

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021

7pm via Zoom

### Present: Councillors:

Charles Sclater (Chairman)(CS)

Jeremy Russell (JR)

John Wynford (JW)

Ashley Stewart (AS)

Simon Simpson (SS)

Nicolas Amor (NA)

Vacancy (Wynford Eagle)

**Officer:** Ms Amanda Hart (Clerk)

**Dorset Councillor:** Anthony Alford (AA)

**Members of the Public:** None

**21/01-01**

via Zoom.

Welcome- Chairman Charles Sclater welcomed all to the meeting

**21/01-02**

confirmed that this was the case.

No one new to the shortlist for WE Parish Councillor vacancy. JW

**21/01-03**

attend

**To receive apologies for absence-** Emma Shelton was unable to

**21/01-04**

None to report.

**To receive any declarations of interest and grants of dispensation**

**21/01-05**

**November 2020** Resolved.

**To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12**

Proposed JR

Seconded AS

**21/01-06**

**Matters arising for information only**

i. **Access to Copies of the Minutes.**

NA mentioned that Ralph Wykes-Sneyd (member of the West Compton Parish) needed copies of the Minutes. The Chairman responded to please inform Ralph W-S that the Minutes are on our website, <https://www.comptonstollerandwynfordpc.org/>, for the general consumption of the Public.

ii. **The Chairman mentioned two things:**

a) The Census coming up this year. Need to be aware of it as Parish Councillors. There is a bit on the Dorset website and Cllr Alford can tell us more if relevant.

b) The Council and Climate Ecological Support Group. CS said he was not sure how to get involved - perhaps AA could advise.

iii. **Broadband**

NA wanted to address the issue of Broadband. West Compton (with NA at the helm) have applied to Open Reach to improve their Broadband. It is currently copper from Higher Wynford. He has had a good response so far. OpenReach has expanded its application to embrace Wynford Eagle. So that's now 57 premises. NA felt he should contact the residents\property owners to gain approval. It looks like a good deal, initial offer pending survey. Total cost of roughly £95k which works out at £1680 per household which looks like it would be covered by grants. Would the Wynford Eagle Councillor object to NA approaching the Parish?

JW confirmed he had already spoken to NA via email. They have fibre broadband which is very successful but was not sure how they can help - it didn't cost anything but they pay a small amount for provision. They get speeds of 60\20. They were lucky to get the introduction all through a man at OpenReach. JW's wife advised Ralph W-S about this. NA confirmed that Ralph W-S has filled him in and was helpful about it. As NA understands it, Wynford Eagle had the opportunity to take up fibre broadband but JW was the only household to take it up.

NA added that it's available now for nothing and the upgrade would be desirable. AS has had communications to that effect. Maximum speeds to achieve would be desirable.

AS commented he had heard about the speeds that Wynford were having, which were twice what West Compton were getting. He had sent emails out to residents a few weeks ago on NA's prompt, a number had been slow to come back as the broadband isn't up to scratch. It is better than it was prior to the arrival of the cabinet at Higher Wynford but this email from one of his tenants, David Parkinson, who is a primary carer was most pertinent. AS quoted from Mr Parkinson's email;

*'When I moved to the village I felt unable to use the available broadband due to the speed and my job often requires fast connection speeds to link to the NHS services. Had it not been for the slim chance that SIM only broadband were available I would have been unable to work from home or access the systems necessary for me to undertake my job as a Senior NHS Nurse. Fibre broadband is a necessity in remote rural areas especially considering the currency impact of the pandemic. Social isolation is massively detrimental to the general and mental well being of the population and not having access to fast effective broadband can only make this worse in 2021. Fibre broadband should be standard throughout'.*

AS said David Parkinson is a Senior Psychiatric Nurse. This encapsulated the situation very eloquently. He has two other primary carers as tenants here. One replied saying 'It would only improve the situation'. This is all ammunition to further push the cause forward further for improvements.

JW asked AS what sort of speeds do they need. AS responded that they certainly matched those at Wynford Eagle. JW replied he is on the lowest band, there were three above him but he didn't need them.

AS said he has always been pushing for better broadband. He has been charged full rate but not had the service. Subsequent to the cabinet at Higher Wynford, West Compton received 30 meg relatively regularly. However the current supplier was providing speeds teetering around 10. Maximum speeds were currently half of what JW is getting.

