

COMPTONS TOLLER AND WYNFORD PARISHES

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on

Thursday 25th May 2023

6.30pm at Compton Valance Village Hall

Present: Councillors:

Charles Sclater (Chairman)(CS)

Jeremy Russell (JR)

John Wynford (JW)

Ashley Stewart (AS) (Vice Chair)

Vacancy (Wynford Eagle)

Vacancy (Toller Fratrum)

Officer: Mrs Michele Harding, (Clerk)

Members of the Public: 14

Refreshments were served prior to the meeting.

APA/23/05-1. Welcome, Housekeeping and to receive apologies for absence.

Simon Simpson, Nic Amor and Anthony Alford (Dorset Councillor)

APA/23/05-2. The last meeting was held on 22nd May 2022.

Proposed JR Seconded JW

APA/23/05-3. Speaker- Trenton Oliver- on Metal detecting

Trenton gave a very interesting presentation on the finds he has made over the years. He has been carrying out his metal detecting on the local farms as well as running his own computer business.

He spoke on the artifacts he has found, from Stone age, Bronze age, Saxon and Roman coins and tools. 95% of his finds have been moo tubes, ring pulls shotgun cartridges and tin cans, but recently he has had some very interesting finds, Roman coins from 141BC to 46 AD an iron age coin, a scraper flint from 8000BC to 2000BC. Also, a Saxon coin which is very rare 410AD to 1066AD.

Trenton did not want to too give much away at the APA as he is presenting at a fundraising event for the Church in the coming months.

He explained that he has a 50:50 share with the landowner on all finds, but anything over 300 years old goes through the treasury process as this forms part of the Treasurers Act.

Trenton he is always looking for new permissions and thanked those at the meeting for their time and questions.

The Chairman thanked Trenton for his interesting talk and encouraged residents to attend the event being organised, Trenton left the meeting at 7.18pm and all but 2 residents stayed for the rest of the APA.

APA/23/05-4. Chairmans report

The Role of Parish Councillors is principally one where the state of local facilities and amenities are considered and addressed in the hope of maintaining and developing the environment for local residents' benefit.

COMPTONS TOLLER AND WYNFORD PARISHES

The Covid years proved difficult for government to function at all levels, national to local, with either no meeting or meetings taking place online. Thankfully those days are behind us and over the past 12 months have seen some catching up done across all levels of government.

Dorset Council has undertaken a comprehensive country roadworks programme. Roads within the Parishes having undergone a complete reconstruction, reconstituting the endless potholes, patchings and substandard top dressing.

However, even with improved road surfaces, the prolonged period of frosts that were experienced in January, has highlighted areas of road where vehicle activity is curtailed due to ice. While the resident farmers try to play their part in keeping the areas of concern gritted using their heavy machinery and volunteer staff, this year proved to be one job too many in this stressful period. As a result, additional grit bins have been purchased and will shortly be sited to allow residents who perform essential services to undertake a degree of self help in order to get to work in Dorchester Hospital and further afield.

Local Finger Posts have for several years now fallen within the remit of Parish Councils. This topic (and grit bins) remains a fixed item on meeting agendas for which those signposts considered important in the age of SatNav are being given priority of funding. Some help has been received from voluntary groups, the AONB and a certain amount of self-help by members of the Parishes has helped to keep costs down.

Size, speed and noise from visiting traffic continues to be of concern within the parishes. West Compton particularly has suffered from both fast-moving delivery vehicles and repeated large numbers of Greenlaners, who have no thought to the surface of the right of way, adjacent livestock, the environmental damage caused or nuisance to local residents. Ways to mitigate this nuisance will continue to be explored with Dorset Highways and will receive full support from the Parish Council.

With the 'Cost of Living Crisis' a concern to all, the level of expenditure undertaken by the Parish Council continues to be of a minimal nature. This is reflected in sums charged through council tax and while a contingency sum is maintained for payment of essential outgoings, Hall hire, clerks' wages, road grit, finger post repairs, additional road drainage, notice board maintenance, new grit bins to name the principal ones, the precept has been kept as low as reasonably possible.

Indeed, while Compton Toller and Wynford Parish Council has minimal managerial responsibility for amenities, it does operate as a body with direct contact with Dorset Highways, Planning and if needed other facilities in County Hall. With the local Dorset Councillor, Tony Alford, giving County level updates while attending the majority of Parish meetings, channelling concerns directly to the relevant department and helping consider the affect of wider regional policies.

