. There had also been a non-dwelling burglary in Artington.

The police were currently reminding people of security in the warmer days, and not to leave windows open when the house is empty.

61/14

Public Forum:

- a) *Local Plan:* Mrs Adair had seen Artington Parish Council minutes on a local noticeboard recently, and noted that Michael More Molyneux had been asked to put forward possible sites for housing, which he had done with a proposal for 184 houses. It was noted that CPRE opposed this, as it would border the boundaries of Compton, Artington and Guildford, Waverley.
- b) *Demographic:* Cllr Palmer was asked the demographic of the people that the housing was being aimed at and advised that it was based on an evidence based paper. There was also an aspiration to make Guildford a wide economic hub.

62/14

Members Report: Highways

- a) *Slip road at the roundabout near the Nursery:* has been re-surfaced with silent tarmac. Cllr Curtis would arrange a meeting of the traffic committee to address this anomaly: Highways had decreed that it was not possible to re-surface the Street with silent tarmac, as funds did not permit. Cllr Palmer would be invited to this meeting.
- b) *VAS data:* Cllr Haskins said that more needs to be done with this.
- c) *A3:* Mr Miller reported that there was a back up on the road to the A3 every day from 4pm. He believed that if the undergrowth was cut back at the junction, traffic would be able to move faster as the sightlines would be clear.
- d) *Rubbish on the approach to the roundabout:* Peter Borrett would be asked to deal with this.
- e) *Thistles against wall opposite church:* Peter Borrett would be asked to remove these.
- f) *Compo:* It was suggested that Peter become an accredited driver for Compo, so that he could step in when needed.
- g) *Withies Lane:* cars drive very fast down this lane, and are a danger to children. A covert VAS was suggested, Cllr Haskins would organise this.
- h) *Proposed new junction on A31:* Mr Miller pointed out that this would be very close to the existing Compton junction. It was possible that there was a restriction on how close together junctions can be, and this would be investigated.

63/14

Members Report: Allotments and Environmental Projects

- a) *Allotments:* all is well.
- b) *Environmental Projects:* Cllr Haskins had met with a team from GBC and SCC on the 13th May and walked the woodlands to assess conservation projects. Cllr Haskins had supplied them with the report drawn up by GBC. Moira Cash is the Head of Countryside at GBC and has responsibility for the team who has started work on a plan for Compton. They want to

aim for properly managed woodland and their remit is to get volunteers and paid staff to work together

- c) *Clearance working party*: the next meeting will be held on the 22nd June, starting at 10am and meeting at the Withies car park, to pull out Himalayan Balsam. This would be advertised in the News and people would be asked to bring gloves.
- d) *Drainage on the Green*: this has been resolved. Thames Water have repaired a pipe near the green, which also contributed to the soggy ground.

64/14 **Members Report: Recreation ground and playground**

- a) *Almsgate*: Cllr Patel reported that the grass needs cutting and members noted that this is the responsibility of GBC.
- b) *Playground bin*: Mr Borrett confirmed that he had recently emptied this, but would do so again.
- c) *Recreation ground fence*: this needs to be treated with wood stain and protector. The Clerk will arrange this.
- d) *Cherry Tree*: Roger Deacon had removed the cherry tree which had recently fallen in the playground. Members asked that the stump be ground out.
- e) *Grass*: Cllr Patel asked if the edges could be mowed, so that it looked managed.

65/14 **Members Report: Watts Gallery and Cemetery**

- a) *Minutes of the cemetery committee meeting held 9th May* had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted.
- b) *Members reviewed the proposal that benches be purchased for the dais*. (minute no 39/14c), with an outline expenditure of £1,200. Cllr Haskins PROPOSED the purchase of 3 Raffles two seater benches from Chic Teak. This was SECONDED by Cllr Curtis, with all in favour.
- c) *Agreement with Watts Gallery*: members were advised that the Agreement would be signed by the 1st June.
- d) *May Hichin portrait*: members considered a donation to Watts Gallery towards the purchase of this important portrait, due to come up for auction shortly. Cllr Haskins suggested that village organisations be asked to contribute and the Parish Council fund the difference between their contributions and £4,000. This was **agreed** and noted that S137 rules allowed for the Parish Council to make grants of around £5 per member of the electorate, in areas that are not specifically within their remit under the Local Government Act 1971. Cllr Stevens subsequently suggested that the Gallery be asked in return to allow local people to visit free of charge, on the production of a pass issued by the Gallery.

