

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Farley (Chairman), Byrne, Parker, Warner, Rolfe, Windmill and Rix together with 5 members of the public (list retained).

**Public Participation:** *The Chairman invited the public to speak.*

Mr Gordon Stevens said that the matter of the car park can only be considered if the Public House does not exist. The car park and the public house are not two separate issues. The planning application for the new build on the car park requires the White Hart to cease trading. He referred to Central Government PP57 – Closure of a Public House and viability of the business. The White Hart Inn when it is run properly is a viable business. By using the car park as a dwelling the Public House ceases to trade as originally intended. There will be an increase in the parking difficulties in the village, increase in drink driving and loss of employment. The pub car park forms part of the curtilage of The White Hart Inn.

A parishioner, Mr Denton Brockway mentioned a number of objections to the proposal of the new build on the car park. The building is far too high, loss of views, the building is far too close to the road, does not follow Village Design Statement, loss of privacy – the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor window will look directly into his house and Mr Brockway believes that the SDC planners have handled the planning application poorly as he was told that the closing date had already expired.

A parishioner, Mr Simon Grant said that if the car park is taken away then it will mean that the Public House is taken away.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their comments. The meeting was formally opened at 7.47pm

1. **Apologies for Absence:** There were no apologies for absence.
2. **To note any Members' Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interests
3. **Planning**  
**To resolve responses to any current relevant Planning Applications received, as statutory consultees from Sedgemoor District Council AS FOLLOWS:**

**a. Planning Application 21/08/00018 Mr Morgan**

Type: Application for Full Planning Permission  
Applicant: Farlane Property Group  
Location: Land to the South of, The White Hart Inn, Old Coach Road, Cross, Axbridge  
Proposal: Erection of two-storey dwelling on site of former public house car park.

Cllr Rolfe presented the plans, outlined the applicant's proposal and asked if Councillors had any comments. Cllr Windmill asked about the building line. Cllr Byrne informed the council that Mr Morgan had visited the site in August and said that, in his view, the conversion of the Public House into flats and this new dwelling application would go through as the planning application's were "done and dusted" and agreed between the developer and Mr Morgan. Cllr Byrne further said that if the White Hart Inn closed then the car park could become a dumping ground.

Cllr Rix said that the new build was a huge dwelling when you consider the size of the houses on either side of the dwelling. The new build does not fit with anything else in the vicinity – it is too big, the wrong type of build and will take away the amenity of an open space.

Cllr Rolfe proceeded to read through the Planning Advisory Group report titled, "Comments for Council". The Advisory Group recommended the rejection of the Proposal on the grounds of its non-compliance with SDC Local Plan, Policies STR 2,3, H3 a, b, c, e and f, E9, TM1 e, CN14, 14A and 15, HE4, and PCS 7 and the Village Design Statement.

The Chairman asked the Council if they accepted the recommendations made by the Advisory Group. The Cllrs asked for the Comments to be amended to provide for the addition of H3f, more emphasis on loss of car parking and the impact on The White Hart trade/loss of employment. Subject to such amendments, it was resolved that Cllrs were unanimously in favour of the recommendations and the motion was carried. It was agreed to submit a copy of the Advisory Group's Comments so amended to Sedgemoor DC Planning Department as part of the formal reply.

**b. Planning Application 21/08/00022 Con McStay**

Location: 18 Big Tree Close, Compton Bishop, Axbridge, BS262EY  
Proposal: Erection of single storey extension to West elevation.  
43508  
Case Officer: Con McStay  
Applicant: Ms Sheriff

Cllr Rolfe outlined the plans and Proposal then read out a report from the Planning Advisory Group title, "Comments for Council".

Advisory Group Recommended to support in principle a single storey garden room extension but does not recommend acceptance of the design or the choice of materials on the grounds of non-compliance with SDC Policies H3 and BE2, a, b, c and e. It recommends that the Applicant discusses and agrees with the Planning Authority suitable alternatives which are in keeping with the existing structure and accord with the said Policies.

Cllr Rolfe then discussed a "Post Advisory Group Meeting Note". Cllr Rolfe said that he spoke to Mr McStay of SDC Planning on 6<sup>th</sup> January and understands that revised drawings have been submitted by the Applicant to SDC which addresses the points raised in the document. SDC is requested to provide Compton Bishop PC with a copy of the revised drawings in order that they can be discussed at the Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009. A copy of the Advisory Group Comments to be issued to SDC as part of the formal reply

4. The meeting closed at 20.45 hours

*E Yester*

14-01-09

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Farley (Chairman), Parker, Warner, Rolfe and Windmill together with 2 members of the public; Ms D Dickenson, Mr C Byrne and Mr Ian Mat, Journalist (list retained), Temporary Clerk Mrs S Broadbent.

**Public Participation:** Cllr Byrne resident of Compton Bishop and Cllr of Weare, Axbridge and Cheddar mentioned the icy road conditions on the Webbington Road. Two mothers of school children attending Kings of Wessex School had expressed to him concern at the danger of the pick-up point in Old Coach road outside Rosewell Cottage for the school bus, in view of the recent fatality of a schoolboy near Wedmore. Cllr Farley said that he would speak to them and look into the situation and report back to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Rix had apologised for her absence to the Chairman citing her involvement in an ongoing academic course, of which she has previously made the council aware. This was accepted.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on December 10<sup>th</sup> were unanimously approved. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.  
The minutes of the planning meeting held on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Farley declared a Personal Interest in items 4 and 11. Cllr Rolfe declared a Personal Interest in any items concerning Mr Chris Byrne and Cllr Parker declared a personal interest in any items where Mr Byrne is mentioned or involved.
4. **Standard's Committee Report.** Cllr Farley submitted a report titled, Standards Committee Sedgemoor District Council. He said the purpose of the report was to act as a brief record for Councillors and to advise them of the organisational changes that have taken place. Cllr Farley updated the Councillors on the full day hearing meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January with the Standards Committee and Cllr Byrne. The Standards Committee concluded that a breach of the Code of Conduct had occurred and they awarded a penalty against Councillor Byrne 1) Three months suspension from duty as a Compton Bishop Parish Councillor with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> January 09, 2) That Councillor Byrne submits a written apology to Compton Bishop PC, 3) That he undertakes a training course on "Procedures and the role of councils in local government". Finally, Cllr Farley read out the report recommendations. The Members resolved to accept the recommendations, which Cllr Parker mentioned had been discussed at a previous PC meeting.
5. **To receive a report from Cllr Parker: Code of Conduct Consultation: Experiences and Issues.** Cllr Parker read through the draft report, a number of changes had been made on the Council's recommendation at the last Parish Council meeting. Cllr Farley thanked Cllr Parker for taking the council through the report, which is now to be submitted to Mr Karl Holden, Conduct and Council Constitution Team.  
**To receive a report from Cllr Parker re: Freedom of Information: model publication scheme/Grass roots issues and from Cllr Farley SALC report.** Cllr Parker proposed to put on the Council's website a schedule of charges and the Council's policies. The Temporary Clerk was instructed to update the charges and report back to Cllr Parker for the next meeting. Cllr Parker asked that Cllrs read through the Policies and report back at the next Council meeting. Cllr Windmill asked if the policy document was a statement of intent? Cllr Parker explained that the model was a legal requirement from the Government and a policy statement is required.  
Cllr Farley submitted a report about the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008 SALC meeting and said it was a similar subject to the Complaints Consultation. SALC is presenting a list of questions and responses to Government. It was proposed that SALC's core values are extremely important to members. It was unanimously agreed that this was a useful report and that SALC is a valuable resource. If there were any increase to its annual membership fee then the council resolved to pay it. At this point the Chairman circulated to members a Press Release, which reported that one of Compton Bishop Parish Councillors had been found to have breached the Code of Conduct. After reading the press Release, Cllr Farley gave Mr Ian Mat, a journalist for the Cheddar Valley Press, a copy.

7. **Finance**

The Chairman asked Cllrs to resolve the retrospective transfer of an additional £1,000 to make £4,000 in total transferred from the Business Manager Account into the Community Account. This is £1,000 more than minuted in last month's PC minutes. This was unanimously approved by Council.

