

Compton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held on Monday 16th March 2020 at 7:00pm in the Wilkins Centre, Compton

Councillors present: Councillors David Aldis (Chair), Dan Neate, Rebecca Pinfold, Keith Simms, Alison Strong and Ian Tong.

Councillors not present: Councillors Mark Birtwistle, Peter McGeehin and Linda Moss.

In attendance: Sarah Marshman (Clerk), Dr. James Cave (Downland Practice), Alasdair Cunningham (Greenfest), Carolyne Culver (District Councillor).
5 members of the public

- 19/20-APM-01 Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Birtwistle, Peter McGeehin and Linda Moss.
- 19/20-APM-02 Introduction by the Council Chairman**
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 19/20-APM-03 To approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 18th March 2019**
It was resolved that the minutes be accepted as a true record. They were then signed by the Chairman.
- 19/20-APM-04 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th March 2019**
There were none.
- 19/20-APM-05 To invite District Councillor Carolyne Culver to address the meeting**
West Berkshire Council are seeking advice from the Government with regards to the coronavirus outbreak. The Council is liaising regularly with public health officials and holding regular meetings.
The Member's Bid process has secured funding for other Councils in the District, with the next deadline on 14th May.
- 19/20-APM-06 To invite Dr James Cave from The Downland Practice to address the meeting**
An update was given on the current understanding of the coronavirus. It was confirmed the Compton branch will remain open at this time, but that all patients will need to attend a telephone consultation and will be invited to attend the surgery only if it is needed.
- 19/20-APM-07 To invite Alasdair Cunningham from GreenFest to address the meeting**
Greenfest was a new event held in 2019 in Hampstead Norreys with the aim of inspiring 'green' ideas and connecting the community with ideas and solutions. The event was organised by over 100 volunteers and was supported by a variety of local businesses and by charitable and community organisations. Another event will be held on the 5th September 2020.

Parish Council Reports:

- **Reports from the Chairman and Parish Councillors**
- **Financial Report from the Clerk to the Council**

Report from the Chairman of the Council:

As I write this report, the water is back with us. I am pleased to record that, having undergone maintenance, the water is flowing through the village without the flooding that was evident in the last event. I wish to place on record, thanks to the flood warden, Peter McGeehin, for his work in this area, following the last event, which has seen the improvements in the water course. It is however, concerning that we are again, experiencing surcharging sewers although I am not sure of the cause, as there have been issues with the pumps, resulting in backing up of material to at least Tithe Barn Close. I am aware that Thames Water is currently aware of the issue and working on the problem. Certainly, ground water ingress is not helping!

The outbreak of the Coronavirus is a challenge for the country at the moment and will impact our community in some ways. All I feel we can ask is that people become good neighbours and look out for the elderly or vulnerable, without putting themselves at risk. The Parish Council recommends following the latest information from the Government and we are publicising this news on our website, Facebook and noticeboards.

Throughout the year, the Council and the Clerk have continued to discharge their functions that benefit the community. We organised three litter picks, which were well supported by members of the Parish. Look out for notice of the next one. The more people that join us make the whole job quicker and we can all enjoy Pats teas and bacon rolls at the end.

We have given grant funding to local bodies on request—for details see Compilations and the meeting minutes. Many documents are posted on the Council page, so that you can see what the council actually does for the community. We also post regularly on Facebook.

This year we took the decision to donate a sum of money to support the Mobile Library Service. This is only one of the areas that West Berks Council is asking Parish Councils to fund.

We continue to maintain the grounds that we own and the play area facilities, dog bins and seating. Mention of dog bins prompts me to remind the few irresponsible dog owners to pick up after their animals. The money we spend on dogs bins and emptying is not small and it is annoying that the lazy few are spoiling the village for adults and children alike.

We have a busy year coming up with a number of projects ongoing. The NDP Group are working hard and we hope that this will be completed very early next year.

I would like to thank all the councillors, volunteers and all who give their time freely to the work of the council and the community. Our Clerk is a vital part of the Council processes and I thank her for her continued hard work. Our new District Councillor is

also working hard for the communities she is responsible for and I thank her for her support for our Parish.

Finally, the past year has seen the retirement of two long standing Councillors, namely Mike Pinfold and Pat Burnett and I would like to thank them for all their years' work for the Council.

Please keep healthy!

Financial Report from the Clerk to the Council

The financial report is at Attachment 1.

19/20-APM-09 Presentation of local reports have been invited from/on:

The Flood Warden: Attachment 2

The Downs School

Compton Primary School

Compton Preschool: Attachment 3

Scouts

Guides

The Village Hall

Downlands Sports Centre

Newbury Lane Allotments

School Road Allotments: Attachment 4

Autumn Group

Compilations: Attachment 5

Compton Players

19/20-APM-10 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

19/20-APM-11 Items for information and consideration

It is likely the VE Day 75 celebration planned for 8th May would instead be held on VJ Day.

Meeting closed 8:07pm.

Chairman:

Date:

Compton Parish Council Annual Finance Report

Annual Parish Meeting 2019/20

The finance report for Compton Parish Council for the financial year 2019/20 is presented. Please note that as the financial year is not yet completed, all figures are provisional and will be subject to audit.

Income

The total income received from all sources of funding was £78,477. Significant figures included in this total are:

- Precept £45,850
- VAT refund £3,467;
- Compilations advertising fees £2,459;
- CIL receipts £27,562 – it should be noted that CIL is a planning charge to ensure development contributes to the cost of infrastructure. It cannot be budgeted in advance and is earmarked for infrastructure expenditure only.

Expenditure

The total expenditure for the year was £47,644. Significant figures included in this total are:

- Grounds maintenance £4,796;
- Allotments expenses (excluding grounds maintenance work which is included in the above item) £722;
- Removal of the old garages from the Recreation Ground £2660;
- Purchase of five salt bins £750;
- Total employment costs £13,894;
- Insurance £1,704;
- Compilations printing costs (offset by advertising income of £2,459 above) £2,509;
- Street lighting electricity and maintenance £5,233;
- VAT (reclaimable in the next financial year) £2,616;
- Burial ground development £2,698;
- Audit fees £545;

- Neighbourhood development plan £1,908.

Grants and Events

Grants totalling £1,833 were provided to various organisations within the Parish of Compton.

The following organisations benefited from the grants process: Compton Scout and Guide Hut; Pang Valley Flood Forum; 1st Compton Scout Group; Compton Archery; 1st Compton Rainbows; Compton Pre-school; Autumn Group; and Compton Primary School.

In addition to the grants given, the Council provided funding to assist with the costs of staging the Christmas events.

Looking Forward to 2020/21

The precept will increase from £45,850 to £49,050. This is an increase of 7%. A Band D household will pay a total of £74.94, an increase of £4.84 per Band D household. A Band D household will therefore pay just £1.44 per week.

It is expected that large items of expenditure will continue to include grounds maintenance, street lighting electricity and maintenance, and employment costs. Costs towards the development of the Burial Ground are expected to increase significantly during the financial year as work is completed. There is also a planned refurbishment of the Sports Pavilion, costing around £15,000. As work progresses on the Neighbourhood Development Plan, costs may also increase. The Council will also continue to provide grants to applicant organisations within the parish in line with its grants policy.

Flood Warden's Report

It is six years since the River Roden and River Pang were last flowing through Compton and it is worthwhile summarising the infrastructure improvements that have been made since the 2014 flood, before assessing whether there has in fact been any tangible benefit.

Improvements have been accomplished through the combined efforts of landowners, riparian owners, West Berkshire Council, Environment Agency and Thames Water Utilities, augmented by Pang Valley Flood Forum (that Compton Parish Council supports). The summary below is ordered roughly from upstream (East Ilsley) to downstream (Hampstead Norreys):

- i. Dennisford Road culvert and headwalls cleared;
- ii. Ilsley Arch culvert cleared;
- iii. Drainage channel and by-pass ditch dug from TWU facility on Ilsley Road to the boundary/roadside swale opposite Danetree;
- iv. Headwalls constructed on the safety-critical two-pipe culvert under the field entrance that leads from the swale to the ditch alongside Ilsley Road;
- v. Clearing of the Ilsley Road swale and ditches, and Cheseridge Road ditches;
- vi. Trash screens installed at the culvert beginning at Fairfield and the culvert under Wallingford Road;
- vii. Horn Street surface water drainage pipe repaired;
- viii. High Street kerb-side gully outflow cleared and headwall refurbished;
- ix. Trash screen to the High Street culvert improved and a monitoring watch introduced;
- x. Culvert under Cheap Street across to the High Street culvert rebuilt;
- xi. High Street culvert surveyed and a monitoring watch introduced;
- xii. Kerbside gullies at east end of High Street excavated and refurbished;
- xiii. School Road surface water drainage improved;
- xiv. Burrell Road culvert cleared;
- xv. Culvert under the disused railway bridge cleared to reveal a brick floor in mint condition;
- xvi. Channel alongside Aldworth Road surveyed and reprofiled when two culverts at field entrances were replaced to increase flow;
- xvii. Debris at High Elms culvert entrance cleared several times;
- xviii. Channel through Chaubury excavated to improve flow from Ilsley Road.
- xix. Channel near the Sewage Treatment Works improved and footbridge raised;
- xx. Outflow channel from Sewage Treatment Works cleared of trees, roots, and widened with bank improved to support the service road;
- xxi. Culvert under Coombe Road rebuilt and the downstream channel cleared.

Rainfall in the five months to February 2020 at 599mm was just 10% less than the same period ending February 2014. A slightly lower stress on the watercourse this year also arises from the intensity of the rainfall: in the earlier period most of the rain fell in just three months. Nonetheless it is possible to demonstrate that this year, at equivalent flow volume, the River Pang entering the Burrell Road culvert is 25% lower than it was in 2014. The lower level wasn't quite sufficient to stop surcharging from the inspection chambers along Aldworth Road but it probably contributed to a reduction in it.

Attachment 3:

Compton Pre-School

Compton Pre-School continues to be a success, with 27 local children attending. We have 3 more children starting after Easter. In September we will see 16 children off to the local schools and 16 children are returning after the summer break and we are currently advertising in the local area.

We still have a good uptake on the 30 hours free childcare initiative. The majority of children with access to these hours do use their full 30-hour entitlement.

We have had a few more staffing changes across the remainder of last year. At the end of the year we said goodbye to a member of staff. We were successful in recruiting a replacement.

We are still in the process of organising the shade sails. We have had to look into the sizing and fixtures slightly more which has caused the delay in getting these up.

We had another successful santa sleigh fundraiser back in December – no torrential rain this time so that made for a much better event!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council for their continued support for preschool. I hope that the relationship between both organisation's continues to thrive.

My long-term future goals for the Pre-School is still to continue to improve the outside area.

The village hall kindly arranged an outside tap to be fitted and this has allowed us to be able to clean the outside area better. The persistent damp weather had caused excess moss growth on the soft tarmac area, which had made it very slippery. After a good go over with the pressure washer, there has been major improvement and the children have loved getting back outside to use the garden and play equipment again.

We have discussed the idea of removing the mound firstly as this area gets very worn and gets very muddy over the winter months and secondly as we are infested with an annual influx of Hershey mining bees over the summer months thus making this area out of bounds! We don't have the biggest of garden space so to we are trying to make the most of the area we do have and find it very restrictive when we have to cordon off parts of the garden.

Also over this winter we have noticed our outside shelter roofing is now leaking. This means the children's belongings have been getting wet under the shelter and the shelter is no longer sufficient on rainy days!

We have submitted our contributions and have been liaising with the NDP team in light of the proposed development and what impact that may have on us as a Pre-School.

Attachment 4:

School Road Allotments

A quiet year on the plot, tranquil retreat for many. I hear wonderful comments of how people are enjoying this space - *“A lovely morning at the allotment, lots to do, but feeling more positive – it’s amazing how much being with nature makes you feel more grounded.”*

Occupancy is full again for 2020-21 with a waiting list of 3. I have not heard of any movement requests so consideration will be given to the compost plot which has failed to be utilised effectively therefore I propose renting it. Renewals will be sent out at the beginning of April.

The water supply has been restored on the middle tap however I believe we still have an issue with the one at the entrance.

We are still struggling with cars being parked over the access gateway. I requested last year new signage but as yet not heard.

A tenant has requested a large tree on the boundary be removed as causing a problem. I understand this is being dealt with.

All in all everything is growing well ;-)

Compilations

This past year has seen a few changes in and around the village. Consequently, there have been quite 'newsy' magazines. The last change to Compilations was the decision of East Ilsley Parish Council to withdraw funding. The magazine will no longer be distributed in that village and future editions will be mainly Compton news.

It is quite fortuitous as there has been an increase in contributors. I am thrilled to be able to say that I have not had to 'winkle out' information in the last few months and there have been several compliments about the content. Even one lady who thought everything should be on-line stopped me and apologised for her comments. She and her friends now like the printed version to read with their coffee!! It is not just the older inhabitants who like reading from books. But there is room for both.

Advertising has been quite consistent and just recently there have been new contributors to replace those who no longer wish to advertise.

I am still trying to make sure that all village clubs and groups are represented. This is easier said than done but things are improving. I can be like a dog with a bone, so, perhaps next year I will be able to report an even bigger list of contributors.

I would like to thank the Parish Council for their advice and encouragement. I would also like to thank the trusty team of distributors that brave all weathers to push the magazines through letterboxes with special thanks to the organiser who does an admirable job. One individual has distributed the magazines single-handedly in East Ilsley for years and he deserves special thanks. The print-room at West Berks Council Offices deserve a mention too as they are so helpful and speedy.