

# SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 11th January 2017

at 7.30pm in Shipton Gorge Village Hall

**Open Forum** Geoff Fry, Chairman of Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council, attended to express P&SC's concern of about the potential loss of the 210 Bus Service. He was assured SGPC felt equally worried that the bus service would be lost and had made strong representation in the recent Survey. Mr Fry had also attended L Cheney PC meeting but felt they did not feel strongly that the bus service should remain. He also clarified that if the bus started its journey (ie in Bridport) before 9.30am residents with passes would be unable to use their bus passes regardless of what time the bus arrived in Puncknowle or even later in Shipton. This had not been fully understood by the SGPC Councillors. There is a WATAG meeting on Thursday 26th January at 6:30 pm at W.I. Hall, North Street, Bridport DT6 3JQ at which a DCC representative will be answering questions and it was generally felt it would be important for as many people to attend as possible. The Chairman thanked Mr Fry and assured him Shipton Gorge would do all they could to support the retention of the service and would hopefully have some representatives at the above meeting. It was agreed a bus 2 days a week would be the minimum ideal solution to be fought for. Cllr John Russell felt it important that it be pointed out that it was the only way for some people to get into town. The Chairman thanked Cllr Fry for coming and that it was good to see someone from another parish council and that it was beneficial for all councillors to try to attend adjacent villages' meetings occasionally.

**Present** Cllr Mary Boughton (MB), Cllr Richard Cunningham (RC), Cllr John Porter, Cllr Hilary Cunningham (HC), Cllr Christine Huxtable (CH), and Cllr Diane Buckenham

**In attendance** Parish Clerk - Paula Biss (PB), John Russell (JR) District Councillor.

**17.01 Apologies for absence** – Cllr Ron Coatsworth, Nigel Wheeler.

**17.02 Declaration of Interests** – There were none.

**17.03 Neighbourhood Policing update** – No report was received and there had been no correspondence from the Police regarding the new PCSO for Shipton, although it was understood that Puncknowle and Swyre were aware of their PCSO. Clerk to query this.

**17.04 Chairman to sign Minutes of meeting held on 9 November 2016.** These had been circulated and placed on the website. They were unanimously agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman. Pro. Cllr H Cunningham, Sec Cllr R Cunningham

**17.05 To consider any matters arising from the Minutes, not on the Agenda.**

- a) Letter to Rosamond Avenue residents had been completed and were due to be delivered. MB confirmed it was on the same lines as the one sent to residents of Chapel Street earlier in the year.
- b) New Inn sign on fingerposts. Clerk to enquire how to go about getting "brown" sign for pub. This information could then be passed to the New Inn when the fingerpost at Burbitt Lane was finished and their sign needed to be removed.
- c) Bird scarer noise – nothing further had been heard and the scarer removed. RC had informed the complainant how to report this

Signed.....Richard Cunningham, Vice Chairman.....Dated.....8 March 2017.....

Chair Richard Cunningham

# SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

## 17.06 Chairman's Report

- *We still have one vacancy on the council, so if you know of anyone who might be interested in joining us, please point them in the right direction.*
- *Since the last meeting we've had notification about the removal of our payphone in Brook Street and I've held meetings with the clerk regarding this and the proposal from our last meeting to install a defibrillator in the village. Both these items are on the agenda later and you will have already received a paper outlining the options available to us on both of these.*
- *An enquiry was received via our website from a Michael Fynes who has family connections to the village from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nigel forwarded his email to me and also to others including Ernie Thomas who has suggested in contact the Dorset History Archives in Dorchester. There is little I could add to this myself but if the name is familiar to anyone else then let me or the clerk know and we will put you in touch with Mr Fynes. **Nigel Wheeler would respond to the enquirer with the information available.***
- *Several people commented to me in November about the bird scarer that was in the field opposite Cairnhill for a couple of weeks. Richard Cunningham received a complaint about the noise of this from a nearby resident and he informed them who they should contact for assistance on this type of environmental nuisance. He may wish to enlarge on this at the meeting.*
- *I've had meetings with Cllr Huxtable, our Financial Officer, to deal with issues arising from our audit and she will be reporting on this later in the meeting.*
- *I have very little to put in the February Bride Valley News but if there is anything from this meeting that needs publicising then we can do so, but the copy needs to be with Barbara Chambers by the morning following our meeting. **Date of next Council meeting and also asking for contributions to Defibrillator. The Bus Service situation would be put into the BVN later when there was something to report.***
- *Unfortunately I am unable to attend the March meeting and so this will be chaired by Richard Cunningham as vice-chairman.*
- *There is nothing further that I have to report since the last meeting.*

The chairman also mentioned that the Avian Flu Poster was to be displayed in Noticeboards and asked that Councillors respond to the various consultations that are being received, especially the Clinical one requested by Ron Coatsworth. She also acknowledged that there seemed to be many!

RC proposed and it was agreed to send letter of Congratulations to Sally Parker on her being award the BEM.

## 17.07 Clerks Report

### 1. Cheques to be approved:

- *Cheque 823 - reimburse C Huxtable – purchase of items for finger posts from Jewsons - £9.24, plus £63.00 expenses and £16.01 (all in connection with the Fingerposts)*
- *Cheque 824 – Donation towards churchyard expenses to St Martin's Church.*

*Both approved. Pro RC Sec. JP*

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# SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

2. *There was no expenditure over £100.00 to be put on Website.*
3. *Draft November Minutes put on website*
4. *Defibrillator – much research was done on this item – MB's Report*
5. *2017/2018 Precept form to be completed and sent by 31 January 2017.*
6. *Reports requested from Wally Axford and Nigel Wheeler and Agenda sent to Beaminster Police as requested by Luke White.*
7. *Emails regularly checked and forwarded as appropriate.*
8. *Meetings held with MB and MB and CH*
9. *Letter produced for residents in Rosamond Avenue*
10. *Information on Brown sign for New Inn. I will find out how to go about this and let the pub know when fingerposts finished.*
11. *Royal Garden Party – 16 May. It was agreed to nominate the Chairman to attend. Pro. CH and Sec. HC.*

**17.08 Fingerpost Update.** *Since the last meeting I have been to Shillingstone to collect the part for the Burpitt Lane post and we assembled it there and the final bill after fixings was over £100. I had mentioned on my last visit having some spare fittings and was able to swap these in exchange. I think I had a good result. Unfortunately he had forgotten the plastic insert needed to stop it falling down the existing post. This is being made and I should have it within the next few days. A while ago I asked Roger Sorrell if he could try and pull the post straight and he's now done it and it looks really good. This week I put some post cement in the hole so hopefully it will stay upright. As soon as the insert arrives will complete. One left to do. All expressed how good the fingerposts looked.*

**17.09 To discuss action regarding proposed removal of phone box.** MB circulated her paper on the background of the Phone Box:

**Telephone kiosk 01308-897245)**

- a) *Going back over as many as 20 years there have been indications from BT that our telephone kiosk in Brook Street would be replaced with a modern yellow one or removed completely. The Parish Council managed back in the 1908s to persuade BT not to replace it as there were strong feelings from residents that they would like the red box retained.*
- b) *Over the years the service has been changed from a coin payphone to a BT phone card only and this has meant that it is less used than previously, although much of its lack of use is likely to be because most households have landline phones and/or mobiles.*
- c) *However the box can be used for emergency 999 calls and it must be remembered that there is little mobile phone coverage in that part of the village. BT records show that the box was only used four (4) times during the past year and that therefore there is little demand for it and apart from emphasising the lack of mobile availability. The kiosk is also shown on our sign in the Playing Field as being available in an emergency.*

*They initiated a consultation on a proposal to remove it on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016 with 42 days for people to send their comments on this to West Dorset District Council. We do not know if any residents contacted WDDC during this period. The clerk has responded to WDDC and registered our interest in adopting it. BT have an*

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## SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

"Adopt a Kiosk" scheme and more than 3,500 boxes have been retained by their local communities using this scheme.