- a. **Monthly reconciliation(s).** The temporary clerk read out the reconciliation for December and the COUNCIL RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for December 08 (attached to these minutes).
- b. **Payments due:** COUNCIL RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary and expenses (4 weeks)	£182.91
Moore Stephens Audit Fee	£138.00
The cost of the Small Claims court action against Cllr Byrne	£45.00
Cheque to SCC for the licence to relocate the replacement Notice board at Kennel lane	£25.00
- c. **To receive from the Temporary Clerk a bank reconciliation of forward projection of outstanding payments:** Closing balance: £5,709.23  
Income: Claim against Cllr Byrne: £300.65  
Less payments to be made: Moore Stephens (actual) £138.00

Moore Stephens (actual) £2,293.68 (Deferred)  
Erection of PC notice board – Memorial Hall (estimate) £30.00  
Erection of PC notice board – Kennel lane (estimate) £50.00

**Cash Projection: £3,498.20**

- d. **Small Claims Application:** The Cllrs approved unanimously the payment of £45.00 to the Small Claims Court as a fee to recover monies owing from Cllr Byrne.
- e. Cllr Farley showed the Council a letter from Cllr Ham offering to make a grant to the set-up costs of Compton Bishop and Cross Summer Scarecrow Festival. Cllr Farley said that it was a welcome contribution, however no sum of money had been mentioned at this stage.

**8. Planning:** Cllr Rolfe asked the Clerk if the Advisory Group recommendations to planning applications: 21/08/00018, Farlane Property Group, Erection of two-storey dwelling on site of former public house car park and 21/08/00022 Ms Sheriff, 18 big Tree Close, had been sent to SDC Development Control. The Clerk confirmed that they had been Emailed and posted. Cllr Rolfe went on to discuss the following application which had been sent to the PC after the agenda had been finalised.

**Reference number:** 21/08/00023/RSM  
**Proposal** Retention of existing two-storey dwelling  
**Location** The Bungalow, Barton Road, Webbington, BS26 2HT  
**Applicant** Ms S Charman

**Recommendation:** Cllr Rolfe said, the Planning Advisory Group does not condone the Applicant proceeding with the modifications, evident from comparison of approved drawings with latest drawings, without approval. This said, the Advisory Group has no objections to the modifications proposed and is content to leave it to the planning dept. to confirm its approval or otherwise. Cllrs unanimously supported the Planning Advisory Group recommendations. The Temporary Clerk was instructed to submit them to SDC Development Control.

## 9. Reports from Advisory Group leaders

### a. Environment

- Cllr Parker discussed the new gate at the top of the Scaurs and said that it does not close like the old one. He also mentioned that he received an Email from Mr Crawford that stated the Scaurs is dangerous as a bridle way and that it should be declassified as such. Mr Crawford also said that he was interested in offering the Scaurs to the National Trust. Cllr Parker said that we now know who owns the Scaurs. At this point 20.40 hours Mr Mat left the meeting.
- The Council is satisfied with the bus shelter repairs and the money from the Community Chest had been banked. Acknowledgement is to be made to the Community Chest.
- Cllr Rolfe to contact Mr David Ham who will erect the notice board at The Memorial Hall according to the sketch plan.
- The Council approved the cost of £25.00 for the licence to reposition the notice board at Kennel Lane.
- Cllr Parker brought to the attention the redundancies at the AONB.
- It is now unlawful to use 4x4 vehicles on bridleways.
- It is the International Year of Astronomy said Cllr Parker.
- Somerset County Council is offering a team of volunteers for one day to work on a project in the Parish, it is free and Cllr Farley will ask the Memorial Hall Committee if they are in need of volunteers.

### b. Highways

- Plans for winter gritting were shown to Members; Cllr Farley said that gritting is on the main routes only. He suggested a formal letter should be sent to SCC as Old Coach Road and Webbington Road have been left off the plan and these roads are used by school buses.
  - The parish sign on the Webbington Road west bound has been stolen; the matter has been reported to the Police. Cllr Farley asked if an insurance claim should be made for the replacement. It was unanimously decided not to claim on the Parish Insurance Policy.
  - A sign has been erected on the A38 advertising Chew Valley YFC. The matter has been reported to Mrs Berry and the people advertising have been contacted.
- 10. Website.** Cllr Parker updated members: a link can be made to the Police Crime Statistics from the PC website. However, the statistics programme is not compatible with the PC site. It was decided not to link to this site.
- 14. Correspondence.** It was noted that there was little correspondence this month. Cllr Parker said that he would like to comment on items 109 and 110. The first is an open letter to Clerks, Cllrs of Compton Bishop, Weare, Cheddar, SDC, Police and Magistrates Court. The second is a 'Newsletter', which was circulated within the parish and had a heading, 'Compton Bishop Parish Council', and had a copy of a letter from Cllr Byrne, to the Chairman of the Standards Committee attached. Cllr Parker said that, Cllr Byrne continues to produce and circulate newsletters with the CBPC heading thereby implying, incorrectly, that this council endorses his statements. He continues his unrelenting aggressive pattern of misinformation and allegations, which remains unsupported with fact. Yet again he is bringing this council into disrepute. Cllr Parker proposed that Cllr Byrne be censured for showing, in these two letters, a lack of respect to this council and its members and has brought this council into

disrepute. He has breached the code of conduct – paragraphs 3(1), 3(2)(b), 5 and 6(a). The Council unanimously supported this proposal.


Item 105 Somerset Rural Youth Project, it was suggested that a copy should go to Mrs Settle, Chairman of Cross connections.

Cllr Warner mentioned that Explore Somerset wanted the council to identify any walks in the area to be advertised on their website. It was decided that no further action would be taken.

Item 104 in the correspondence file, Somerset NHS was given to Cllr Windmill to report back at the next meeting.

15. To resolve the date, time and place of the next monthly Council: February 11<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.15 hours.**

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:  .....Chairman

DATE:  .....

# COMPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of a meeting held at Quarry House to discuss Moore Stephens and a verbal offer communicated via Ms Wellman of SDC on behalf of Cllr Byrne on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 at 18.00 hours

- 1 **Present:** Cllrs D. Windmill, J. Warner, M. Rolfe, R. Parker and E. Farley
- 2 **Apologies:** Cllr A. Rix due to a prior engagement, written submission made.
- 3 A further letter-dated 24.01.09 has been posted to Moore Stephens expressing councillors' dissatisfaction at the scale of the invoice received due to Cllr Byrne's complaint to them. A submission has been made to SALC, Mr P. Lacey and he has replied that he is thinking about the matter. SB advice was that if no progress can be made with MS, then resorting to the Association of Chartered Accountants could be a useful avenue. Agreed that an initial enquiry should be made of ACA prior to exhausting matters with MS. EF is to do this on the lines of "How best to make a case". Also agreed that EF will write to Cllr Byrne and ask for copies of his correspondence to MS. It is possible that a letter entitled "Evidence and Proof from Cllr Byrne dated 5.7.08 was the original complaint letter by him to MS. It is understood that there have been 7 letters, one of 19 pages from Byrne to MS.
- 4 Cllr Byrne had made a verbal offer via Ms Wellman understood to be as follows:  
"That Councillor Byrne will make no more complaints against members in Compton Bishop Parish Council and other councils on which he serves in exchange for Compton Bishop Parish Council withdrawing the County Court claim against him."  
There was considerable discussion on this subject as it was the main object of the meeting. A range of views was expressed and Cllr Rix's submission noted. Several councillors considered that if such a proposal were put forward formally it would likely be rejected at the council meeting that proposed it. It was pointed out that that would be beyond the date by which Cllr Byrne must respond to the Court, the 9<sup>th</sup> February. It was agreed that EF should E-mail Ms Wellman tomorrow on the following lines: "We have given the verbal offer put forward on behalf of Cllr Byrne due consideration. Cllrs consider they are not in a position to bargain using public money. They expect Cllr Byrne to fulfil his responsibilities to both the Court and the Council in full."
- 5 Copies of Ms Wellman's E-mail, Standards Committee Decision report for 5<sup>th</sup> January were handed out.