66/14 **Members Report: Planning**

Cllr Parsons had sent a report on recent applications. Cllr Graham commented that the Priorsfield School application had been turned down and that there were a couple of small applications approved in the village, one of which was for Old School House.

67/14 **Members report: Local Plan**

Cllr Stevens reported that the first draft of the Local Plan has been published, and the proposed Hogs Back development has been included. The Plan had been presented to the Scrutiny committee at GBC last week, and the general response from councillors had been one of shock, as they now realised the implications of the proposed housing figure. The draft Plan will now go to the Executive Committee on the 4th June, and Full Council on the 19th June. It will then be opened to public consultation on the 1st July.

Members discussed how to ensure that the public knew about the consultation and how important their involvement is. It was agreed to hold a drop in session, starting at 5pm, on the 16th July, the evening of the next Council meeting. Cllr Stevens will organise and run this in liaison with the Clerk. It was also agreed to hold a traffic meeting before that date, so that the infrastructure issues can be tied in.

68/14 **Members Report: Village Hall**

Cllr Graham reported that the Village Hall Committee had recently held its AGM, followed by a normal management meeting.

Sarah Baskerville had been secretary for 19 years, and her long service was recognised by an invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

The committee were currently undergoing a project to replace the old gas pipes in the roof, and had

installed a new water boiler in the kitchen. The hall's website is being re-built. The double glazed windows are going to be replaced and the committee room is to be refurbished.

The committee had asked for possession of the original conveyance document and the Clerk was seeking advice on this.

The landlord at the Harrow pub had advised that his regional manager from Punch Inns was interested in talking to the committee about developing the piece of land behind the village hall for parking.

69/14 **Finance**

- a) *Annual Return*: Members received the Annual Return to the Auditors for the year 2013/14 together with supporting Balance sheet. Cllr Haskins PROPOSED, SECONDED by Cllr Curtis, that members approve the return and approve and complete the Annual Governance Statement. All were in favour. Management report to 31/3/14 and the Internal Auditors report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- b) Schedule of income and payments to end of financial year had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- c) *Financial Regulations*: this item was deferred to the July meeting.
- d) *Grant aid projects*: members proposed that an application be made for an additional bus shelter, and also equipment for the common clearance parties such as chain saws and strimmers.

70/14 **Clerk's report**

- a) *Standing Orders*: this item was deferred to the July meeting.
- b) *Casual vacancy*: the electorate had not called for an election, following GBC's advertisement of this vacancy, which could now be filled by co-option. This vacancy will be advertised in Compton News.
- c) *Bus Shelters*: members received proposals on sites for bus shelters within the parish, circulated prior to the meeting. Costings were itemised in this annex. Members **agreed** that they preferred the Surrey design produced by Littlethorpe bus shelters and also **agreed** in principle to purchase 2 bus shelters, to be placed opposite the village hall and at The Avenue. The total cost would be in the region of £8040, to include delivery and installation. The Clerk would seek further quotations for the July meeting.
Members also agreed to review how the bus stop next to the Old School House could be made more accessible, and to consider how a canopy could be installed at the bus stop next to the church.
- d) *Compton Parking*: The survey had indicated that most would be happy for some parking on the Green, and that this should be the mesh option. Cllr Haskins PROPOSED that the Council proceed with permanent mesh in the area in front of the Club, this was SECONDED by Cllr Curtis, with all in favour. The Clerk will now proceed to obtaining quotations for mesh, and advice from SCC on lowering the kerb. A plan will need to be drawn up of exactly how this will look and how it will work, including how to ensure that cars stay on the mesh.

71/14 **Councillors Business**: *any further business arising from the meeting, to be noted or dealt with on a future agenda*
no further matters were raised.

72/14 **Compton News**

Items for the News had been agreed as the meeting progressed, and included the Drop In Event and the Compton Common working party.

73/14 **Correspondence**:

None had been received.

74/14 **Dates of meetings**:

16th July, 17th September, 19th November.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.20pm.