

Minutes of the Meeting of Little Compton Parish Council held in the Village Hall
on Monday 19 September 2011

Present: Cllrs. Rudge (Chairman), Ashford and Hall, Warwickshire County Cllr. Saint, Parish Clerk Susan Cox and 7 members of the public.

1. Declarations of Interest - there were none.
2. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Moorman and Brandreth.
3. The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 11 July 2011 were agreed to be a correct record, proposed by Cllr. Ashford and seconded by Cllr. Hall.
4. Matters arising from the minutes - those not included elsewhere on the agenda.
10 - Verge cutting contract - A consultation paper had been received from Stratford District Council, which has been circulated to Councillors for comment. The verges within the village are now cut only 5 times per year, compared to 16 cuts some years ago, which was then reduced to 13 and then to 9 cuts. The decision to reduce the number of cuts was taken after the date that the Parish Council budget and precept was set, thus eliminating the opportunity for the Parish Council to enhance the number of cuts. Additionally, despite several requests, not all verges in the village are cut and not all verges are cut up to the 30 mph signs. In its response to the consultation, the Parish Council asked if there was any guarantee that the District Council would keep to its contract with the Parish Council in future and also if there would be any payment to the Parish Council from the District Council in respect of the savings to the District Council's budget if the Parish Council undertakes the maintenance of the verges. No reply had been received. Cllrs. agreed that five cuts per season are insufficient and need to be enhanced and that more litter picking would be beneficial.

17.4 South Warwickshire Games - A meeting was held in Long Compton in July to discuss the possibility of neighbouring villages working together to arrange an event in 2012 to celebrate the London Olympics and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Cllr. Rudge and Mr. Evans had attended that meeting. Mrs. Caroline Maddison had expressed an interest in representing Little Compton at future meetings on this venture.

17.4 Correspondence had been received on suggested ways of celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. 2012 beacons are to be lit throughout the UK and its territories. The Chairman suggested working on this event with a neighbouring village. It was planned that a questionnaire covering various topics will be sent to all residents and a question on how the village would like to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee would be included.

5. Date of next Meeting - Monday 21 November 2011.
6. Report from County Cllr. Saint. Cllr. Saint reported on the Parish Council's request that Little Compton is included on Warwickshire's Primary Gritting Route. The County Highways department insists that the village is a secondary route and will be gritted only during prolonged periods of severe weather and as resources allow.

There is to be a reduction of hours at Shipston library, although there appears to be no changes to the mobile library service. A meeting will be held to discuss library changes on 10th October. Cllr. Saint said that school transport is another item being considered for cost cutting purposes.

Free electric blanket testing is taking place at Stratford Fire Station on 7 October.

Cllr. Saint agreed with Councillors that District Council arrangements such as the grass cutting contract should not be changed without prior notice or consultation. He said litter picking should be taking place and fly tipping should be reported to the District Council

Mr. McLean asked Cllr. Saint, in relation to the National Planning Framework Document, if the County Council has delegated areas where development will be permitted.

Cllr. Saint replied that the National Planning Framework is only a consultation document, although the MP concerned, Mr. Clark, would like it to become law by next year. If that is the case, then Cllr. Saint would expect some revision of the document. This is work in hand and it is hoped the plans will become much clearer in due course.

7. Playground Report. Mr. John Hall had kindly replaced the shackles and bushes on the swings.

8. Village Maintenance. Cllr. Ashford reported further on Parish Council's request to be included on Warwickshire's Primary Gritting Route. He said the points system used to determine inclusion on the Primary Gritting Route is a waste of time. Only incidents reported to the Police are included. There had been a number of vehicles skidding out of control in the village during last winter. These occurrences were not reported to the Police because invariably no one was injured. In future Cllr. Ashford will report every case that he has knowledge of to County Highways.
 Cllr. Ashford said all potholes in the village have been filled. He had spoken with County Highways regarding the willow tree overhanging the A44 from which a branch had fallen. County Highways had identified other trees nearby which required attention and had asked the landowner, Mr. Allen, to arrange for these trees to be pruned as soon as possible.
 The missing kerbstones at High Corner had been reported and all grips in the village had been re-cut.
 Cllr. Ashford said work to the bank opposite The Orchard was still outstanding. It was agreed that village benches required power washing and re-sealing. This would be carried out in the Spring.
 It was also agreed that residents will be consulted, via the proposed questionnaire, regarding the use of The Payback Scheme for village tidying and other tasks.

9. Cemetery. Cllr. Hall reported that three quotes were obtained for trimming the sides of the hedges in the cemetery extension (not including the roadside hedge) and subsequently Thomas Fox was asked to carry out the work. The path had been sprayed for weeds. Mr. Hall had re-seated three headstones. A burial had taken place in a reserved plot. Mr. Evans had pruned and re-staked some trees and had tagged trees in the hedges. Mr. & Mrs. Cox will replace the tree which they had sponsored and which had died.

10. Footpaths and Bridleways report. Cllr. Hall reported that she had walked the bridleway opposite to Redlands Farm and agreed that it is overgrown and very wet in the area of the spring. The landowner had erected a sign allowing walkers to use the field at this point. The landowner will be asked for permission to allow the Cotswold Wardens to do some work along this path.
The step on the stile at Little Compton garage is still outstanding, as is the footpath sign at the bottom of the lane to Langston Farm.
The Rights of Way map for the noticeboard still requires some work to make it legible. The Chairman suggested contacting the relevant department at Warwickshire County Council again to ask for a copy of a suitable size.
The Parish Paths Partnership should also be contacted as they may offer support with work on footpaths and bridleways.
11. Liaison with Local and National Organisations. The Chairman and Cllr. Brandreth had attended a WALC discussion event on the Open Public Services White Paper. A copy of the feedback was made available for Councillors and the public.
12. Finance. - The Responsible Financial Officer reported:
1. Bank balances: Cash account £292.75 BMM account £7,526.99
 2. External Auditor's Report. The external auditor had commented 'Contrary to the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011, the Parish Council did not approve its accounts (and section 1 of this Annual Return) by 30 June 2011'.
The Conclusion of Audit notice will now be displayed on the village noticeboard.

