

MINUTES OF THE SOUTH PERROTT ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Held in the Village Hall, South Perrott on Wednesday 24th April 2019 at 7.00pm

PRESENT There were 30 people present

APOLOGIES received from Jane and Mike Brueton, Angela Gillingham, Jill Turner, Nick Hoar and Jane Baker

INTRODUCTION Kate Organ chaired the meeting, as Chairman of the Parish Council. Although Kate Organ was keen to stress that this is a Village Meeting and not a Parish Council Meeting.

MINUTES The minutes of the 2018 meeting were circulated. They were proposed by Martyn Gillingham and seconded by Dominie de la Poer. Kate Organ signed these as correct.

MATTERS ARISING AND OTHER LOCAL MATTERS

HIGHWAY MATTERS

Peter Hinton reported a pot hole in Picket Lane, above the nursery. Rebecca Taylor to either chase or raise with Highways.

Bob Buckland raised the issue of flooding on the A356 outside Sarum. Bob Buckland was concerned that the road was scheduled to be closed to fix this, when, in Bob Buckland's view, the flooding wasn't deep enough to affect the flow of traffic. Kate Organ explained that the road is not now going to be closed, as remedial action to clear the drains can be done from the roadside. Martyn Gillingham, in his capacity as river warden reiterated that this needs to be resolved as it is his responsibility to put out 'flood warning' signs whenever there is heavy rainfall. Martyn Gillingham explained that when the road floods, the water covers half the road and effectively reduces the road to a single carriageway.

David Lines expressed his concern about the proposed 'top dressing' of the A356. Top dressing a road like the A356 is inadequate, and villages like South Perrott should be entitled to a quiet road surface. David Lines expressed the view that a big issue should be made of this to ensure the work done is suitable. Sue Coutanche is to email Mike Westwood to chase this matter. Residents were encouraged to contact the council independently to complain about the current state of the road surface.

Ann Studley reported that the 'No HGV' signs at the South Perrott end of Lecher Lane are both pointing in the same direction (visible as you approach from Chedington, but not Crewkerne). One needs to be moved to point in the other direction.

Jo Hoar is concerned about the turning out of Picket Lane onto the A356, and suggested that the introduction of a 'priority' sign from one direction or the other would help traffic to navigate the narrow section of A356 by Swing Gate Cottage, and could help to calm traffic through the village. Kate Organ and Dave Smith pointed out that visibility for traffic through the village was poor, and that making traffic stop in this way might be dangerous. Sue Coutanche said that traffic did stop by Swing Gate although not visible until at the narrowest point.. Anthony de la Poer suggested that a mirror on Sylvia Daw's cottage might help. Kate Organ offered to speak to the residents at White Stop House, to ask that they trim their hedge to help improve visibility at this junction. Jane Woodford suggested that visibility would be less of an issue if a 20mph speed limit were introduced. Kate Organ said that this was not allowed as South Perrott has no school.

Sue Coutanche asked if there was any update on the Finger Post sign at the end of Lecher Lane. Kate Organ reported that this is in hand. Ann Studley hopes that the HGV sign will be sorted out before the Finger Post is erected.

VILLAGE CLEAN UP

Dates for a village clean up were proposed and discussed, and the date of 7th July was agreed upon. Sue Coutanche thanked Jonathan Baker for providing equipment including high-vis jackets and grabbers. The road should also be swept before the fayre. Bob Buckland asked about the grass verges and Kate Organ was able to let everyone know that these will be cut twice a year.

VILLAGE BREAKFASTS

Kate Organ said that these had been brilliant and thanked the organisers. Martyn Gillingham reported that £936 had been raised by the 3 breakfasts held this winter. This money, along with money from a JustGiving page set up by Oliver's mother, and a generous donation from Peter Jones, in memory of his late wife Lorraine, has enabled Oliver's family to purchase specialist 'Eye Gaze' equipment, which Oliver is now using at home.

BROADBAND / MOBILE PHONE RECEPTION

It was agreed that mobile signal in the village is either poor or non-existent. Martyn Gillingham and Kate Organ suggested that EE should give residents the best mobile coverage, as EE are used for ambulance service communications.

MILLENIUM GREEN

Martyn Gillingham reported that the survey was successfully completed in the autumn, with a 60% response rate from residents of South Perrott and Chedington. There was a clear majority in favour of keeping the Millenium Green. A number of volunteers came forward as trustees and 'Friends of the Millenium Green'. The new trustees are in the process of being appointed. There is currently an ongoing discussion with the Environment Agency about the bridleway which currently runs up the spillway. The Environment Agency say that the horses are damaging the spillway and would like to divert the bridleway through the Millenium Green. Those present at the meeting understood the importance of the flood defence works, including the spillway, but were concerned that horses would also damage the Millenium Green.

PICKET LANE RAILINGS

These were taken down as they had become dangerous. Ann Studley and family have generously offered to pay for the cost of replacement railings, in memory of Ann's late husband Hugh. Kate Organ confirmed that all bulbs moved during the works would be saved and replanted. Ann Studley was thanked for her generosity, and confirmed that the work was all on hand.

DOG FOULING

It was generally agreed that the situation in the village is now much better.

VILLAGE HALL

Michael Stevenette reported that the inspection had been completed, and the Village Hall should last another 10 years. The village hall will be 40 this year, and Kate Organ suggested that there should be a celebration.