However, the Parish Council currently is one councillor short for both Wynford Eagle and Toller Fratrum and while a minimum quorum of 3 has been achieved, a full council of 8 has not been convened for some years.

With Local elections due next year, it would be great to see all the seats on the Parish Council filled to protect the ability of residents to have a channel to respond to local issues, manage those items already mentioned and to focus and pass comment on items of planning that arise within the boundary of the parishes and those of a larger nature which may affect the wider area, for example:

National grid works removing pylons at Winterborne Abbas

Solar Farm proposals at Crupton

Traveller site at Frampton

Dorset Hedge project

COMPTONS TOLLER AND WYNFORD PARISHES

Creation of a light Railway from Maiden Newton to Bridport

Should the apathy of recent years continue, there is a danger that the Parish Council will fail to convene a quorum and the role be fulfilled from within Dorset Council, thereby losing the ability to continue to consider items from a local viewpoint.

Chairmans report May 2023

APA/23/05-5. Finance report

The Clerk reported on the Finances for the year 2022-23

Bank balance as at April 22	£4398.84
Receipts	£2600.00
Payments	£2007.60
Balance as at 31 st March 2023	£4991.24

APA/23/05-6. Dorset Council ward member report

1) Low-income households in the Dorset Council area will be able to apply for the next round of the Household Support Fund (HSF) to help with rising costs.

Dorset Council has been awarded further funding from the Government's Household Support Fund to support households in the most need with their energy, food, and water bills. The support will be in the form of supermarket vouchers. Citizens Advice will be allocating this fund on behalf of Dorset Council and vouchers will be issued to residents who meet the eligibility criteria within 6 – 8 weeks. Unlike round 3, which saw two application windows, round 4 will be split into 6 different windows, spread over 6 months, allowing more residents to have a chance to apply.

2) Dorset Council is currently consulting on several guidance documents on planning for climate change. These are:

- Interim Guidance and Position Statement on planning for climate change.
- Proposed sustainability checklist.
- New guidance on listed buildings – what you can do for climate change.

These documents, although they are not mandatory, will support:

- Our natural environment, climate and ecology strategy.
- Our decision making until the New Dorset Council Local Plan is adopted.

The documents will bring together legislation, national policy and local planning policy on climate change and will encourage those making planning applications to consider measures for addressing climate change.

The closing date for comments is 8 June.

3) Grants of up to £5,000 are available for projects that bring communities across Dorset together. If you're looking to kickstart a new project that will make a difference for people in your community, round 5 of the Community and Culture Project Fund has now reopened.

4) Changes to the Cabinet came into effect from 1 May 2023. The changes reflect the ten Cabinet Commitments in the Dorset Council Plan and ensure that the Cabinet portfolios are aligned to those priorities.

COMPTONS TOLLER AND WYNFORD PARISHES

5) All our car park and on-street pay and display machines are to be replaced

APA/23/05-7. Your issues-

A resident commented on the reserves that are being held and what these will be used for especially as the biggest cost to the PC is staff and admin costs, also the low visibility the PC has in the parishes. He suggested that the PC should consult individuals to gather feedback on what the PC will be doing for the parishes as the village do not hear what is going on. Finally, that is there any point in the Group Council.

JW explained that in past years he and fellow landowners had taken the costs of verge cutting and ditches upon themselves and not charged the PC for this work.

CS explained that the PC had purchased 3 new grit bins for Wynford eagle which will show in this year's accounts. Also, the PC had on 2 occasions in the past carried out a review of the pros and cons of being a joint Parish Council rather than having 4 individual Parish 'Meetings', or indeed merging with much larger adjacent Councils (Maiden Newton, Winterbourne Abbas, Toller Porcorum). As the 4 Parishes remain similar in nature, it was felt the current CTWPC group retained its identity and could consider issues that would directly affect them.

CS also noted that the PC had been through several clerks and are now in a stable position with the current clerk who clerks many other PC's and can share this knowledge.

The PC will take on board these comments and aim to review this when setting the budget for the coming year and welcomed new members for the Council as there are currently 2 vacancies. Although the PC will lose 1 Cllr from Toller Fratrum from April 2024.

Meeting finished 7.45pm