



COMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notice of Parish Council meeting

Local government Act 1972

Minutes of a meeting of Compton Parish Council, held on

Wednesday 21st January 2015 at 7.00pm

At **Pucks Oak Barn** for the transaction of the under mentioned business

Present: Cllrs F Curtis, J Parsons, K Patel, K Stevens
County Cllr G Johnson
Borough Cllr J Palmer
3 members of the public

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs J Cadman

Cllr Curtis PROPOSED that Cllr Stevens take the chair for the meeting. This was SECONDED by Cllr Patel, with all in favour.

- 01/15 **Apologies for Absence:** were received from Cllr P Graham
Borough Cllr N Ward had also sent his apologies
- 02/15 **Declarations of interest:** Cllr Stevens declared a personal interest in the Local Plan, due to her involvement in protecting the Green Belt at Blackwell Farm, and a financial interest in that area as she would stand to make a financial gain if Green Belt status is removed from that area,
- 03/15 **Minutes of meeting held 19th November 2014:** were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
- 04/15 **Report from the Police:** No police were present. The Clerk had met with PCSO Gregor Culross the previous day, and he had advised that he intended to write a piece for the Newsletter on the recent spate of shed break-ins and ways to protect property.
- 05/15 **Reports from County and Borough Cllrs**
Borough Cllr J Palmer:
1. *Bridge on B3000:* a meeting has been arranged for the 6th February, between the MPs, Network Rail and SCC. The Clerk will arrange for a representative from the Parish Council to attend.
 2. *Cluster funding – flood forum:* Cllr Palmer advised that a flood forum has been set up. Compton has not been invited to join it, the Clerk will speak to the Clerk at Shalford, as will Cllr Palmer. Cllr Palmer will also send the Clerk details of the body that has funding available to help local communities set up flood forums. Cllr Parsons pointed out that there needs to be a joined up solution to flooding, as dealing with the problem in this parish will serve to send it on to Artington. Technical advice is needed.
The Clerk confirmed that she had sent details of areas to be jetted to Cllr Johnson, as the Cluster Group had set aside some money to do this work.
Cllr Palmer advised that GBC have adopted a Surface Water Management Plan, which will look at the whole problem.
 3. *Council budget:* it is likely that council tax will increase by 1.5%, in line with the Council's policy to increase council tax in line with inflation, or below. Central Government have reduced funding by 15% this year, which means that savings will have to be made, but there will be no cut backs. Over the last three years, funding from central government has been cut by 40%. GBC is in a better position to deal with this than most local authorities, as it has invested in property.
 4. *Local Plan:* this is on hold until after the May elections. The draft SHMA was published just before Christmas, but there is no formal consultation at present. The housing numbers are still awaited from ONS. Work is continuing regarding constraints that will affect housing numbers, such as traffic, infrastructure and flooding, and this report will be released at the end of March. Cllr Curtis

asked for confirmation that the constraints would include the Green Belt and Cllr Palmer confirmed that it is included, but not part on the current ongoing work. Cllr Curtis asked if the Green Belt status was going to be re-assessed, Cllr Palmer said that it would not be, but that each site would be looked at and assessed against criteria.

Cllr Stevens advised that the Leader of SCC had said that the County Council would not be able to fund any more school places unless money was provided by central government. She questioned how this would fit in with the proposed increase in housing.

County Cllr G Johnson

1. *Quiet Lane Projects:* in response to a question from Cllr Johnson, Mr Miller advised that the funding issue will not be resolved before activity starts. Work is due to start the following day on the footpath at the side of the road in Down Lane.
2. *Howard Davies Airports Commission:* the commission recommended an extension of the runway at Heathrow, or a new runway at either Heathrow or Gatwick. The resulting extra activity would create 100,000 new jobs, 50% of which would be new people moving into the area. Cllr Johnson will send information to the Clerk and asked members to respond to the consultation document.
3. *Down Lane:* Mr Miller reported that SCC had surveyed Down Lane to record its users and would do another once the road surface is in place. This is part of the Quiet Lane initiative, to improve pedestrian safety.