The meeting closed at 19.40 hours

A  
11/2/09

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Farley (Chairman), Parker, Warner, Rolfe and Windmill together with 3 members of the public; Ms D Dickinson, Cllr C Byrne and Mr Rix and, Temporary Clerk Mrs S Broadbent.  
**Public Participation:** Cllr Byrne resident of Compton Bishop and Cllr of Weare, Axbridge and Cheddar raised five points: A pothole in the A38 by the bridge; Mud on the road at Kennel Lane; That he had an issue with the December Minutes where it said, "I am warning you"; A lady received a letter from The Chairman addressed to Mr & Mrs Sutor who was too upset to approach the council. Asked for a report back on the school bus question raised (on behalf of parishioners) by Cllr Byrne at the last meeting. The Chairman stated that he had spoken to the lady directly and it is an agenda item. The Chairman reminded him that he can only speak as a resident of the parish and not as a Councillor as he has been suspended.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Rix had apologised for her absence to the Chairman citing her involvement in an ongoing academic course, of which she has previously made the council aware. This was accepted.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record. The notes of a meeting held at Quarry House on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2009 to discuss Moore Stephens were also unanimously approved. The notes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Farley declared a Personal Interest in items 9a, 14 and 9e. Cllrs Parker and Rolfe declared a personal interest in any items where Cllr Byrne is mentioned or involved. Cllr Windmill declared a prejudicial interest in 9d, due to there being two unresolved complaints against him to the SDC Standards Committee by Cllr Byrne (Standards ref. 2008/124 & 125).
4. **To receive a report from Cllr Parker re: Freedom of Information.** Cllr Parker gave an update on the Schedule of Charges for the Publication Scheme. A copy will be displayed on the website. Cllr Parker went on to say that a Policy Statement for the Parish Council is essential – he distributed a proposed policy document and requested that once the amendments had been made the document should be adopted by the Council. Cllr Parker proposed the adoption and Cllr Windmill seconded the proposal, which was unanimously adopted. A copy will be displayed on the Council's website. The Chairman thanked Cllr Parker for all his hard efforts.
5. **Cllr Windmill to report on: proposed response to Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation.** Cllr Windmill gave an outline of the response to the Proposal for the Development of Mental Health Services in Bridgwater and Mendip (Wells), which was set out in a discussion, document previously circulated to Councillors. He said that the only informed comment that the Council could make was to comment upon the domestic arrangement and not on medical issues. Cllr Windmill proposed that the Council accept the response. Cllrs Windmill, Parker, Rolfe and Warner accepted the proposal and Cllr Farley abstained, as he had not yet read the proposal. The clerk was instructed to return the document with a covering letter. The Chairman thanked him for his hard work in compiling the response.
6. **Parish Newsletter:** Cllr Parker circulated a listing for proposed content and requested that Cllrs E-mail him with further suggestions and he will liaise with the Chairman. Update on progress required at next PC meeting.
7. **Cllr Parker to report on Contingency and Emergency Planning.** A report was circulated and Cllr Parker said that he would put a team together to look at Risk Analysis and report back at a future meeting. He also presented an outline Fact Sheet for local transport arrangements; the Chairman commented that a similar document exists and would be retrieved.
8. **Hanging Basket Competition.** Cllr Farley asked if the Council wanted to run the competition again? It was decided that Mrs Jordan would be contacted by Cllr Farley to see if she would liaise with the gardening club. Councillor Rolfe was holding the Trophy as winner of the 2008 competition.
9. **Finance**
  - a. **Monthly reconciliation(s).** The Temporary Clerk read out the reconciliation for January 2009. The COUNCIL RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for January 2009 (attached to these minutes).
  - b. **Payments due:** COUNCIL RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary and expenses (5 weeks)	£221.39
Transcription to Braille	£ 15.53 (incl. VAT)
Erection of notice board on the Memorial Hall	£ 30.00
Supply and fit sign on the Webbington Road North verge	£319.52
  - c. **To receive from the Temporary Clerk a bank reconciliation of forward projection of outstanding payments:** Closing balance: £5,318.32 (less payments due)  
Income: Claim against Cllr Byrne: £345.65  
Less payments to be made:

Moore Stephens (actual)	£2,293.68 (Deferred)
Erection of PC notice board – Kennel lane (estimate)	£50.00
Cash Projection:	£2,735.88

- d. **Small Claims Application:** Cllr Windmill declared an interest and left the room at 8.12 p.m. Cllr Farley said that he had received notice from the court that Cllr Byrne intends to defend the claim and he has 28 days to put forward his defence. The matter is now in the hands of the Small Claims Court in Taunton.  
Cllr windmill returned to the meeting at 8.15 p.m.
- e. **Moore Stephens invoice:** the two invoices have been separated: the audit invoice of £138.00 had been paid. Cllr Farley said that he has written to Cllr Byrne requesting him to release the documentation purporting to the irregularities of the Council that he sent to Moore Stephens. Cllrs Farley, Rolfe and Warner are to meet with Mr Vince at Moore Stephens on 19<sup>th</sup> February 09 at 11 am. The items for discussion at the meeting include; justification, what evidence is there to substantiate the invoice of such magnitude and the issue of the Accountants hiding behind the Data Protection Act and restrictions by the complainant on The Freedom of Information. Cllr Farley read out a letter from Moore Stephens dated 9<sup>th</sup> February. Cllr Rolfe said that Cllrs had a duty to Parishioners; there was a need to thoroughly investigate the accusations made to Moore Stephens, which resulted in the Accountants sending such a large invoice. Cllr Parker read out a statement: "Moore Stephens confirmed that Cllr Byrne was 'the elector' who had contacted them, in their letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008. A Councillor must abide by The Code of Conduct at all times (refer to Scope section 2(5). Cllr Byrne had failed to comply with two of the Ten General Principles of the Code of Conduct: **Openness** – The Council has made a request to Cllr Byrne for details of the content of the allegations he submitted to Moore Stephens, our accountants, which resulted in them initiating an investigation. He has refused. He also refused to allow Moore Stephens to release the information to Compton Bishop Parish Council  
**Stewardship** – Cllr Byrne has failed to ensure that the council's financial resources are used prudently, and in the best interest of the parish, by failing to co-operate with Compton Bishop Parish Council to establish whether or not there had been any irregularities of process.  
Cllr Parker proposed that: Cllr Byrne is censured for making adverse comments and unsupported claims to our Council's Auditors and thereby improperly abiding by council procedures and governance, which has brought this council into disrepute. Further, by his individual and unsupported action, Cllr Byrne has caused the council to meet a £2,293.68 fee levied by the Auditors on our precept. For bringing this council into disrepute and failing to act in accordance with this council's reasonable requirements, he is in breach of paragraph 5 and 6b of the Code of Conduct. Cllr Parker proposed and seconded by Cllr Rolfe, the proposal was carried unanimously.  
*The meeting was adjourned at 8.21 and resumed at 8.25pm as two councillors wished to use the lavatory.*

## 10 Planning:

**Reference number:** 21/08/00018/RSM

**Proposal** Erection of two-storey dwelling on site of former public house car park

**Location** Land to the South of, The White Hart Inn, Old Coach rd, Cross

**Applicant** Farlane Property Group

Cllr Rolfe read out the planning decision from Sedgemoor District Council concerning the above application, which was **REFUSED**. Cllr Rolfe said that two further applications submitted by The Farlane Property Group had been received by the Planning Advisory Group; 21/08/0019 Change of use and conversion of Public House to two dwellings and 21/08/0020 Conversion of Public House to two dwellings. There would be an Advisory group meeting at 4pm on 16<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the plans and a Special Planning meeting open to the public on 20<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30 p.m. at the Memorial Hall.

## 11. Reports from Advisory Group leaders

### a. Environment

- The notice board at Cross Memorial Hall has been erected.
- The licence to reposition the notice board at Kennel Lane has been applied for; Somerset County Council will publish notices concerning the relocation for one month. These notices will be displayed shortly.
- Cllr Warner to respond to Explore Somerset footpaths website with information.
- Cllr Parker reported on the AONB Mendip Partnership Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February, which he attended. He said that cost-cutting measures outlined by the AONB would not affect this Parish, as one of the major landowners is The National Trust.
- Cllr Parker mentioned that the council needs to respond to a management plan document 2009-2014 and he would like the Cllrs agreement to respond to the document. Cllrs unanimously agreed to allow him to do this.
- Cllr Parker mentioned that there is an increasing amount of correspondence, which mentions 'Partnerships', one such, is the Rural Services Network. Cllrs agreed that Cllr Parker could progress with this partnership and identify the availability of opportunities for Government money.
- Clerk instructed to laminate and post notices advertising, Good Horse Pasture Management and Equestrian Development in the Mendip Hills and AONB meetings and place it on the Council's web site.
- A notice concerning Compost Champion Scheme should be given to the Gardening Club. Clerk asked to give to Mrs Hazel Clutterbuck and place it on the Council's web site.