SS commented that in his experience the installation fee was pretty reasonable but usage fee was extremely high and asked had this been checked. NA replied that no it hadn't been checked, it was an

offer pending survey, and they would have to see presumably, because it was nearly 60 people it would improve the situation and a lot of work had been done already as it went as far as the cabinet at Higher Wynford. He added that at Eggardon Farm, which was quite far away, the farmer would be prepared to dig trenches.

JR advised that they check that they didn't give a major usage charge which had happened out at Powerstock.

AS asked JW what they paid for their Broadband. AS pays £30 per month for broadband and landline. JW confirmed that he pays about £32 inc VAT - that's the lowest band and allows a supply up to about 30 to 35 but checking regularly he gets 60.

AS said that engineers reported that the 1 km of copper here was the achilles heel of the system. A depressed system was the term they used. The further away you are on a piece of copper the less reliable it will be. Any improvement would be a better thing. Once the hardware and infrastructure had been installed then the option of the best value within the providers that were available was simply down to a financial decision that an individual householder would use. AS's tenants were prepared to take a better option as long as they are not having to pay more.

JW checked his current speed which was now 73 and 20. AS replied he got 9 when he should have a minimum of 30.

AA commented that usually as part of a deal package there is a commitment required from the residents to take up the service, they would announce there is a competitive situation and you can choose who you want to be your provider but if you look carefully you'll see all the providers are part of the BT stable. AS replied he was seriously considering going back to BT as they have restructured themselves.

JW said he was looking for the name of the engineer BT who was so helpful - he thought he had passed this on to Ralph W-S.

AS asked NA how reliable was his broadband and would he consider BT. NA confirmed he is with BT. They have one cottage with Sky. NA thinks BT is pretty reliable and speeds are pretty good. AS said that one of the problems was the piece of copper between Higher Wynford and West Compton because there are 100 overhead wires of which over 50% are non functioning due to tree damage etc. NA added that it's also the number of devices which is high at the moment.

NA commented that it wasn't really about what people have or think they want, which was not meant to be condescending. They needed to think ahead to what people are going to need. AS agreed. NA said the situation had changed rapidly due to Covid 19. More people needed to be home-based, needed more education from home. He asked if the Councillors would agree that everyone was content for NA to write a standard letter to ask for permission to go ahead and subject to receiving the grants it would cost no one anything.

SS added that they were not getting far with broadband in the Toller valley and asked NA for a point of contact. NA agreed he would pass on the names from Ralph W-S. Unfortunately Toller Fratrum is not on the same spur but SS said that they were not going to give up.

CS advised that they encourage everyone to keep talking at West Compton as that was the way to get it sorted.

Proposed AS

Seconded SS

iv) **The Council Laptop**

The Clerk commented that she had experienced terrible problems with the Parish Council laptop. It was taking hours to send through emails and she was currently using her own laptop. The camera on the Parish Council laptop was not working so she was hosting Zoom from her own computer. She thought there might be a problem with the internal workings but would like to get it looked at and get the camera mended. CS agreed that this was necessary.

JR commented that they did buy it themselves some time ago, maybe as much as 10 years ago. AS confirmed that he thought they had bought it.

CS asked the Clerk if using her own computer was just as easy to do everything. The Clerk responded that she was supposed to store files on the Council computer for record. Certain things like the website were registered to the computer.

CS asked that she find someone reasonable to look at it. If the hard drive was out of date they may need to discuss further. The Clerk confirmed that she will check with the Chairman before spending money.

Proposed JR

Seconded AS

v) **The Chairman invited Councillor Alford to speak.**

AA said he had news from Dorset Council. One bit of info that week was the summary for the programme in Dorset for vaccinations for Covid -19.

Consultation on the Local Plan had also started and they had issued some information about events associated with that consultation including a number of webinars starting fairly shortly. If anyone was interested in hearing more about the proposals then he asked that they tune in to them.

AA didn't have any specialised knowledge of the Census apart from that it's happening. With regard to the Climate Change group - there were a number springing up - the one mentioned wasn't one he was familiar with.

AA also commented that re the discussion about fibre broadband he thought the offer was a remarkably good one. He advised that the Parish Council make it happen as it sounded like a good deal.

AA said he had already outlined the local Plan consultation and everyone had until 15th March to have a look. CS said he was assuming they were intending to roll the 4 districts into one local plan.