The area between the Chapel and the Gallery will be marked by 'entrance gates' and a sign depicting horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians along with a name that will differentiate this area. This work will be completed before the 31st March. A sign saying 'unsuitable for HGVs' is needed, but this won't be organised in time to be part of this initiative. Bahram Assadi had promised to look at this again in the new financial year.

Rob Fairbanks had been in favour of a sign on the gate going into the quiet lane saying 'advisory limit 20mph' but the legal limit is 30mph and there are legal repeater to show this. Albury is putting in a 20mph speed limit through the village, and this would be monitored to see how this could be managed.

06/15 **Public Forum**

1. *B3000:* Alexa Chiltern Hunt complained about the very fast cars on the B3000, and she had seen skid marks at the roundabout. It appeared that some cars were using the road as a race track, going up to the roundabout and back again a number of times, in the early hours of the morning.
2. *Drainage in Avenue:* this is very poor and results in pedestrians having to walk in the middle of the road to avoid the puddles. The hedgerow also needs to be cut back. Ideally, there should be a footpath. Cllr Curtis and Mr Miller had taken Bahram Assadi to the Avenue to show him the problem.
3. *New bus shelter:* Mr Miller said that the seat is too high, and the hedge needs to be cut back to improve the sight lines for people looking for the bus.
4. *Spiceall:* the residents of Spiceall are very fed up with anti-social behaviour on Spiceall, particularly in terms of dog mess. The Clerk advised that she had asked the Dog Warden to investigate, he had carried out some measures to highlight the problem and had heard no more from the complainant, so had assumed that the problem was resolved. She would ask him to visit again.
5. *Railing at chapel:* a railing is needed from the lych gate to the Chapel, not further up the cemetery as had been understood by the cemetery committee. The Clerk will raise this at the next Cemetery committee meeting.
6. *Projects committee:* this committee, recently set up, intends to work closely with the Parish Council over various projects in the parish. The previous chairman had been a member and Cllr Curtis had been invited to join in his place. There were two projects currently to be discussed:
 - i. A salt box where Almsgate joins Polsted Lane
 - ii. A village sign on the Green. Resident, Chris Sharples said that he had been considering this, and had come up with a design, incorporating a terracotta panel (similar to those on the Chapel) into an oak sign. It would be slightly Watts like in appearance, to link the two parts of the village. The sign could be spotlighted from the nearest lamp-post. Members were very enthusiastic about this proposal, and asked Mr Sharples to liaise with Cllr Curtis to take this forward.

07/15 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda

08/15 **Members report: Local Plan**

Cllr Steven's report is attached to these minutes.

Housing needs survey: Cllr Curtis said that a housing needs survey would enable the Council to find out if there are people in the village who would benefit from affordable housing. The problem that she perceived is that land owners would want to maximise the profit from their land and at present would make more money from commercial housing. This Council is one of a few that have not done an assessment of need, but in order to ensure that the need is genuine, she believed that it would be better to devise our own questionnaire rather than using a generic one. The Surrey Community Action survey could be used as a basis.

Cllr Parsons did not believe that the Council should do a survey unless members could see a real benefit. After discussion, it was agreed not to pursue this, as it was not possible to see where new housing might be put.

09/15 **Members report: Highways**

Mr Miller reported on Bahram Assadi's visit to the village, when they had stood at the side of the road and tried to cross to Eastbury lane. The result of this is that Compton has been allocated money in the 2015/16 budget for traffic calming in The Street. At present it is not clear what this will be, SCC will put proposals to the Parish Council after the beginning of the financial year.

10/15 **Members report: Allotments and Environmental Projects**

The Clerk was asked to obtain a report from Carolyn Maslin and circulate it to members.

11/15 **Members report: Youth and recreation**

- a) The repairs to the equipment highlighted by the RoSPA report will be carried out in the next week.
- b) *Cycle paths on the common:* David Hunt is looking into the possibility of a mountain bike circuit. There is a question mark over GBC's obligations regarding the common and whether they have been fulfilled., Any proposals for a cycle track would need to come after an agreement has been reached with GBC about how the land is going to be maintained. David Hunt is looking into this.
- c) *Responses from parishioners regarding the playground:* these were reviewed. The Clerk will speak to Playdale, who make wooden equipment, and bring designs to the next meeting.
- d) *Mole hills:* there are molehills all over the Green.

12/15 **Members report: Watts Gallery and Cemetery**

Cllr Curtis will take the Parish Council place on the cemetery committee. The next meeting will be held in February.

13/15 **Members report: Planning**

There have been a number of planning applications, mainly routine, but four in particular worth noting:

1. *Vinery at Down Place:* (Cllr Stevens declared a personal interest in this application) This is an old vinery. There had previously been an application to turn the building into a residential property, which was declined. This application is to turn it back into a vinery, but with the addition of a toilet, shower, etc for the gardener, and three parking spaces. It appears to be planning by stealth. A letter had been written by a neighbour, stating that he was not against the restoration of the vinery but that there was no requirement for a gardener to have a rest and recreation area. Members agreed that they were also of this opinion. If the Council decides to approve the application, a condition should be attached to prevent the vinery being used for residential purposes.
2. *Mane Chance:* there had been a complaint from neighbours about breaches of their planning permission: a car park in the wrong place, traffic late at night, issues about access, etc. Cllr Parsons had arranged to meet with both sides and had so far met with Jenny Seagrove, the complainants however postponed the meeting with him. There had been a site inspection by the planning enforcement officers who recommended that the complainants monitor late night traffic but found that there was no breach of the permission . Cllr Parsons noted that the whole area is very well kept and that Mane Chance always rectified things when they did anything that upset the neighbours.
3. *Priorsfield School:* are having some work done and the Priorsfield Road Residents Association are concerned about access. There will potentially be a lot of construction traffic on an unsuitable road. Cllr Parsons will ask Cllr Graham if he will liaise with the Priors Hatch Resident's Association, as he lives close by.
4. There had been a number of Certificate of Lawfulness applications, and some for tree work. Cllr

Parsons had not received any complaints from neighbours concerning these, and was content to leave these to GBC's expertise.

14/14 **Members report: Village Hall**

Car parking: Cllr Parsons considered that there was merit in using the front of the common for car parking, where cars would be closest to the club and the village hall, and far enough away from houses not to be taken over by residents. However, it first needed to be established whether more parking was needed.

Mr Borrett reminded the meeting that he had investigated the various areas currently available for parking in the village: the village hall, the club and the church, and considered that they should be able to liaise with each other over events.

The survey carried out last year asked residents if they would be happy with occasional parking, and the question remains to be established as to what is occasional parking. The club now has events every week, the village hall is busy.

Cllr Stevens believed that a lot of residents would object to parking at the side of the Green.

Members discussed the piece of land behind the village hall, at the edge of the Harrow car park. Punch taverns had originally turned down the proposal to sub-let, and had then agreed to consider it, but it was understood that the pub is now on the market. The land could be roughly surfaced, and then chained so that it was only used for events.

Cllr Graham would be asked for the village hall's view on this piece of land.

Members also discussed parking on the Green opposite the Club, but it was noted that the majority of people who had responded to the survey had not been in favour of this.

It was suggested that a meeting be arranged between the Parish Council, and the Club and Village Hall committees to discuss this and bring it to a conclusion. [*post meeting, Karen Stevens & Fiona Curtis agreed to canvass opinion of those living by the Green prior to the meeting mentioned above*]

15/15 **Annual Parish Meeting**

Members agreed that this should be held on Tuesday 14th April, at the Village Club if it is available. As usual, village associations would be asked, but also local businesses. The theme would be 'Celebrating Compton' and although there would be presentations on the Local Plan and Housing need, the emphasis would be on networking and finding out what goes on in the village.

