



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in Compton Village Hall on Tuesday 24th May 2022.
Commencing at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Councillor Dave Aldis, Chair
Councillor Rebecca Pinfold, Vice-Chair
Councillor Tracy Brown
Councillor Jude Cunningham
Councillor Stephen Dearnis
Councillor Linda Moss
Councillor Alison Strong
Councillor Sharon Tiller
Councillor Ian Tong

Members Absent: None

Officers Present: Sarah Marshman, Clerk/RFO

In Attendance: Louise James, Greenham Trust
District Councillor Carolyne Culver
3 members of the public

Minutes

- 1 Apologies for absence**
There were no apologies for absence.
- 2 To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th March 2021**
Those present agreed the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes.
- 3 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th March 2021**
There were no matters arising.

4 Presentation from Greenham Trust

Louise James gave a presentation about the Greenham Trust, starting with a history of the Greenham Common, and how the Greenham Trust purchased part of the land in the 1990s. The Greenham Trust raises funds through the rent of its buildings at Greenham Business Park. The surplus on this rent is used to provide funding through the trust, giving grants to good causes of between £3-4 million each year.

5 Report from District Councillor Carlyne Culver

CC noted that the Institute site will be given outline planning permission with permission to commence demolition. We are awaiting more information on what will happen with the Pickled Pig building. A condition will be included that no one can take up residence on the site until the foul water issues are resolved.

The Parish Council thanked Carlyne for all her support throughout the planning process for the Institute.

6 Parish Council Reports:

6.1 Report from the Chair

For the first time in over two years, the Parish Council held a face-to-face meeting at the start of May. It seemed strange at first, but we will get used to it again quickly. During the dark days of Covid, which we all hope are now past us, the Council continued its' work as usual, with meetings held online, via Zoom.

It was still a busy time for the council. We have seen the completion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which went through its' referendum with a high majority in favour of its adoption, from the significant turnout of the public, to vote. This document will now be part of the West Berks Council Planning Policy.

The Sports Pavilion and Recreation Ground have seen significant expenditure to improve and upgrade the facilities. New concrete has been laid at the front of the building to provide a hard area and address the problem of water laying there. New goal posts and nets have been installed and I am glad to report that Compton FC enjoyed a successful, post-Covid, season.

There has been new seating and tables installed, which, sadly, have seen some vandalism. This has been repaired. We have also replaced a number of the bins around the Rec and the village. These are a visual improvement over the old ones. It is therefore concerning to still hear reports of dog fouling in the village. Please pick up and allow all of us to enjoy our village as we should be able to.

The seating in the Youth Shelter has also been improved and I am glad to see it now being used well.

We will also be looking at installing CCTV in the Recreation Ground.

In the wider village, the street lighting improvement work has now begun, after a pause. Sadly, our desire to install solar-powered lights has not been realised but we will be continuing to look at the technology for inclusion in the future. Please report any non-working lights, to the Parish clerk.

Sadly, one of the long-established trees in Gordon Crescent is diseased and, on the recommendation of our arborist, it will be felled soon. We will consider its' replacement in due course. The hedge in Newbury Lane is also in need of attention and we await the report from our arborist. We do have some trees in stock to plant and a large number of bulbs were planted this year.

We have now been informed that the Secretary of State will not be calling the Pirbright Institute Planning Application in, so West Berks will now agree the Section 106 agreement with Homes England. I believe that work on-site will soon commence, once that happens.

I must record the unique occasion in the history of the English Monarchy that is about to happen, namely the Platinum Jubilee, next week. I know that the group organising the event to celebrate this in the Recreation Ground are working hard to mark the occasion and they hope to see lots of you there on the day.

As always, there are a growing number of people to thank for all their hard work, particularly as we reflect on Covid. It reminds me how fortunate we are to have facilities in Compton that have provided services right through the pandemic, particularly, the Shop, the Foinavon, the Surgery, and also the marvellous Volunteer Group, led by Shelley and Jane. We thank them all.

We also thank all members of the NDP Steering Group and its' working parties for the tremendous energy and effort put into the process. This has resulted in a comprehensive and well-received set of policies. Most thanks go to all the villagers who took the time to come and visit the various events organised by the NDP and providing opinions and information. It could not have been done without your support.

Thank you also to the allotment managers who oversee our two allotment sites.

I would like to thank all members of the Parish Council for their continuing and increasing commitment and hard work. Thanks also, to Carlyne Culver for her work in supporting our communities at West Berks Council level.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to our clerk Sarah, without whose hard work and energy, this council would not be able to function at all.

6.2 Financial Report from the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

The Clerk presented her finance report which is in Appendix 1.

7 Presentation of local reports are invited from:

The Downs School

Compton Primary School

Compton Preschool

The Village Hall Please see the report in Appendix 2.