FIRES / BONFIRES

Dominie and Anthony de la Poer appealed to residents to be considerate when lighting fires, and especially to consider wind conditions, time of day, and to try to avoid Sundays.

NOISY NEIGHBOURS

After reports of machine tools being used early in the morning, including Sundays, Christmas Day and Easter Sunday, residents were urged to be considerate of one another. Dave McSkelley had spoken to one resident, who had stopped using his machinery on that occasion. Kate Organ agreed to speak to the resident responsible for much of the disturbance.

NOISY DOGS

Chris Kennett reported a dog that howls and whimpers from 6:30am. She says that the sound is not only a nuisance, but that it is distressing to hear a dog whimpering and crying continually. It was suggested that neighbours of the dog should get together to contact Dorset Council, the Dog Warden and the RSPCA.

BAILEY'S LANE PLOT OF LAND

Martyn Gillingham has spoken to the lady who has purchased the block of land in Bailey's Lane, as the Gillingham's scaffolding was blocking her access! The intention is to use the land for peace and quiet, and relaxation. The lady has been able to access the land by 4x4, and has organised working parties to clear some of the over-grown vegetation. Log piles and clearing have been seen by several residents. Sue Coutanche asked about the right of way to drive a vehicle along Bailey's Lane. Martyn Gillingham said that he assumed they have a right of access.

VILLAGE MEETING FORMAT

It was jovially agreed that this year's meeting was more open (and less like a Parish Council Meeting) than last year's.

FUTURE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Peter Jones asked about the future of the Parish Council. Kate Organ summarised the current situation. Chedington have decided that they no longer wish to have a Parish Council, and are moving to a Village Meeting instead. However, all of the notifications from Dorset Council have assumed that the joint Parish Council will continue. South Perrott currently have 2 nominees for the new Parish Council – Sue Coutanche and Yvonne Harris, both of whom will automatically become Parish Councillors. A third candidate has been requested, and Jonathan Baker has put himself forward for this. However, this would still leave South Perrott with just 3 Parish Councillors, when 5 are required for the council to be quorate.

3 suggested solutions were proposed:

1. Form a joint Parish Council with Mosterton. This was an unpopular suggestion for several reasons. South Perrott is a much smaller village than Mosterton, and the needs / wishes of South Perrott residents would get lost / overlooked in this union. There is also very little contact between South Perrott and Mosterton, social or otherwise. Jo Hoar pointed out that the precept would be set by Mosterton, so South Perrott residents would likely contribute more, and see less in return.

2. As there are less than 200 residents on the South Perrott electoral role, we could move to a Village Meeting format. There was a strong feeling amongst those at the meeting, that the Parish Council is important, and that we should fight to keep ours.
3. If there are enough people willing to stand, we could form a new 'South Perrott Parish Council'.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the third option would be the most popular. As well as Jonathan Baker making the third Parish Councillor, two further residents: David Lines and Peter Jones both expressed their willingness to be co-opted on to the new council. Kate Organ and Rebecca Taylor agreed to send a letter (by post and email) to Kirsty Riglar at Dorset Council putting forward our proposal for the future of our Parish Council.

HEDGEHOGS

Jo Caughlin spoke to the meeting about the proposals to turn South Perrott into a 'hedgehog friendly' village. There will be a presentation in South Perrott Village Hall at 7:30pm at South Perrott Village Hall, but Susy and Colin Varndell, from the Dorset branch of the British Mamma Group. Hedgehogs are in decline nationally, and this scheme aims to educate people about how to help hedgehogs, and how we can encourage them into our gardens. If you see a hedgehog, please report it to Jo – all sightings will go onto a map of the village. There will be a number of fundraising events, details to follow.

PERMISSIVE PATH

Sue Coutanche spoke about the permissive path on Ian Neal's land, which has become muddy and slippery. Sue Coutanche has spoken to Ian Neal and he is happy for work to be done to the path to improve safety. Sue Coutanche has spoken to Tom Ellis and got a rough quote of £600 to include weed membrane, scalplings, labour, materials and digger hire. Jo Hoar questioned the amount mentioned by Sue Coutanche, as it seems very low. Jo Hoar suggested that the true cost was likely to be 3 or 4 times higher. Kate Organ reported that she has spoken to the Environment Agency about residents using the Engineers Road to access the Millennium Green, and they have confirmed that they are very happy for residents to do this. Kate Organ further added that the Parish Council is not obliged to pay for any work to be carried out on private land, and that if the path is dangerous, it should be closed in the winter. Sue Coutanche said that she liked to do a circular walk, and that the path wasn't only dangerous in the winter, and suggested that residents, especially dog walkers might like to contribute towards the cost. Jo Caughlin questioned who was responsible for the upkeep of the path and who would be liable if someone was to have an accident. It was agreed that it was the owner's responsibility to maintain the path or close it.

PUMP AND POUND

Sue Coutanche would like all articles for the Pump and Pound by Tuesday 21st May.

AOB

Kate Organ thanked Anthony de la Poer and Sue Coutanche for their hard work as Parish Councillors; and Rebecca Taylor as Clerk to the Parish Council.

Bob Buckland thanked Kate Organ for her huge contribution to the village.

The meeting closed at 8:35pm