Leone would be asked to do the food, as before each person would be given tickets for 2 free drinks.

16/15 **Annual Litter Pick**

Members agreed to hold this on the 7th March, starting at 10,30am at the village hall. The Clerk will organise soup for mid-day. (Subsequent to the meeting, it was discovered that the village hall was booked on Saturday mornings all through March, and so this was re-arranged to start and end at the village club).

17/15 **Finance**

a) *Management accounts to 31st December* had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved.

b) *Schedule of income and expenditure to 31st December* had been circulated prior to the meeting and the total expenditure for November and December of £16654.62 was noted and approved.

Cllr Curtis asked about the donation from Watts Gallery arranged as part of the agreement. The Clerk agreed to remind the Gallery of the need to ensure this payment was made in full, before the end of the financial year.

18/13 **Parish Council powers and duties**

Parish Councils are statutory bodies and are the elected first tier of Local Government. Parish Councillors are elected to represent and be the voice of their community. Parish Councillors are independent, work with their community to make improvements, and have the interests of their village at heart.

This Parish Council has taken legal advice concerning recent verbal and written comments, made by an individual, appertaining to the actions and intentions of Parish Councillors. It has been advised that it is neither illegal nor unlawful to be interested and involved in local issues, especially at this time of the emerging Local Plan, and that the comments made are defamatory of the hard work that councillors do for the community.

19/15 **Clerk's Report**

a) *Parish handyman:* Mr Borrett reported that he was experiencing a problem with disposing of vegetation when clearing pavements. It was agreed that he should list the paths that need clearing, and contractors engaged who have the facility to get rid of the spoil. The Clerk would ask people to

cut back their hedges and trees via the newsletter.

Mr Borrett undertook to mark problem areas on a map of Compton, so it is clear where work needs to be done.

The laurels at the bottom of Fowlers Croft need trimming back and Mr Borrett undertook to do this. Mr Borrett advised that he is hoping to arrange a series of walks with the Compton Village Association, and these would take place twice a year. Not only would it be an opportunity for networking, but any problems observed on the walks could be reported back to the Parish Council.

- b) Parish Council elections: the Clerk reminded members of the Parish Council elections in May. She would organise receipt of the election packs and asked members to get these from her, and to return the completed forms to her so that she could deliver them to the Borough Council. She will also mention the election in Compton News and ask anyone interested to contact her for more information.
- c) *Bus shelter*: it was agreed to establish who owns the land where the bus shelter used to be opposite the Withies, and then consider replacing the bus shelter later in the year if the area can be cleared to improve sight lines.

20/15 **Action list:** had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted.

21/15 **Councillors business:** *any further business for noting or including on a future agenda*
No further matters were raised.

22/15 **Open Forum**
No further matters were raised.

23/15 **Compton News**
Items raised during the meeting, including the annual parish meeting and the litter pick, would be included for the February edition.

24/15 **Correspondence**

- a) *Surrey Hills Management Plan*: Cllr Stevens advised that she had talked to Rob Fairbanks, director of the Surrey Hills AONB Board, about the inclusion of the word 'public' in the policy relating to protection of views into and out of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). She pointed out that the word 'public' does not appear in this context in other AONB management plans and that its inclusion removed a level of protection for land which formed the AONB setting. Cllr Stevens advised that Mr Fairbanks is proposing to draw up further guidance to address issues around the setting of the AONB. Cllr Stevens also advised that the Guildford Green Belt group want the Surrey Hills to be re-designated as a National Park.
The Clerk was asked to establish why this Parish Council was not consulted on the management plan.
- b) *Local Council review*: this was tabled at the meeting.

25/15 **Dates of meetings:** 18th March.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.15pm