AA said that the idea was to have a coherent set of planning policies covering Dorset as a whole. So a new fresh load of ideas and consultation was therefore important for Parish Councils to ensure that the right policies were executed.

CS asked that, with the CTW parishes and AA's greater ward being mainly open countryside, that the overall planning wouldn't change a great deal. AA responded that yes, because proposals for housing were concentrated in the towns, rural countryside was substantially spared from new development proposals. Parish councils or Parishes generally could produce neighbourhood plans if they wanted to encourage a little bit of housing in their area.

CS commented that requests for more housing would be limited, if requested at all, but it was more to the point with regard to the input they could have to tourism and the business section? AA replied that if, for example, you have particular strengths in the holiday making industry then you may want to promote policies conducive to economic growth in the area.

SS asked how relevant was the AONB in the decision making process?. AA responded that it was highly important. The role of the Council was to preserve the AONB and carry out policies to protect the countryside within the AONB boundary.

SS mentioned that there had been a lot of issues in Charminster with regard to a development being fought next to Nigel Thimbleby's house. Wolfeton? That particular developer seemed to be doing a lot of developments around villages rather than towns. Was the Parish in danger of being exposed to that sort of thing?

AA replied that there was one important and relevant issue and that was meeting the targets for new housing. The 5 year rule was to produce a sufficient number of new housing and the Council are below that level at the moment. For that reason existing planning policies could be attacked. If they tried to say no to particular developments and then they got approved on appeal because they hadn't reached the housing targets then they were at risk of more development in the countryside. CS commented that developers seemed to be targeting quite small plots but in areas where you really wouldn't think they would get permission. So the shortfall in what is being built then gave those developers opportunities.

NA asked if we had adequate housing stock in Dorset and what was the basis for the target being set? AA said it was very difficult to comprehend how they come up with the number. They were not far away from meeting the target but once it was met then all the planning policies would come back to life.

CS asked what was the expectation of new buildings in towns such as Maiden Newton etc?

AA replied that in all the areas that made up Dorset Council now there was a shortfall. In West Dorset we needed 5 years supply but thought we had about 4.5 years supply.

CS asked AA that in the Eggardon ward, which is his remit, how much housing allocation would be fitted into that. AA responded that he hadn't found the number yet but the suggestion was that they would be most likely to be found in Maiden Newton but had not been found there yet either.

CS responded but there weren't that many villages in AA's ward that had a village boundary to start with. AA replied that some did have neighbourhood plans where there was an allowance for some housing.

CS advised that everyone look at the website re The Local Plan. If anyone had any thoughts there were welcome to send them to CS.

The Chairman gave thanks to AA.

**21/01-07**

**Democratic forum.**

The Clerk confirmed that no one from the public had come into the meeting.

**21/01-08**

**To consider any planning applications or other planning matters**

CS confirmed that nothing was ongoing.

**21/01-09**

**To consider any Highways or Rights of Way matters**

I. To receive an update on Traffic through West Compton

CS referred to the Speed meeting attended by NA and AS. NA replied that AA was also present. Dawn Heath from Dorset Council attended and was very useful and sensible.

To calm the speed we should start softly softly with a sign and maybe some flowers at the entrance of the village. AS has kindly agreed to let any sign be installed on his land, a strip of land at the entrance to the village. They hadn't had any costs back yet, just a question about steel posts etc.

The Clerk had chased this up twice on email with Dawn and Adam Marsh at Dorset Council and asked that they come back to her before the meeting.

AS said they had the information they had asked for. They hadn't received an acknowledgement that the information has been received as yet.

NA added that there is a strip of lane into West Compton some of which were now deteriorating fast. He had a big flint in his tyre. CS advised that he went onto the Council website and filled in the form on potholes.

AS confirmed that there were a congregation of flints at the bottom of that strip and it was becoming increasingly potholed in this weather.

II. Grit Bins

No issues amongst the Councillors. NA confirmed West Compton bins were full and good.

III. Finger posts

CS said that Covid had shut Roger Bond down. He was waiting to hear back and had chased twice but no reply as yet. JW commented that when he was getting theirs done he didn't get any answer from Roger, then discovered that all Roger's emails were in his spam folder

AS said that some at West Compton were looking bad again. He was happy to sort them out and make repairs as a gesture of goodwill.

Proposed NA

CS Seconded

IV. Potholes

CS asked JR how things were coming along in Compton Valence, JR confirmed that they should be