On a proposal by Cllr. Hall and seconded by Cllr. Rudge, the following payments were approved (*paid):

100684	Thomas Fox	£204.00*
100685	Staples Printer	£168.32*
100686	Playdale	£ 72.43*
100687	Clement Keys Audit Fee	£162.00*
100688	Thomas Fox	£306.00*
100689	BT Internet	£ 54.00*
	Clerk Salary July - September 2011	£ 341.13
	Mr. J Hall for Cemetery repairs	£ 40.00
	Thomas Fox - Hedge trimming	£160 max + VAT

Cheque100580 for £48.00 paid to Stratford DC for Domain Name had been reimbursed.

13. Planning Applications.
Cllr. Rudge said she had become aware that there were some misconceptions about the Parish Council's role in responding to planning applications. The Parish Council can make observations and comments on planning applications, can support or object to them, but all decisions are made by Stratford District Council. The Parish Council does have guidelines on responding to planning applications in the Village Design Statement. This was compiled about twelve years ago and records the character and qualities of Little Compton that are valued by its residents. It was prepared in consultation with residents of the village by means of a questionnaire and three public

meetings. Its aim is to ensure that any future changes to the village take into account local knowledge and ideas and protect and enhance the special nature of the village. This statement and its guidelines is addressed to all those who may be involved in planning, approving or implementing any change which may alter the look or appearance of the village. This includes the residents and businesses, developers, architects and designers, local planning authority, statutory bodies and local community groups. The Little Compton Village Design Statement has been adopted by Stratford District Council as supplementary planning guidance and its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are assessed. In this way it will complement local planners and the existing design guidance as it affects Little Compton and it will also assist the Parish Council in assessing and commenting on planning applications and village design issues. It remains in place until it is either withdrawn or superseded.

The Chairman said she considered that, as Councillors had been elected to represent the residents of the village, the V.D.S. must be brought to the attention of the planning authority when appropriate. Fortunately most applications do conform to the V.D.S., but occasionally one does not.

Many Parish Councils have regular planning meetings. However Little Compton, on average, has only one application a month. When an application is received, it is circulated, with the plans and accompanying documents, to all Councillors who are asked to comment, noting any planning issues. If necessary a site visit is arranged and also, if necessary, a meeting is arranged to discuss the application. A summary of Councillors' comments is then submitted to Stratford District Council - all relevant planning issues are included. Often responses to Stratford District Council are that the Parish Council supports the application in principle, but asks for some details to be reconsidered and changed.

The Chairman said that about seven years ago, when she was Clerk to the Council, she suggested that a regular planning meeting should be introduced. The Parish Councillors at that time did not deem this necessary and this decision was supported by the District Councillor at that time. The system by which the Parish Council responds to planning applications can be changed if a majority of Councillors wish it.

Current applications:

11/00105/FUL Rigside - retrospective application for erection of conservatory and sub division of the house to make a dwelling and holiday let - Decision still pending.

11/00964/FUL The Red Lion - retrospective application to erect a 6ft wooden fence bordering Pill Lane. No objection in principle for the erection of some extra security, but the wooden fence was not in accordance with the Village Design Statement - Decision pending.

11/01443/FUL 1 Post Office Row - first floor extension and conservatory - Permission granted

11/01111/EXT Compton Graze - Extension of time for permission already granted - Approved

11/01393/FUL Kitebrook Farm - installation of photovoltaic panels on stable roof - Decision pending.

10/02431/FUL Land behind Jordans Orchard - an appeal has been submitted against the refusal decision of the planning committee in April.

14. Correspondence:

1. LCR Autumn 2011
2. Clerks & Councils Direct September 2011
3. Stour/Shipston Community Forum (noticeboard)
4. The Cotswold Lion
5. WALC Annual report and Annual Meeting 27 October

By e-mail:

Business Rates for Parish/Town Councils

Information sharing

Destination News

VASA Facing up to opportunities....

Local Government Pensions introduction

Improving Broadband

Agenda doc. for Housing Advisory Panel

Big Society - What Society

Open Public Spaces white paper

Flood Defence assistance grants

Queen Elizabeth 11 Field challenge

Proposal to empower local councils

New national planning policy framework

Training to assist Chairmen of Parish & Town Councils

Warwickshire Highways letter to Mr & Mrs Bamford

Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd - Phase 2 of the quarry and new entrance.

Representatives of the Parish Council have been invited to join a liaison group with representatives of adjoining Parish Councils and Smith & Sons. Cllrs. Ashford and Hall agreed to represent the Parish Council at these meetings.

15. Questions and comments from the public

Mr. Hope reported that there is a pothole in Drivers Lane still requiring attention.

Cllr. Ashford will report this to County Highways.

Mrs. Bamford asked if District and County Councillors could be welcomed to Parish Council meetings.

Mrs. Hanks asked who was liable for compensation for any injuries incurred by falling branches etc. The Chairman replied she did not know, but will find the answer.

16. Other Business. There was none.

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm