

# SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017

at 7.30pm in Shipton Gorge Village Hall

**Open Forum** - There were no parishioners present to bring any issues to the Council's notice.

**17.34** Present Cllr Mary Boughton, Chairman, (RC), (HC), Cllr Christine Huxtable (CH), Cllr Diane Buckenham (DB), Cllr John Porter (JP), Cllr Andrew Fry (AF), Cllr Gerry Pyke (GP)

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

The Chairman welcomed Cllr J Russell.

**17.36** **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Richard Cunningham, Cllr Hilary Cunningham

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

**17.37** **Neighbourhood Policing update** – There was no response from Neighbourhood Policing.

**17.38** **To elect Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council** – Mary Boughton was unanimously appointed Chairman and Richard Cunningham unanimously appointed Vice Chairman. Proposed AF, Seconded GP.

**17.39** **To appoint Committee Chairs and members to fill positions of responsibility –**

BLAP	MB
DAPTC	Vacancy. Any Councillor to attend when able.
Highways Chairman	HC
Planning Chairman	RC
Planning Committee	All Councillors except Chairman
Playing Field Chairman	JP
Playing Field Committee	DB, GP, Grayham Rosamond
Resilience	GP, JP
Responsible Finance Officer	CH
Rights of Way/Footpaths	Wally Axford (not Councillor)
Transport (including WAYTAG)	Minutes to be sent to Councillors when relevant

Signed.....Dated.....

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Village Hall	CH
Website	In abeyance

Proposed MB, Seconded DB.

**17.40 Review and approve updated Risk Register - and Village Green Risk Assessment – (On Website) – and previously circulated - copy to be given to grass cutting contractor. All approved Pro HC Sec GP**

**17.41 Chairman to sign as correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017 - previously circulated and on the website. Unanimously agreed and signed Pro CH, Sec AF**

**17.42 To consider any matters arising not on the Agenda – there were none.**

**17.43 To consider and confirm dates for future Parish Council Meetings.** Letter sent to Doris Benselin confirming second Wednesday bi-monthly.

**17.44 Chairman’s Report – had been previously circulated:**

*Firstly I must say that I was very disappointed that at our Annual Parish Meeting in April we only had three members of the public, and two of them only attended to deliver reports. There were six parish councillors also present. This is the lowest number that I can ever remember attending this meeting. I understand that the recent Village Hall Trust AGM was also was also virtually unattended by the public and I suspect other organisations are suffering from the same lack of interest. It is an example of the general apathy of the public to get involved in village affairs and when so much effort goes into these things by a few people it is very disheartening that the village do not support the voluntary work that is done on their behalf. I have highlighted many times that we are likely to no longer have a Parish Council within a few years if people don’t get more involved. Is there anything else we can do to try and increase participation I wonder?*

*Back to the mundane - as usual I’ve had meetings with Paula to do the agenda for this meeting and go through documents that need reviewing and updating this month – the Risk Register, Asset Register and Village Green Risk Assessment. You will have received the updated Risk Register with your papers and this will be discussed later in the meeting.*

*I have also met with Christine Huxtable, as our RFO, and we have completed the bank reconciliation and the BDO audit papers for the financial year just ended, as well as our Asset Register. Christine will be enlarging on this in her report.*

*While looking at the revised Risk Register I realised that we intended to paint the stones around the Village Green to reduce the low risk of them being a hazard to vehicles and pedestrians. We have never actually done this and so over the May bank holiday weekend I gave them all a coat of white paint, although they will need further coats. I understand that there have been some people who are unhappy with this but unless we can come up with an alternative way of highlighting the hazard they will have to remain painted white.*

*Something that has been overlooked in recent years is that all registered charities in the parish were always obliged to send a copy of their annual accounts to the Parish Council. The Village Hall Trust, as a registered charity, has recently done this having realised that they had not done so for some time. We need to check as to whether this is still a mandatory requirement and if so remind other charities in the parish of this obligation.*

*You will have noticed that there is a new Notice Board at the New Inn, purchased by the Village Society, as the old one was beyond repair. I have spoken to Chris Griffiths-Hardman, their new chairman, regarding the insurance for this. All the village notice boards are on our Asset Register and covered by our insurance, which they were not aware of. Ownership of the notice boards is a bit muddled as we originally purchased them in 2010/11 but the cost was reimbursed to us by the Village Society, who have responsibility for their maintenance. The Village Society would now like clarify this and so have agreed*

Signed.....Dated.....

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that they have sole ownership and will be responsible for their insurance and maintenance. We can therefore take them off our Asset Register. In order to make this clear for the future and as a record, the Village Society will be writing to us to confirm that they are taking over ownership, insurance and maintenance of the boards from now onwards.

It was confirmed that all local charities should lodge their annual accounts with the parish council. Accounts had been received from Shipton Gorge Heritage and the Village Hall. It was agreed the Clerk would send letter to the Church requesting the accounts of the Lilian Stone Trust.