- 1) We can purchase the kiosk for a nominal sum of £1 (inc VAT)
- 2) BT disconnect the phone and remove it
- 3) The unmetered electricity supply would be maintained and the BT contract specifies that this can be used for an 8 watt lightbulb or similar or for defibrillator equipment. As far as can be seen in the contract BT will supply this electricity up to the fuse box, but it is not clear if we have to pay for this. We need to get further information on this from BT.
- 4) We will be responsible for maintenance of box and any liability arising, so we would need to add it to our insurance. We already own the land where the kiosk is located and so already have insurance for that, so it would just be a matter of adding the kiosk itself which we would think would be a minimal increase in our insurance premium.
- 5) There are various documents that BT supply for us to use to inform the public that the phone has been removed and the Parish Council now own the kiosk.

We have looked at possible alternative uses for the kiosk if we take it over and some of the suggestions made and uses in other parishes are as follows:-

- a) To house a defibrillator and as a medical information point
- b) As a mini library where books can be borrowed and exchanged for free.
- c) To display art from local artists.
- d) As an information point for the village, with details of local organisations and items of interest to visitors.
- e)

There are probably many other uses we can come up with if we decide to adopt our kiosk but the Considerations to make are:-

- a) Cost of insurance (likely to be minimal)
- b) Cost of maintenance (it was re-painted voluntarily a couple of years ago)
- c) Possibility of vandalism and what can do to minimise
- d) Cleaning of the kiosk and maintaining whatever is inside when we decide what to do with it.

We have already contacted BT to register our interest in adopting our box as we were concerned that we might otherwise miss the opportunity and we wanted to get this onto their radar as an interest.

There was much discussion on the paper and it was generally felt that residents would not like to see the phone box disappear as it was felt to be an established part of the village. It was pointed out that if it was felt the phone box was eventually not needed and should be removed, considerably more than the £1.00 purchase price from BT could be expected. It was agreed that it was not a suitable place for a Defibrillator (see next item). The Clerk to contact Came & Co to see if there would be an increase in the insurance premium. The meeting voted on whether or not to purchase the phone box. 5 – for, 1 - against. To go on the March Agenda.

**To consider proposal to install defibrillator.** Again the Chairman circulated her paper on progress so far for discussion:

### **Defibrillator**

At our last meeting "The Clerk asked the Council if they though the purchase of a Defibrillator would be important to the village. It was agreed and Clerk to find out prices. Other organisations in the Village to be approached to see if they would consider fund-raising and the local pub would be asked if they would house the defibrillator on their premises."

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## SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

The clerk has found out a lot of information and she has contacted St John Ambulance and the British Heart Foundation through whom I believe defibrillators are obtained. It seems that the cost of obtaining the equipment would be in the region of £1,500 but this includes training for 10 people and there are grants available towards all or part of the cost. Clerk has provisionally made an application with BHS for grant aid towards the cost. She can expand on this for us.

Meanwhile the possibility of using the telephone kiosk arose just after our meeting so I felt it appropriate to mention this as an option when we wrote to all the village organisations and to ask for their views and if they could contribute to the cost.

The responses received were as follows:-

St Martins Church -

Not able to contribute to cost, felt it difficult to establish a location accessible to all in our village.

New Inn Support Ltd -

Not able to contribute to cost, no other comments

Village Hall Trust -

Not able to contribute to cost, felt the village hall would be a better location as that is where people congregate in larger numbers.

Village Society -

Not able to contribute to cost,

Shipton Gorge Heritage -

Not able to contribute to cost but could consider help with phone kiosk as this is within the charity's remit.

Points for the council to consider:-

- a) Do we think we should proceed with obtaining a publicly accessible defibrillator?
- b) What is the best location - pub, village hall, telephone kiosk (if we adopt it), other suggestions?
- c) Are there concerns regarding vandalism or misuse of equipment?
- d) Cost of adding this to our insurance?
- e) If we go ahead who should we approach to be trained in its use?
- f) Other considerations?

Again there was considerable discussion. It was agreed the most suitable site would be outside the Village Hall or the New Inn.

Geoff Fry confirmed that if the council is successful in purchasing a defibrillator, St John's Ambulance would be responsible for the first four years, and would arrange training. John Porter had attended a training session and confirmed a defibrillator would be easy to use. Costs would include purchase, wiring, and training. Approximately £1500.00 to purchase +VAT, £500.00 for wiring/electricity. Puncknowle and Swyre had been fortunate to receive donation from parishioners to help with the costs. We have applied for a Grant from the British Heart Foundation but the Chairman felt the council would be able to help towards costs. BVN might be a suitable outlet to ask for contributions from residents.

Again Mr Fry kindly suggested Kate Fisher from the NHS South West Ambulance Trust would give advice on location etc.

The Council generally approved the concept. Proposed RC, Seconded JP. 4 voted for and 2 against.

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## SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

It was agreed that no money should be specifically put aside through the 2017/18 precept as there were unallocated funds in the council's reserve account that could be used.

Came & Co would be asked if insurance premium would be increased.

**17.10 Confirmation final Budget/Precept 2017/2018.** Precept confirmed and approved £5978.00 + Local Council Tax Support of £43.00 giving a total of £6021.00. Proposed RC, Seconded JP

**17.11 Local Council Online Consultation project.** RC reiterated his objections to the project. Clerk to attend evening meeting in Dorchester on Wednesday 25 January.

**17.12 To receive the following reports:**

- a) **Finance** – CH – *After our last meeting I contacted the BDO to clarify their comments on the 2015/2016 annual return and how future audits are to take place. The issue raised was the sum recorded for our assets. This had been taken from our asset register. After speaking to them it was realised that we had been historically using cost and insurance values but not always consistently. While checking this it was noticed that the list did not contain all the PC assets. The old playing field equipment, village green and a few other items were missing. I was told we can submit a restated figure on this year's return with a covering note explaining the changes and why our assets have increased in value. As I understand it we can use a proxy value where a cost is unknown but must not change a value unless a replacement is purchased or an item disposed of. Depreciation or increase of an existing asset must not be recorded. Mary and I have started a new asset register which we believe contains all our assets. 2016/17 Annual Return to be submitted as in previous years. From April 2017 new arrangements set out in The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 come into force. The Act allows small authorities to opt out and be exempt from undergoing a routine annual assurance review. As a small PC we opted out and will no longer have to send the return to an external auditor. Returns have to be published and displayed for 14 days at a given time (July?) to comply with the Transparency Code as stated in the 2014 Act. If an elector wishes to make an objection to a return an auditor will be appointed by the governing body. The elector has to make the request. After speaking to BDO at their suggestion I printed off the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities guide. I need to fully study it but think this is the gist of it.*

HC thought we had not agreed to opt out and the meeting agreed. CH confirmed that we had not opted out but are exempt as a small council and apologised for her miswording. She would check any implications with Internal Auditor.

a) **Resilience** – Nothing to report

b) **Highways** – HC has some Potholes to report otherwise nothing else to report. MB had wanted to have a word with the PCSO about cars parked outside Virginia House causing a hazard on the bend, and it was suggested that maybe a 20mph restriction would help although this was not thought enforceable.

c) **Playing field** – JP had had recent meeting with GR and all in hand – fences, gates, swing and basketball nets all of which will be dealt with when the weather improves. Hoping to have Open Day in May/June for volunteers and will want information put in BVN. He is to contact SES to collect mower for service. MB asked that JP look at Grants for the proposed Climbing Wall.

d) **Planning** – Nothing to report

e) **Rights of Way - Wally Axford.** No report received

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# SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

f) **Website** – *I won't be able to make it tonight after all, so at short notice a very brief report which I hope reaches you in time:*

*1) Unfortunately I had some email issues (following a computer breakage) which did lead to delays / problems getting information through as noted at the previous meeting - my fault for overlooking 'reconnecting' to the webmaster email on the new system, so apologies. As a separate issue, I have slight concerns about recent increases in spam email, which Mary seems to have also experienced with Shipton Gorge Heritage, and email from the Clerk's account being marked as spam despite being a known contact. I have asked Damon Allen if he can shed any light.*

*2) The issue with gov.uk emails seems to have been resolved without the need for changes. When investigating this I did look into the costs & processes for using such email addresses it may be worth understanding this process anyway should the issue arise again, so will aim to put something together for the next meeting.*

*3) I am confident that in 2017 we can move forward with the website re-design process and look forward to presenting more information once the relevant parties have had the opportunity to meet and discuss options. Best Wishes for 2017 to All!*

**17.13 To confirm date for the next SGPC meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

Meeting ended 9.05pm

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