- Cllr Farley attended an AONB meeting concerning the Heavy Goods Vehicle weight restriction limit on the A368 Churchill to Burrington Coombe section. North Somerset wants to make the imposition of a weight limit on this stretch of the road permanent. A point of information is that the police oppose the scheme, as does Somerset County Council and BNES. The meeting was an expression of views with no outcome other than noting the lack of consideration for Parishes and other routes outside the North Somerset area receiving diverted traffic.
- b. Highways**
- The verge on the Webbington Road had been overrun. Cllr Farley to write to Liam Gill of SCC to request that fluorescent markers be placed along the verge to stop vehicles driving on the grass.
  - The drains have been blocked at Bourton Lane. Mr Gill at SCC had organised gully emptying, however with mud still coming off the field it was discussed that Cllr Farley would contact Mr Parrett who could perhaps do more in terms of planting that would stop the mud from going on to the road. A copy of the letter to go to the Crawford Estate.
  - School pick-up, Cllr Farley had spoken with a parishioner, Mrs Rawlings and had written to the Head of Kings of Wessex School, but he was informed that they do not look after the school transportation, it is a matter for SCC. Cllr Farley had a response from SCC who had travelled the routes of the school bus in our parish and considered the present location was the most convenient. Safety of children is the responsibility of parents who are reminded of this in their individual school transport acceptance. Cllr Farley to write to see if visible tabards could be issued to the children.
  - The Council will have to wait for the notice from SCC to have the notice board at Kennel Lane repositioned. It was agreed that the stolen sign at Webbington road would not be replaced.
  - The advertising on the A38 has been removed, but it had been reported to Sedgemoor District Council.
  - Cllr Farley reported that Mr Martin Hill a Highways officer in SCC is looking at the A38 traffic problem from Lower Weare to Shute Shelve and expects to provide the results of the 2008 survey for communication to other involved councils shortly.
12. **To receive a report on Springfield Wildlife Site.** The clerk read out a report sent to Mr David Aggett at SDC from Mrs Ayling on the progress of the working party and mentioning that a number of alder trees are encroaching on nearby properties and should be pollarded. A copy to be given to Cllr Rix.
13. **Website.** Cllr Parker said that there was nothing to report
14. **Correspondence.** Cllr Warner mentioned item 0202 a letter from SDC concerning Local plan policies for outdoor sport. Item 0201 Cllr Parker took a leaflet, 'Safe in your community' for the website and one had been given to Neighbourhood Watch. Item 0208 Somerset Art Work letter asking for a donation of £30, although it was agreed that the organisation had immense value it was considered that with the present financial commitments, that the Council has, to make a donation could not be made at this time. A letter from SALC (0216) gives information on a meeting concerning Severn Barrage Proposals, which is on Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> March at Locking Hall. Cllr Farley mentioned an E-mail that he had received concerning a training course for all Cllrs on Local Governance and the Code of Conduct. The Clerk was instructed to forward the E-mail to all Cllrs to see if they can attend.
15. **To resolve the date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** March 11<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.20 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....  ..... Chairman

DATE: ..... 11-3-09 .....

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting**  
**held on Friday 20th. February 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

**Public Participation:**

Mr Denton <sup>W.</sup> of Blaisdon House addressed the meeting and outlined his concerns about the applications to be discussed as follows: He feared the proposed demolition could damage his property, having just spent £8,500 having the joint wall maintained. He feared increased noise for neighbours from the proposed rear courtyard area where the square would act as a sounding box. He deplored the loss of an historic building, central to the very being of Cross. He pointed out that the proposed demolition affected some of the oldest parts of the building. He had concerns about the sub-strata and its ability to bear the proposed construction, together with perceived ground-water problems. He pointed out that previously, Blaisdon House had been refused permission for a much simpler alteration. He deplored the loss of a village amenity.

Mrs Laband had concerns about any alteration to the present car-park that might involve intrusive lighting.

Before the meeting got underway the Chairman welcomed back the Clerk to his post.

**1. Present :**

Councillors Farley (Chairman), Windmill, Warner, Rix, Parker, Rolfe

**2. Apologies :**

None

**3. Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest by councillors in respect of any items on the agenda

**4. Resolution to exclude Press and public:**

It was RESOLVED unanimously that in view of the special nature of the business that may be transacted at item 6 (below) that the public and press should be excluded from this item on the agenda

**5. To resolve responses to any current relevant Planning Applications received, as statutory consultees, from Sedgemoor District Council as follows:**

**a. Planning Application 21/08/00019 Rob Morgan**

Registered 28/01/2009

Type: Application for Full Planning Permission

Applicant: Farlane Property Group

Location: White Hart Inn, Old Coach Road, Cross, Axbridge BS26 2EE

Proposal: Change of use and conversion of Public House to two dwellings

**b. Planning Application 21/08/00020 Rob Morgan**

Registered 28/01/2009

Type: Full Planning Permission

Applicant: Farlane Property Group

Location: White Hart Inn, Old Coach Inn, Cross Axbridge, BS26 2EE

Proposal: Conversion of Public House to two dwellings.

The Council RESOLVED unanimously to recommend refusal of these two applications for reasons set out in the report produced by the Planning Advisory Group, subject to some minor amendments arising from the public discussion prior to the meeting. The Clerk was instructed to make this decision known to Sedgemoor District Council and to forward a copy of the amended report.

The summary of grounds for recommending refusal was as follows:

*The Applications do not comply with STR2, H3, E9, SH11, CNE 15, BE2, HE6, HE 7, HE8, PCS7 and Policy Guidance PPG 15*

*There is also the question of the impact on neighbours and particularly the Grade 2 listed building Blaisdon House.*

*The proposal is apparently opportunist on the part of the Farlane Property Group which, the Advisory Group is reliably informed, has a history of purchasing pubs with a view to this type of development. The proposal will, inter alia, destroy an essential community service and will leave the White Hart completely unrecognisable as an historic Coaching Inn. It is understood from the previous landlord that the property was sold to the Farlane Group some 5 months before he left.*

*Note: At this point Press and public were excluded.*

#### **6. Financial matters.**

- a. It was RESOLVED unanimously to instruct the Clerk to sign a completed Allocation Questionnaire document and submit it to Weston-super-Mare court before 27<sup>th</sup> February. This document would be completed by the Chairman in accordance with the wishes that had been expressed by fellow councillors.
- b. A set of notes produced by the Chairman following a meeting with Mr. Vince of Moore Stephens (External Auditors) was discussed and accepted by councillors.

**The meeting ended at 21.50**

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: ..........Chairman

DATE: .....11-3-09.....

10/03/2009

11th. 1/11

Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Parker, Warner, and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

**Public Participation:** Mrs. Woolley raised the issue of fly-tipping at the lay-by on Webbington Road below Crook Peak and the throwing of rubbish into the neighbouring field. Sedgemoor District Council would be informed. She also enquired about the possibility of creating village allotments. The mechanism for this would be investigated.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Rix had apologised for her absence to the Clerk citing her involvement in an ongoing academic course, of which she has previously made the council aware. This was accepted. Cllr. Rolfe apologised for absence due to a long-standing previous engagement. This was accepted.

2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the Planning Meeting held on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2009 and those of the monthly meeting held on February 11<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Farley declared personal interest in items of correspondence 3/03, 3/04, 3/06 and 3/10 as author or recipient of items. Cllr Parker declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda that might involve discussion of Cllr Byrne's activities – citing a breakdown of personal relationships. Cllr Windmill declared a personal interest in items 7e and 14 due to ongoing unresolved complaints made by Cllr Byrne to SDC Standards Committee.

4. It was RESOLVED that in view of the special nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should be excluded from item numbers 14 and 15 on the agenda.

5. **Matters arising:** The Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Windmill's comments on proposals for the Development of Mental Health Services had been returned to the NHS Foundation Trust.

6. **Finance**

• **Monthly reconciliation.** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for February 2009 (attached to these minutes).

• **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc.	£133.88
Cross Memorial Hall hire	£76.00
SALC subscription	£136.09
SLCC subscription	£72.00
Retrospective payment to clerk (miswritten cheque)	£27.00
New Pay Scale adjustment to clerk	£36.30

• It was unanimously RESOLVED to pay Moore Stephens (External Auditor) half the fee due to meet the costs of Cllr Byrne's enquiry. This was in the sum of £1146.84. However, councillors expressed misgivings at the scale of these charges, especially as Cheddar Parish had been charged considerably less for an apparently similar enquiry. The Chairman will write to the auditors to seek an explanation. It was agreed that the force of law was with Moore Stephens. Councillors felt that reassurance was needed from the auditors that in the event of any future enquiry by an elector, that there would be better liaison between the auditors and council to ensure that no unnecessary work is done at the council's expense and they would ensure the Council was properly informed. Chairman read an email from the auditors, which confirmed categorically that no issues raised by the elector warranted any action by the auditors. There were no findings of malpractice. The Chairman regretted Cllr Byrne's continued lack of openness in not providing the Council with copies of his letters to Moore Stephens that had resulted in the costs being incurred.

• It was unanimously RESOLVED to instruct the Clerk to request that HSBC bank should transfer a sum of £2,000.00 from the Business Money Manager Account to the Community Account and to delay payment of other cheques until this transfer had been completed.

• The Clerk was asked to discover the latest situation with respect to local County Member's (Cllr. Alan Ham's)', or other local authority grants available, so that projects such as: improving the Kennel Lane to Rackley Lane footpath; the Scaurs footpath and the footpath along Cross Lane could be considered. Cllr Warner to develop a plan to support the request.

• It was noted that all necessary documents had now been filed with Weston-super-Mare court in respect of the small claims submission to recover a sum of ££345-65 from Cllr. Byrne.