Compilations Please see the report in Appendix 3.

Downlands Sports Centre Please see the report in Appendix 4.

Newbury Lane Allotments

School Road Allotments Please see the report in Appendix 5.

Autumn Group The Autumn Group gave a short presentation on the background and current activities of the group.

Scouts Please see the report in Appendix 6.

Guides

Compton Players Please see the report in Appendix 7.

8 Questions from members of the public

There were no questions from members of the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:21 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1: Finance Report

The finance report for Compton Parish Council for the financial year 2021/22 is presented. The figures have been reviewed by the Internal Auditor and will be considered by the Council at its meeting on 6th June 2022.

Income

The total income received from all sources of funding was £63,413. Significant figures included in this total are:

- Precept £49,050.
- VAT refund £4,425.
- Compilations advertising fees £1,665.
- CIL £6,790.
- Allotment rent £949.
- Football pitch and Sports Pavilion hire £450.

Expenditure

The total expenditure for the year was £84,479. Some of the significant figures included in this total are:

- Grounds maintenance £4,317.
- Allotments expenses £631.
- Insurance £946.
- Compilations printing costs (offset by advertising income) £2,562.
- Footway lighting electricity and maintenance £6,948.
- VAT (reclaimable in the next financial year) £6,050.
- Neighbourhood Development Plan £425.
- Professional advice £6,810.
- Play equipment maintenance £2,296.
- Tree maintenance £1,495.
- Refuse disposal £421.
- Vandalism repair £400.
- War memorial maintenance £669.
- Sports Pavilion running costs £2,388.

- Concrete pad and drainage outside Sports Pavilion £4,459.
- New goal posts and pitch marking £3,345.
- New refuse bins and installation £7,402.
- Improvements to the Youth Shelter seats £895.

Grants

A grant of £5,000 was made towards the new roof for the Scout Hut. This grant was made via The Good Exchange, which provided matched funding. The council also made a donation of £82 to the Royal British Legion.

The Council received no other grant requests during the year and would like to invite local groups to apply for grant funding this year by completing the form available on its website by 15th September 2022.

Looking Forward to 2022/23

The Council will increase the precept a little to £51,000. A Band D household will pay a total of £77.68 in the year or just £1.49 per week.

It is expected that large items of expenditure will continue to include grounds maintenance, street lighting electricity and maintenance, and employment costs. The Council will continue with the street lighting replacement programme.

The Council has completed a considerable level of work on the development of the new burial ground to date, however, the impact of COVID restrictions delayed delivery on a small number of planning conditions, resulting in a project pause. However, since early this year, activity is back on track. At this time, it is highly probable that costs relating to the delivery of the Parish Burial Ground will be required to be met from the Council's earmarked reserves.

Appendix 2: Village Hall

We are delighted to be back up and running with a good number of bookings taking place over the year.

Our village fete is due to be taking place this year, we have really missed it over the past couple of years.

We have had some work done to the village hall this year, this has included guttering replacement and repairs. Work will soon be carried out at the Wilkins Centre and Preschool.

Our committee members have stayed the same with the exception of Dave Morris. After his passing in September we've felt a great loss to our team. We are just hoping we can live up to his standards as time goes on.

Appendix 3: Compilations

COMPILATIONS REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 2022

I am very pleased to report that more people are showing an interest in publishing their clubs and their activities. It has taken a long time for them to do this. When I first started to ask to for information I was treated with suspicion and was frequently asked why I wanted to know!!

I know that my persistence has paid off and the idea that villagers are interested in what happens in the village is now accepted by the majority. Sadly, there are still a few gaps in the general information. But I am working on it.

I am also working on the concept that a deadline is just that and I am pleased to say that there have only been a couple of times when articles arrive too late. More people are sending their articles after the first reminder. This is very helpful as I can sort the layout of the magazine well in advance and only have to adjust at the very end.

I set the time at noon on the day and can then send the proof to the printers that afternoon. This has been working well and means the magazines arrive through letterboxes by the first of the month.

The printers are extremely helpful, and we have a good relationship. They have only been late once in the past and that was due to a breakdown of the machinery. I can't praise them enough.

Faye McGeehan organises the distribution of Compilations and has 'a well-oiled machine' of several volunteers who brave the elements and deliver the magazines as soon as they receive them. She deserves a very big thank you as she is so diligent.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Parish Council for entrusting their Parish Magazine to me and I hope that the advertisers continue to use us and enable Compilations to be viable.

Appendix 4: Downland Sports Centre

Downland Sports Centre forms part of the West Berkshire Council Leisure Management Contract and is managed on behalf of the Council by Legacy Leisure.