The Village Society had confirmed that they now have sole responsibility for the noticeboards from now onwards. MB gave brief history of purchase and ownership of the noticeboards.

## 17.45 Clerks Report – This had been previously circulated:

*Cheques to be approved – **we also need a third signatory for cheques:** John Porter, who banks at TSB, agreed to be a signatory. Pro DB, Sec AF*

<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Payee</b>	
832	29.32	C Huxtable	Fingerposts
833	19.45	Chairman's expenses	
834	45.77	P Biss	Feb
835	41.32	P Biss	March
836	20.58	P Biss	PC Annual Meeting
837	151.91	G Rosamond	Costs 10/1 – 1/4
839	48.60	P Biss	April expenses

*Came & Co – Insurance Renewal due 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 MB had raised some queries with Came & Co which had all been clarified satisfactorily – £433.76 which clerk is to pay.*

## Cheques agreed – Pro AF, Sec JP

*Expenditure over £100.00 sent to Nigel to be put on Website for April.*

*Final January minutes/draft March minutes sent to Nigel for Website*

*Emails regularly checked and forwarded as appropriate. Spreadsheet updated and meetings with RFO.*

*Final Annual Parish Council Meeting Minutes for April 2016 and draft for April 2017 sent to Nigel for Website.*

*Mail received from WDDC who have objected to the removal of the telephone kiosk which means it isn't now available for adoption. It will, therefore, remain in place as a working kiosk and it has been confirmed that cleaning and painting the kiosk when appropriate will be dealt with by BT customer services. Faults/damage can also be reported to their customer services team [Customer.serv.payphones@bt.com](mailto:Customer.serv.payphones@bt.com) 0800 661 610*

*Arrangements put in place for Litter Pick on Saturday 29 April.*

*Reported fly tipping in Barr Lane - 29/4/17 and tree in entrance to Burbitt Lane. Actioned*

*Data Protection Registration 2/5/17 renewed.*

## 17.46 Report from BLAP - Paper had been circulated to Councillors 19/4/17. The concerns in this paper were approved by the Council as set out and would be sent, as requested, to Bob Gillis, Bridport Town Council as follows:

1. The main and most important question is what, if any, extra responsibilities and activities that are to be devolved to us will be mandatory or will they be discretionary.

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2. There are no activities that we are likely to be asked to take on that could provide us with a funding stream and no means of raising income except through the precept or funding direct from a higher level of local government.
3. The level of bureaucratic burden on smaller parish councils is already something we are floundering under (risk assessment/ standing orders/ financial regulations/transparency etc) and if we are to take on extra responsibilities then there has to be a way found to reduce this burden for small councils. Currently we have to conform to everything that a large parish, town, district or county council have to do, but we do not have the manpower or capacity to do it. As a result we spend as much time carrying out bureaucratic processes and compliance as we do actually doing things to benefit the parish.
4. We are a small parish with few assets, either physical or financial, and we strongly oppose further activities or responsibilities being foisted on us when we do not have the ability to manage them, time organising bearing in mind councillors are voluntary
5. Although joint working with other parishes may be an option, and probably the only option, the concern is whether we would have anyone within the parish who would take on liaising with other parishes and contractors to achieve this.

**17.47 Defibrillator – to approve quotation for installation.** Quotation had been received from D B Electrical for £252.06 inc VAT- to include external weatherproof double socket outlet, including materials and labour costs, for the use of the Village Hall. It was unanimously agreed to accept this quotation and pay the full costs - MB to inform R Hewlett. Pro CH Sec AF.

Once all equipment installed, training to be organised. It was agreed this would be open to all and advertised in the BVN with a poster for villages.

**17.48 Report from WAYTAG meeting. MB**

*This was the first time I've attended one of these meetings. They meet on the first Wednesday of each month, so ideal timing for our parish council meetings which are a week later. There were around 25 people resent including representatives from Dorset County Council and bus operators.*

*A revised constitution was agreed and then a new chairman appointed as the current one was leaving the area. They struggled to find a chairman but eventually a man called Philp offered to chair meetings but didn't want to have to act as the representative of WATAG to the press and at other meetings. It was felt that perhaps a newly elected Vice-chairman could take on this role, but they failed to find anyone to take on that post. As the pas chairman was also the treasurer, they also tried to find a new treasurer and eventually a lady called Janet Proctor took this on although she didn't have a computer and so would have to do the work by6 hand. So altogether not a very satisfactory round of appointments and it certainly didn't strike me as a very dynamic group.*

*The secretary is John Collingwood and he remains in post. I think without him it would fail to continue.*

*There was an update from Dorset County Council regarding the School & Public Bus Transport Contract where we were told that there would be public announcements in mid May as to what contracts have been approved and details of the services to be run would follow afterwards. There was work planned for a number of bus stops as many needed markings re-doing and bus timetables at many were out of date, some by as much as five years, but all were now being updated. It was reported by some present that many bus stops were not marked at all, there were often no timetables evident and some show bus routes that ceased many years ago. These would also be dealt with. Dorset County Council have cut funding to the Axe Vale Ring & Ride Servi8ce, although Devon County is still funding it.*

*I asked about the situation with our 210 bus service and emphasised how vital it was that we have at least some service if only on one or two days a week. I was told that they were very aware of the situation and concern but we would have to wait to see what was announced in mid May. It was felt though that a community initiative was probably the only way we were going to have any service in future. There was talk about these community schemes and DCC had £5,000 funding put aside for those that*

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wanted to set up such a scheme. In my view, and depending on what is announced in May, this may well be the only option and perhaps the villages on the 210 route should investigate this.

As far as trains are concerned, we were also told that there were plans to improve Platform 1 at Maiden Newton train station and that a "Friends of Chetnole Station" had been set up recently. There is also work being undertaken at Waterloo Station from 5<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August which will cause disruption to the Weymouth-Waterloo service. South West Trains is now under new management and either First or Stagecoach have tendered for the Weymouth-Waterloo service, so we will have to wait to see who was successful.

Next it was the turn of the Bus Operators to give updates but they had little to say that was relevant and only two operators, First Bus and Damory, were present anyway. First Bus is relaunching the Jurassic Coast Bus brand with new timetables for the X51 and X53 from 7<sup>th</sup> April. This would include extra services to run from 27<sup>th</sup> May stopping at holiday parks, tourist venues etc.

Dorset County Council said there is a Coastal Community Fund initiative available for parishes to get involved in and it was suggested that a bid could be put together to include extra bus routes and it was confirmed, when I asked for clarification, that Shipton Gorge and the villages on the 210 route could be included in such a bid.

Finally, the Bridport & District Local Bus. Surveys had gone out and they were currently waiting for the results. It was only an idea at this stage but it was possible that this service could cover the villages but it was not a regular service but just a "when needed" operation. No bus contractors had yet been approached for this so it is in its very early stages – don't hold your breath.

In any other business someone questioned as to whether walkers and rights of way should also be covered by WATAG as these were also forms of transport and there were some issues. No decision on this made and it seems to me that they have enough on their plate already!

**17.49 Fingerposts Update.** CH had nothing further to report

**17.50 Parish Website.** No report had been received.

**17.51 Annual Spring Clean –** This had been successfully completed although GP queried if one day a year was adequate. The chairman asked for it to be noted that this normally takes place at 10am starting from the New Inn as this had proved to be the most convenient time.

**17.52 To receive the following reports:**

- a) **Finance –** CH – The annual return to BDO completed. There will be no external Audit from this year ( 2018). The Transparency Code, on the Website, had been adhered to and the Asset Register with regard to Insurance had been updated. The additional amount of £105 to be added to the Playing Field had been omitted from the total when the precept was submitted, so 2018's precept is the same as last year. The spreadsheet had been updated and in future Councillors will only be sent the current year. Five cheques should have been paid so they would be included in the 2017 year's spreadsheet so it was agreed that they could come out of 2018 year. Reserves are within limits. The RFO now meets monthly with the Clerk. The Internal Auditor, Peter Varney would like to retire but would continue in post until a new IA appointed. He felt with increased legalities, eg Transparency Code, a qualified accountant might be more appropriate to be appointed. CH said that there were no extra responsibilities as a result of the change in audit arrangements and she didn't feel it was any more onerous.
- b) **Resilience –** Up to date – Nothing further to report
- c) **Highways - HC –** Nothing to report

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- d) **Playing field** – All work on the playing field by Graham Rosamond is up to date ie. cutting of the grass and weeding, There will be a playing field maintenance day on the 1<sup>st</sup> July starting at 10.00 am. Cold refreshments will be provided and £25.00 from the playing field budget was agreed for this. A list of all the work that requires doing has been sorted. Information given to B Chambers for BVN

A No Entry sign has been purchased and will be fitted to the gate where Graham puts the grass cuttings.

A quote for 6 panels for the roundabout has been obtained. This would cost £420.00 in hard wood as opposed to £240.00 in soft wood. It was felt some of the panels were still OK and to speak to Gerard for spares – (C Hewlett might have one) It was agreed to use hardwood.

A new list will be issued for the Playing Field inspection rota and will be sent to everyone shortly.

MB/JP to have meeting. **Clerk to check** financial limit allowed to be spent on an item of expenditure before Playing Field Chairman was required to refer back to the main Council for approval of a payment..

- e) **Planning** – Nothing to report. Councillors generally felt there should be a planning meeting arranged concerning the application for Cairnhill development.
- f) **Rights of Way - Wally Axford** - No report received.
- g) **Website** - No report received.

**17.53 To confirm date for the next SGPC meeting: 19 July 2017** – Hire of the hall on this date has been confirmed with Doris Benselin. Following meetings 13 September and 8 November.

Meeting ended 9.40pm

Signed.....Dated.....

Chair Mary Boughton