• It was unanimously resolved that the retrospective adjustment in new pay rates for the temporary clerk would be paid.

7. **Planning:** Council RESOLVED as consultee to the following planning application, submitted to Sedgemoor District Council, to recommend its approval subject to a number of issues raised in the Planning Advisory Groups report:

**Reference Number:** 21/09/00002/RSM

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1995**

**Proposal:** Erection of dwelling with integral garage and formation of access.

**Location:** Land to the North of, Wavering Down, Webbington Road, Cross, Axbridge

**Applicant:** Mr J Pridham and Ms C Cox

It was resolved that the Advisory Group report be accepted in principle, noting the adjacent northern landowner's request that any trees planted on the boundary should not overhang his field.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the members of the Advisory Group for their hard work on this application.

- Cllr Parker drew members' attention to the latest document (The Role of Settlements) from Sedgemoor setting out proposed housing allocations within the district. Cllrs Parker and Farley would draw up a response and submit it to SDC.
8. **Parish Spring Newsletter:** It was RESOLVED that, subject to any minor amendments to be notified to Cll. Parker by 18<sup>th</sup> March, the newsletter presented to members should be produced by Worle Resource Centre together with a copy of the Annual Open Meeting agenda to be inserted in each copy for delivery throughout the parish. Cllr Parker was thanked for his efforts in producing the newsletter.
9. **Reports from Advisory Group leaders**
- a. **Environment**
- Mrs Margaret Jordan had agreed to organise a 2009 "Hanging Basket competition", in conjunction with the Gardening Club.
  - The erection of a replacement notice board at Kennel Lane was still subject to the public display of a notice by Somerset County Council at the intended site. This would be for a period of 28 days.
  - The Clerk was asked to contact Sedgemoor District Council once more about the fallen tree lying across Mr Blower's fence at the Wildlife Site and to enquire about the pollarding of certain willows at the site.
  - Cllr. Parker presented an AONB Management Plan document indicating what was planned for the Compton Bishop area. He would ensure the tasks were fulfilled.
  - The Chairman was asked to produce a report to the Community Chest providers as the final part of the agreement for the grant on the bus shelters' maintenance, for which £750.00 had been received.
  - Cllr Parker would contact the publishers of "Rural Community News" and so receive a regular copy by email.
- b. **Highways**
- The drain at the junction of Webbington Road and Bourton Lane had been cleared, but water still would not run away. The Clerk had informed Liam Gill at Somerset Highways.
  - Cllr Parley reported that the sum of £180m. reported in the press to be available for expenditure on Somerset roads was not an extra sum, but included all money set aside for repairs in the usual way.
  - It was noted that SCC Highways had made good efforts in patching the roads in the parish.
  - Some statistics had been received from SCC Highways following the traffic surveys undertaken in 2008. It was agreed that the A38 Joint Parishes Working Group should be reconvened to consider the implications of this data.
  - The Clerk was asked to contact the Webbington Hotel with a view to having overhanging dead trees removed near the corner of Barton Lane.
  - The Clerk was informed that the SALC model policy for the Freedom of Information Act had been adopted in his absence and that a list of policies was to be maintained.
  - It was RESOLVED that the website need only hold minutes of meetings for the previous 6 months. The possibility of using the site as a "back-up" resource was discussed. Cllr Parker would liaise with the Clerk to determine a suitable system for backing up material currently held on the Clerk's computer and for it to be stored separately.
- 10 **Correspondence.** There were no matters arising from correspondence. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should only scan and circulate to members those items that appeared to him to have immediate relevance. All correspondence would be circulated in the file to members in the week before meetings and any extra items brought by the Clerk to the meeting.

*Note: The press and public were excluded at this point in the meeting.*



11. An agenda was agreed for the Annual Open Meeting to be held on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 20.00 in Cross Memorial Hall. This will be preceded by the Cross Memorial Hall AGM starting at 19.30. Cllr. Byrne's suspension expires on the 12<sup>th</sup> April, he could re-join the council at this meeting, even though he may not have fulfilled the full conditions of his 3-month suspension from office. The Chairman had sought the advice of the Monitoring Officer at Sedgemoor District Council.
12. It was noted that Sedgemoor District Council had currently received around 76 complaints from Cllr Byrne since May 2008. The date for the public hearing of Cllr Byrne's appeal against Sedgemoor District Council's finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct and its imposition of sanctions will be 21<sup>st</sup> April at North Petherton.

*Note: The press and public were invited to return to the meeting.*

13. To resolve the date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting: April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.07 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....Chairman

DATE: 8-04-09.....

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Mrs. Rix (Vice-Chairman), Rolfe, Parker, Warner, and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

**Public Participation:** *There were no issues raised by the public.*

1. **Apologies for absence:** There were none.
2. **Approval of minutes:** Subject to Councillor Windmill's declaration of interest being altered from item 11 to 15 the minutes for the monthly meeting held on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Farley declared personal interest in items 8a (spots 1,4,5) and in any correspondence to or from Cllr Byrne. Cllr Parker declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda that might involve discussion of Cllr Byrne's activities – citing a breakdown of personal relationships. Cllr Rolfe declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda that might involve discussion of Cllr Byrne's activities – citing a breakdown of personal relationships. Councillor Windmill declared personal interest in correspondence item 04/13 (overhanging vegetation in Old Coach Road) and in any item on the agenda that might involve discussion of Cllr Byrne's activities – citing the possibility of legal action. Cllr Mrs Rix declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda that might involve discussion of Cllr Byrne's activities – citing a breakdown of personal relationships.
4. **Matters arising:**
  - 4.1. The Clerk confirmed that the Temporary Clerk, Mrs. Broadbent had been sent a cheque to cover the pay adjustment agreed at the March meeting.
  - 4.2. The Clerk confirmed that he had purchased a device for backing up his computer files including those of the Parish Council. He would provide a further "remote" back-up by putting the council's files on a memory stick for transfer to the Chairman's computer on a regular basis.
  - 4.3. Cllr. Windmill informed council that he had been reported to Sedgemoor District Council's Standards Committee.
  - 4.4. Concern was expressed at the length of time HSBC Bank was taking to transfer £2,000 between accounts.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for March 2009 (attached to these minutes).
    - 5.1.1. The Clerk confirmed that he intended to provide a set of draft unapproved end-of-year accounts in a format suitable for presentation at the Annual Open Meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup>. It may be possible to have the opinion of the Internal Auditor, Mr. John Gravell available by then, but council could not approve completed end-of-year accounts until its May monthly meeting.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc.	£173.99
Clerks and Councils Direct	£10.00
Woodspring Resource Centre	£47.50
  - 5.3. **V.A.T.:** The Clerk was instructed to reclaim VAT on all accounts settled to date also to contact Allianz Insurance to enquire if a settlement could be reached on re-imburement for part of the work replacing signs and the notice boards at Webbington and Kennel Lane.
  - 5.4. **Moore Stephens account:** The Chairman read out correspondence received that day from Moore Stephens on the matter of the discrepancy between fees borne by Cheddar and Compton Bishop Parish Councils in respect of "elector enquiries". It was RESOLVED by 4 votes to two to pay Moore Stephens (External Auditor) the second half of the fee due to meet the costs of that elector enquiry. This was in the sum of £1,146.84. The Chairman read his proposed letter to Moore Stephens and this was approved by councillors.
  - 5.5. **Local Councillor Grants:** County Councillor Alan Ham had written to confirm how the previous Local Initiative Budget and Members' Community Grant money had been allocated and confirmed that after the June elections the funds for 2009/10 would be available.
    - 5.5.1. It was agreed that a submission for funds would need to be prepared and the most likely areas for improvement were Scaurs Path and the Kennel Lane to Rackley Lane footpath. Cllr. Warner was asked to give this his consideration.
  - 5.6. **Small Claims Court:** The clerk reported that to date no further communication from the Court on this matter had been received.
    - **Dates relevant to the Annual Audit:** Moore Stephens had given dates for preparation and completion of the Annual Audit and these were noted by councillors.
  - 5.7. **Residents' comments on 2009/10 precept:** 9 residents had contacted the Chairman and councillors to express their concern at the 19.3% rise in the annual precept for the parish.
6. **Planning:**
  - 6.1. The Council RESOLVED, as consultee, to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that it should approve the following planning application:  
Reference Number: 21/08/00021/RSM (Received 13/03/09)



**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1995**

**Proposal:** Change of use, conversion and extension of outbuilding to form annexe accommodation

**Location:** Webbington Farm, Barton Road, Webbington, Axbridge, BS262HT

**Applicant:** W H Amesbury & Son

- 6.2. The Council RESOLVED, as consultee, to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that it should approve the following planning application, but asks that the District Council takes into account the notes provided by the Planning Advisory Group:

Reference Number: 21/09/00003/CJA (Received 23/03/09)

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1995**

**Proposal:** Erection of agricultural building

**Location:** Agricultural Building (2) Southcroft Farm, Cross Lane, Cross, Axbridge

**Applicant:** Mrs J Brinson

**7. Newsletters:**

- 7.1. **Parish Council Spring newsletter.** Councillors reported that the newsletter had prompted a number of complimentary comments from parishioners, as to its contents and standard of production; others commented on the rise in precept.