The Covid pandemic has had a major impact on leisure facilities across the country and for much of the previous year facilities were closed by law as part of the Governments response. Facilities began to re-open on April 12th 2021 – like many areas focus was placed on the larger facilities, especially those with swimming pools as part of the offer, and as part of a recovery plan to minimise the risk of furthering the pandemic the re-opening of Downlands Sports Centre was delayed until September 2021.

The facilities available limited the scope of the programme that can be developed at the site (e.g. classes can only be put on in the Sports Hall which restricts the type of class due to the nature of the floor.

In the 7 months (Sept 2021 to March 2022) the total number of attendances recorded at the centre was 2,940 (this compares to 5,602 attendances in the same period leading up to the first Covid lockdown).

The last seven months has also seen a total of 262 gym attendances (compared to 389 in the same period pre Covid lockdowns).

The majority of activity seen at the centre pre covid and once again since the reopening is related to club activity and block bookings.

The Local Education Authority have submitted proposals to refurbish and extend the current sports hall on the site from three badminton courts to four courts, move the gym down stairs extending the number of stations and the addition of a room for fitness classes and improved changing areas. If approved these would be available for community use outside of curriculum time.

The West Berkshire Council Sport and Leisure Team have recently commenced the procurement of a new leisure contract to commence on July 1st 2023. Seven leisure operators have expressed an interest and this will be followed through over the coming months with the successful operator announced in April 2023.

Appendix 5: School Road Allotments

Occupancy again is full, with a waiting list of 2. We have had quite a bit of movement this year with new people on the site. I will hold a welcome tea and cake later in the year now that we can safely do this again. The annual tidy up of the hedge and verge is underway, mindful not to disturb any nesting birds. Sovereign has not managed to cut its hedge back for 2 years now so it really is desperate for a trim this autumn (it's growing into the main path.) The main gate is still a bit of an issue as the post really needs replacing. We have cut back the brambles from the gate to enable safer access.

Over the winter have had a couple of woodchip deliveries which has really helped with some of the muddier paths.

Unfortunately, due to avian flu, chickens had to go into lockdown again this time from November to May, only in recent weeks have the restrictions been lifted so thankfully they are out again. No reported cases in Compton or locally that I am aware of.

Our contracts have been revised and a new welfare contract was added for those keeping wildlife. We have also benefited from CPC joining the Allotment Society.

The ongoing water leak from tap 1 is still awaiting the plumber to fix. The other leak from a spur I have managed to fix.

Appendix 6: 1st Compton Scouts

The Scout Group has bounced back fully from the COVID-19 lockdown which did cause a reduction in numbers.

All three Sections (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts) are full, and the Explorer unit is healthy number wise.

All sections are back to sleepovers and camps, both at the Compton HQ and away. More camps are planned to the New Forest and Lake District this summer.

We do still need Adult volunteers to join the group to help us deliver an exciting programme to all the young People.

The Hut and Grounds have had a vital boost.

We have a new roof! This was the result of around £61,000 of fundraising. The Group would like to thank Compton Parish Council for their £5,000 contribution.

This made a significant difference as it demonstrates community engagement for the changes, and that makes further fundraising that much easier.

The Group (and all other users) would also like to thank CPC for its continuing support with the cutting of the Grass at the Hut.

This makes a major improvement to the facilities with the regular cuts keeping everything usable year-round.

The Scouts were very happy to help out with a tidy of the rec and clean of Play Area and MUGA. We are very happy to make this a regular activity.

Appendix 7: Compton Players

After our successful "toe back in the water" with *Evil Will Come* in November 2021, the critics said: "I find the Compton Players guilty of delivering an extraordinary one-act play in a most exceptional manner"; "Well done, Compton Players for a wonderful performance, that kept us all on the edge of our seats"; "It was, as is usual with Compton Players, a smooth, well-paced production with a sting in the tail"

Evil Will Come was actually written and directed by our own Helen Saxton under the pseudonym Alexi Stonehouse, and now she is doing it again. But differently. First, she is taking it to the Abingdon Festival of one-act plays, with the original cast on the 15th June in the Unicorn Theatre at 7.30 pm.

And then it's going to the Edinburgh Fringe in August - Helen Saxton has changed it from the cast of seven to a cast of two – herself and Pete Watt. Intriguing. If you want to see how she's done it, there is a one-night-only preview in Compton Village Hall on 14th July you can book your tickets here: <https://www.comptonplayers.co.uk/book-tickets/>

Our next production will be on the 26th-29th October 22, when Eric Saxton will produce *Happy Acres*, a farce by H Connolly, rehearsals will start in August, the players are really looking forward to doing a full-length play, our first since the Covid outbreak.

Have a lovely summer, and we look forward to seeing many of you at our next performances in the Village Hall.