- 7.2. **Other local publications.** Councillors considered the contents of recent documents produced by Cllr. Byrne and distributed around the parish and perhaps beyond. It was RESOLVED that a statement from the Parish Council should be displayed on the public notice boards in the parish. The wording would be as follows:

*Statement from Compton Bishop Parish Council*

*"Compton Bishop Parish Council understands that a circular entitled "Compton Bishop Parish Residents' Newsletter" has recently been distributed throughout the parish. This circular emanates from Councillor C Byrne, who is a member of Compton Bishop Parish Council but presently serving a three-month suspension from duty (imposed by Sedgemoor District Council's Standards Committee). The circular alleges under the heading "Unfounded lies from a parishioner" that Mrs Caroline Woolley was allowed to make a statement about Councillor Byrne's medical condition at a Parish Council meeting on 11th March 2009, and that she claimed in front of councillors that his medical condition did not allow him to hold public office. Compton Bishop Parish Council wishes it to be known that Mrs Woolley made no such statement either directly to Council or within earshot of the Clerk or any of the serving Councillors present. The circular's description of events alleged to have taken place at the meeting on 11th March 2009 is to the best of the Parish Council's knowledge completely false. The Parish Council is aware of the distress caused to Mrs Woolley and expects Councillor Byrne to immediately and publicly withdraw his allegation, and to unreservedly apologise to Mrs Woolley for having made it."*

*Note: At this point 20.30 the meeting was suspended in order to confirm with Mrs Woolley, who was present as a member of the public, if the allegations made against her in the "Residents' Newsletter" had any basis in fact. She stated that they did not. The meeting was re-convened at 20.32.*

- 7.3. Cllr. Farley confirmed that he had reported Cllr. Byrne to the Standards Committee at Sedgemoor District Council in respect of Cllr Byrne's allegations about the Parish Clerk in the "Residents' Newsletter".
- 7.4. Council held a censure motion in abeyance until the May meeting to give Cllr Byrne an opportunity to apologise. This related to his producing and distributing the "Newsletter" issued around 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2009. His actions in accusing the clerk without evidence, without reference to the council as the clerk's employer had brought the council into disrepute.
- 7.5. With reference to another publication distributed by Cllr. Byrne headed "Why was A38 Advisory Group meeting cancelled at the last minute", the clerk was instructed to write to Axbridge and Weare councils to discover whether or not he had authority from those councils to write as he had done on their behalf; did those councils agree with the sentiments expressed within the document.

**8. Environment:**

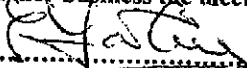
- 8.1. **Licence to erect notice board:** The Clerk reported that the Somerset County Council legal department planned to display a notice at Kennel Lane for 28 days in order that a new licence may be issued for a notice board to be erected there.
- 8.2. **Grass cutting contract:** Cllrs. Farley and Warner would meet Tim Baker to define this year's grass cutting contract.
- 8.3. **Wildlife Site:** Cllr Mrs Rix reported new growth and wildlife in abundance at the Springfield site and confirmed that for the time being the fallen fence would remain a haven for small creatures. Dr Ayling would present a report at the Annual Open Meeting.





- 8.4. **Village Spring Clean:** The Chairman thanked all who had given up their time to help with the Village Spring Clean; both councillors and residents. It was agreed that it would be of advantage to carry out the exercise a week or two earlier next time. The clerk was asked to arrange a site meeting between councillors and Mr David Aggett of Sedgemoor District Council at the Webbington Peak lay-by to consider the ongoing fly-tipping problem there.
- 8.5. **Severn Estuary – harnessing tidal power:** Council noted the discussion paper prepared by Cllrs Windmill and Parker and agreed to make any further comments to them before 23<sup>rd</sup>. April. Council delegated power to Cllrs Windmill and Parker to reply to the online consultation website on behalf of the council.
- 8.6. **Local Development Framework (evidence based report):** Cllr Parker pointed out concerns with the accuracy of this document from Sedgemoor and was given authority to respond to the District Council.
- 8.7. **Cross Moor Drove:** The Clerk was instructed to investigate who had the responsibility for maintaining the surface of this and other droves.
- 8.8. **Seat refurbishment:** The Clerk was asked to discover advice from Sedgemoor District Council about the treatment of the memorial seat to the east of the Memorial Hall.
9. **Highways:**
- 9.1. **A38 discussions with Somerset Highways:** A meeting between Mr Dan Martin and colleagues, together with the Joint Parishes A38 Group was being arranged and one of these 3 dates were suggested (29/04/09, 06/05/09, 20/05/09), a response is awaited to enable the organisation to be completed.
- 9.2. **Road signs:** The Clerk was asked once again to enquire when the signs at Church Lane and the Old Coach Road/Webbington Road junction would be completed.
- 9.3. **Traffic congestion in east end of Old Coach Road:** Council agreed that this should be brought before the next PACT meeting to see what suggestion the police may have to alleviate this growing problem, particularly at weekends.
10. **Website:**
- 10.1. Cllr Parker had planned to meet Patrick Freeman to discuss possible re-vamping of the website.
- 10.2. Patrick Freeman was thanked and congratulated on the way that he had developed the site thus far.
11. **Annual Open Meeting:**
- 11.1. Councillors confirmed their approval of the agenda for the Annual Open Meeting and RESOLVED that no more than 50 seated persons be admitted to the hall. Cllrs. Windmill and Mrs Rix agreed to act as counters and verify that attendees are parish residents other than officials or press. They are to list those in excess of a total of 60 so that they might be invited to another meeting at a later date.
- 11.2. The Clerk was instructed to confirm if press, police and County and District councillors intended to be present and send them agendas.
12. **Correspondence:**
- 12.1. Councillors agreed that the Correspondence Box system had worked well this month.
- 12.2. A letter from Somerset Association of Councils on the matter of strengthening the "Observance" of Standing Orders was read out.
- 12.3. Chairman agreed to write to Kerry Rickards at Sedgemoor District Council meeting to consult on possible changes to Code of Conduct and Standards Board procedures in the light of the Compton Bishop experience.
- 12.4. Sedgemoor District Council had advised that Cllr Byrne had no more rights than any elector or member of the public with regards to council papers arising during his suspension, and their access.
- 12.5. The Clerk was instructed to write to Cheddar Axbridge and Weare councils to ask if they had authorised a recent letter about a cancelled A38 Joint Parishes Group meeting that had been circulated by Cllr Byrne.
13. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.07 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....  ..... Chairman

DATE: ..... 13-5-09 .....

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Byrne, Parker, Warner, and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk) and 1 representative of the Press.

**Public Participation:** There were no issues raised by the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Mrs Rix and Cllr Roffe.
2. **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**
  - 2.1. Cllr Farley was elected unanimously as Chairman for the year.
  - 2.2. Cllr Mrs Rix was elected unanimously as Vice-Chairman for the year.
3. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes for the monthly meeting held on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
4. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Byrne declared personal interest in correspondence items of which he was either the subject or author. He declared prejudicial interest in Planning item 8.3 as owner of the land and declared his intention to leave the meeting during discussion of this item.

Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne.

Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in item 8.2 as a user of an "Orange" mobile phone and in items of correspondence referring to Moore Stephens and Small Claims Court issues.

Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne.
5. **Welcome by the Chairman.** The Chairman welcomed Cllr Byrne to the meeting following his recent suspension and invited him to address the Council. Cllr Byrne informed members that he had appealed against the recent Adjudication Panel's decision to uphold the earlier Sedgemoor District Council decision to suspend him and to impose conditions that he should attend training and make an apology. The Chairman expressed disappointment with this response and made it clear that he felt that Council should try to put past matters in the past.
6. **Matters arising:**
  - 6.1. As resolved at the April meeting (20090408/7.4 refers), there being no apology from Cllr Byrne in respect of accusations made by him in a newsletter, the Chairman moved a motion of Censure in the following terms:  
*Within a recently circulated Newsletter by Councillor Byrne, issued generally to the residents of Compton Bishop Parish around the 24th March, 2009, Councillor Byrne castigated a resident of our parish for allegedly making remarks at the March Council meeting. In it he also included a statement that the chairman had failed to intervene and have the alleged comments withdrawn. Let it be categorically known that the chairman neither heard the remarks alleged by Councillor Byrne, who was attending the March Council meeting in the public section, as a suspended councillor, or anything derogatory said towards Councillor Byrne that might have allegedly been made by the named resident. After checking with colleagues neither did the Council Clerk, or other councillors present recall anything remotely similar to the allegations Councillor Byrne has made. Such abnormal behaviour from a councillor is unworthy, in contravention of the Code of Conduct and this council wishes it known that it disassociates itself from such profoundly disturbing remarks made by a councillor against a resident of good standing and hereby censures Councillor C. Byrne for an eleventh occasion since April, 2008.*  
This motion was APPROVED unanimously.  
Cllr Byrne then informed the meeting that he had reported the behaviour of a resident to the Monitoring Officer at Sedgemoor District Council (SDC).
  - 6.2. The Chairman confirmed that he had written to SDC Chief Executive Kerry Rickards to try to arrange a meeting to discuss Code of Conduct issues with the Standards Board for England, resulting from a meeting at Compton Bishop (20090408/12.3 refers).
  - 6.3. The Clerk was reminded to contact Dave Aggett at SDC to arrange a meeting to discuss fly-tipping at Webbington Road (20090408/8.4 refers)
  - 6.4. The Clerk confirmed that he had identified a sum of £532.70 in VAT payments that he felt may be reclaimed from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. (20090408/5.3 refers). He was instructed to make the claim to HMRC.
7. **Finance:**
  - 7.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for April 2009 (attached to these minutes).
  - 7.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc.	£186.64
Allianz Insurance premium	£496.89



Community Council for Somerset

£30.00

- 7.3. **Amenity Grant from SDC:** The Clerk was instructed to apply to SDC for re-imbursement from the Amenity Grant towards the cost of grass-cutting in the parish during the previous year.
- 7.4. **RTL3 bids:** The Chairman had been unable to attend the recent Cheddar Valley Cluster Group meeting, which had decided that RTL3 funds should be spent at Cheddar, Shipham and Mark. Members agreed that consideration should be given to a future bid for funds. The Clerk was instructed to discover the criteria against which bids are judged.
- 7.5. **Small Claims Court:** The Chairman outlined the decision of the Small Claims Court not to uphold the Council's case against Cllr Byrne for the sum of £345.65 in connection with the Grievance Procedure undertaken in the previous year. Members voted unanimously, with Cllr Byrne abstaining, that this sum, included as an item of potential income for 2009/10 in accounts, should be "written-off".
- 7.6. **Notes of Finance Advisory Group meeting:** Councillors noted a written report of a meeting held between Cllrs Warner and Byrne, the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) and Mr John Gravell the council's external accounts examiner. It was noted, in response to a direct question from the Chairman, that all members present at the Group meeting were fully satisfied with the accounts and the report as presented.
- 7.7. **Petty cash:** The Council approved a suggestion that once the Clerk had expended all present money in the Petty Cash Account, any future expenses for administration should be refunded on a monthly basis against vouchers presented at each meeting. No single purchase should exceed £50 without the prior approval of Council.
- 7.8. **Annual Audit:**
- 7.8.1. Members were provided with copies of the Annual Audit of Accounts documentation and RESOLVED that the Chairman and Responsible Finance Officer should sign them after the meeting. In particular Section 2 of the pro-forma was agreed by members, item by item.
- 7.8.2. Members also approved the Explanation of Significant Variations provided by the RFO. He was instructed to include in the covering letter to Moore Stephens further explanations about the likelihood of insurance refunds and the "writing-off" of the sum referred to in 7.5 above.
- 7.9. **Distribution of Chairman's Annual report:** It was RESOLVED to distribute copies of the Chairman's Annual Report, presented to the Annual Open Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April, as recommended by residents at that meeting. Cllr Byrne voted against and asked that it be recorded that he was of the opinion that this report did not accurately reflect the activities of the year in question.
- 7.10. **Further reports from Finance Advisory Group:**
- 7.10.1. Cllr Warner cautioned members that there would be a need for continuing prudence during the forthcoming year and he referred to Cllr Byrne's proposal to consider an increase to the Clerk's salary, as one example of uncertain expenditure. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk's contract of employment should be an agenda item for the June meeting.
- 7.10.2. The Clerk was instructed to clarify the wording and meaning of Box 9 in Section 2 of the Annual Audit sheet and to amend the pro-forma as necessary before submission to the External Auditor.

8. **Planning:**

- 8.1. The Council RESOLVED, as consultee, to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that it should not approve the following planning application:

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1995**

**Proposal:** Erection of dwelling subject to an equestrian occupancy provision

**Location:** Clover Farm Webbington Road.

**Applicant:** Mr M Head

**Ref No:** 21/09/00001/CG

The Clerk was instructed to forward comments from the Planning Advisory Group to SDC, which set out the objections in more detail. Cllr Byrne asked that it be noted that he voted against the decision to recommend refusal.

- 8.2. The Council considered a pre-application consultation document from Orange Personal Communications Services Limited in respect of a proposed new communications mast at Barton Lane, Webbington. The Council RESOLVED to respond in the terms of a letter prepared by the Chairman.

**Note:** Cllr Byrne, having declared prejudicial interest in this item, left the room at 21.18 hours.

- 8.3. The Council RESOLVED, as consultee, to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that it should not approve the following planning application:

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1995**

**Proposal:** Erection of single storey dwelling.

**Location:** Land to the North of, Wavering Down, Webbington Road, Cross, Axbridge

**Applicant:** Mr C Byrne

The Clerk was instructed to forward this response together with comments from the Planning Advisory Group to SDC, which set out objections in more detail.

*Note: Cllr Byrne, returned briefly at 21.29 hours to the room to explain that he must miss the rest of the meeting as his partner had been taken seriously ill and was in hospital. The Chairman expressed his regrets and sent good wishes to Mr Heymer for a speedy recovery. Cllr Byrne left the meeting at 21.30 hours.*

**9. Correspondence**

9.1. The Chairman brought to members' attention a letter from Cllr Byrne dated 14<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Members RESOLVED that his request for copies of all Council papers and those relating to Highways and Planning covered during the period of his suspension, should be treated in the same way as a request from a member of the public, as had been advised by SDC, and that Cllr Byrne should be so informed. Copies of Council meeting minutes for the period of Cllr Byrne's suspension have been supplied. Any such correspondence could only refer to issues already dealt with by Council and as such, no useful purpose would be served by recision (Standing Order 36).

9.2. The Chairman brought to members' attention a letter from Cllr Byrne dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Members felt that for the most part this referred to matters of a personal nature and not with Council business. However, concerns were expressed that Cllr Byrne referred in this letter to having technology fitted to his car that monitors activity whilst driving in the community and that he had indicated the possibility that these are used by him for personal purposes.

9.2.1. Councillors confirmed that the Clerk had been instructed to write to Weare and Axbridge Councils at the previous meeting (20090408/12.5 refers) contrary to an assertion made by Cllr Byrne in his correspondence.

9.2.2. Cllr Parker proposed a censure motion against Cllr Byrne in the following terms:  
*He referred to newsletters and open letters circulated by Cllr Byrne during a period from 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009 to 7<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Cllr Byrne was suspended from office for contravening the Government's Code of Conduct for Parish Councils and the Parish Council's own Standing Orders between 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and 12<sup>th</sup> April 2009. He had not demonstrated any remorse for the actions, which had led to his suspension and had continued to contravene the Code of Conduct in these publications alone. Councillors also had been subject to a large number of complaints made by Cllr Byrne to the Standards Committee at Sedgemoor District Council during this period.*

*It was Cllr Parker's opinion that Cllr Byrne had:*

- *used the Complaints Procedure to bully, harass and intimidate his fellow councillors.*
- *misused the resources of Sedgemoor District Council by submitting an unreasonable volume of frivolous, vexatious complaints and requests for review.*
- *failed to exercise his duty of care to an employee of Compton Bishop Parish Council.*
- *made unfounded allegations of bribery and corruption against Compton Bishop Parish Council.*
- *accused Sedgemoor District Council of cronyism.*
- *accused Compton Bishop Parish Council of lying in their newsletter.*
- *publicly accused a parishioner of lying*
- *unlawfully reproduced transcripts of recorded telephone conversations.*
- *made false allegations against members of Compton Bishop Parish Council.*
- *accused Compton Bishop Parish Council of 'doctoring' minutes of meetings.*
- *attempted to discredit the Chairman, Clerk and councillors of Compton Bishop Parish Council.*
- *failed to show respect for the Chairman, Clerk and councillors of Compton Bishop Parish Council.*
- *brought his office into disrepute.*

*Cllr Parker then proposed that Cllr Byrne be censured as he had, in his opinion, failed to abide by The Ten Principles of Public Life' and had contravened the Code of Conduct, paragraphs:*

- *3 (1) Failing to treat others with respect*
- *3(2)(b) Bullying*
- *3(2)(c) Intimidation*
- *4(a) Disclosing the content of private telephone conversations contrary to:
  - *Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000*
  - *Data Protection Act 1998*
  - *Telecommunications (Data Protection and Privacy) Regulations 1999**
- *5 Bringing his office or authority into disrepute*
- *6(b)(i) Failing to act with his authorities reasonable requirements*
- *6(c) Disregarding the Code of Publicity by not producing a balanced view.*

This censure motion was APPROVED by majority, Cllr. Warner abstaining, and councillors expressed the hope that this motion, together with the completion of sanctions imposed by SDC against Cllr Byrne, could be seen as an opportunity by all parties to "draw a line" under past events and to work for the common good of the community.

- 9.3. Cllrs Parker and Farley would endeavour to attend a consultation and exhibition by North-Somerset Council on the provision of gipsy caravan sites in North Somerset, to assess the possibility of collateral effects on the community.
  - 9.4. The Clerk was instructed to thank Axbridge and Weare councils for their responses to correspondence about the previously cancelled A38 meeting (9.2.1 above refers).
  - 9.5. The Clerk was instructed to contact SALC and SDC to see if there is a model Public Sector Equality Policy document available.
  - 9.6. The Clerk was instructed to advise Inspector Williams (Highbridge Police) that copies of council minutes for the past 6 months are available on the council's website and that earlier copies are available from the Council archive.
10. **Environment:**
- 10.1. **Grass-cutting:** Members RESOLVED that Tim Baker should be advised that a revised schedule of grass-cutting will be provided for the year; in particular this would include one cut of verge grass on the north side of Webbington Road between Bourton Lane and Newtown at a cost of £30.00 per cut. This area would be reviewed in September to see if another cut might be needed. The intention was to improve the sight line on the bend and provide pedestrians with a refuge. The Clerk was asked to issue the appropriate instructions.
  - 10.2. **Severn Barrage:** Cllr Parker confirmed that he had sent a response to the consultation document on the Severn Barrage proposals (20090408/8.5 refers).
11. **Highways:**
- 11.1. The A38 Joint Parishes Group would meet on 20<sup>th</sup> May at 2.30 p.m. in Cross Memorial Hall. Agendas had been distributed.
  - 11.2. The responses from Axbridge and Weare Councils to the recently cancelled meeting and ensuing correspondence were noted.
  - 11.3. Mr and Mrs Amesbury of Webbington Farm had given permission for the erection of a new notice board on their land at the west corner of Kennel Lane. The Clerk was instructed to arrange for Cheddar Signs to install the board and to ask SCC to refund the licence fee, which now is not necessary as SCC do not own the land to be used and must have known that this was the case when charging for the licence.
  - 11.4. The Clerk was instructed to enquire of Chris Betty (SCC Highways) if signs agreed at a recent meeting for Kennel Lane ("no turning space") and Webbington Road ("pedestrians in road") were to be installed.
  - 11.5. The Clerk was instructed to ask Cheddar Signs to refurbish a Millennium road-side sign, which had been damaged and recovered from a field.
12. **SALC and PACT meetings:** The dates of the next meetings were noted.
13. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** There was no report.
14. **Website:** Cllr Parker would try to include a revised bus-timetable on the website.
15. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.30 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....Chairman

DATE: 10-06-09.....

*10th June*

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**  
**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Warner, and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).  
**Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Mrs Rix, Cllrs Byrne, Parker and Rolfe had all apologised for absence and their reasons accepted
2. **Approval of minutes:** Subject to a minor typographical amendment, the minutes for the monthly meeting held on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**  
Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne's newsletters etc.  
Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne, in planning matters as a user of Orange networks and in election results as Chairman of a local political party.
4. **Matters arising:**
  - 4.1. Under item 6.3 of the previous minutes it was agreed that any meeting with David Aggett in connection with fly-tipping at Webbington should be delayed until the vegetation in the area has died down; in the winter period.
  - 4.2. Under item 6.2 of the previous minutes the Chairman reported that Kerry Rickards (Sedgemoor District Council) had written to set out the limited action he had been able to take in respect of seeking changes to the Standards Board for England procedures, but there was little else that he could do. He had sent copies of letters addressed to the Minister responsible.
  - 4.3. Under item 9.3 of the previous minutes Cllr Warner reported that he had attended an Open Event organised by North Somerset Council on the matter of gypsy site provision. There had been no obvious impacts on Compton Bishop parish.
  - 4.4. The Chairman undertook to enquire at the forthcoming SALC meeting about the availability of a Public Space Standards template document.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation for May 2009 (attached to these minutes).
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc.	£185.69
Clerk's salary adjustment (one extra week worked in previous month)	£42.67
Tim Baker (grass-cutting - 2 invoices)	£70.00
Woodspring Resource centre (photo-copies)	£55.00
  - 5.3. **RLT bids:** Cllr Warner outlined the procedure to be followed in making bids for RLT3 funding through the Cheddar Valley Cluster Group meetings and the purposes for which the money may be used. This was largely related to sport and recreation provision. It was suggested that a play-area or sports field within the parish might meet these criteria and that the involvement of Cross Connections in any such project would be helpful. The improvement to Public Rights of Way in the parish might also qualify for funding. The Clerk was asked to produce a summary document of all funding sources available to council.
  - 5.4. **Asset Register:** The Council amended and approved a draft Asset Register produced by the Clerk together with the submission to Moore Stephens setting out the significant variance in Box 9 of the Annual Audit document. The Clerk was instructed to investigate the ownership of the two bus shelters at Old Coach Road and Church Lane.
  - 5.5. **Report of Advisory Group:** The Council approved recommendations from the Finance Advisory Group in respect of the Clerk's employment as follows:
    - 5.5.1. Matters concerning the Clerk's Contract of Employment are noted.
    - 5.5.2. Council approve the development of a "Council Asset" record.
    - 5.5.3. It is proposed and recommended to Council that with effect from the 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 the Clerk's pro-rata remuneration be advanced by one spinal point to SP19 and that it incorporates the 2009 settlement when that is finally agreed.
    - 5.5.4. It is proposed and recommended to Council that the Clerk should attend the SLCC conference in lieu of formal training and that the travel cost be met.
    - 5.5.5. Council note the outcomes from the Appraisal session with the Clerk.
    - 5.5.6. Council ask Cllr Byrne whether or not communication by E-mail would be a possibility that he could consider for the future.

*[Handwritten mark]*

6. **Planning:**

6.1. The Council RESOLVED, as consultee, to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that it should not approve the following planning application:

**Reference number:** 21/09/00005/CJA

**Proposal:** Erection of 12.5m Lattice Tower, 3 antennae, 2 dishes, equipment cabinets, enclosure and ancillary development

**Location:** Land to the North of The Paddocks, Barton Lane, Webbington, Axbridge

**Applicant:** Orange Personal Communication Services Ltd.

The Clerk was instructed to request that parties should consider the possibility of combining the antennae and dishes from the two companies operating at Barton Lane onto the one mast.

7. **Environment:** There were no reports

8. **Highways:**

8.1. **A38 issues:** The Council noted a draft report produced by the Chairman of an A38 Joint Parishes Group meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup>, April. Those present had been particularly disappointed that despite months of work on the issue of the Cross cross-roads issue no new proposals had been brought forward by Somerset County Council Highways officers. They would review the issue and it was hoped to hold a further meeting either in late July or September.

8.2. **Kennel Lane notice board:** The Clerk was instructed to seek the specification and size of the proposed two posts for support of the replacement notice board at Kennel Lane from Cheddar Signs. This is to determine if a cheaper set of mounting posts could be found. In any event the Clerk was instructed to ensure that this work was completed with haste.

8.3. **Grass-cutting:** Cllr. Warner and the Clerk had met Tim Baker to clarify grass-cutting issues and he accepted the amended schedule for the year including one cut of the verge between Bourton Lane and Newtown, subject to a review in late summer when a second cut might be required.

9. **Council meeting in August:** Council agreed not to take a break in August, but to hold a monthly meeting as usual.

10. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** The Council agreed to make available a sum of £60 to Dr Sarah Ayling to provide prizes to winners of a Summer Nature Diary competition. Details of this competition would be made available via Contact magazine (Cllr Warner), the parish website, local schools, Cross Connections and by posters, which the Clerk undertook to produce.

11. **Website:** There was nothing to report.

12. **Correspondence:**

12.1. **Mediation:** Correspondence between the Chairman and Ms Wellman, Monitoring Officer at Sedgemoor District Council was discussed at length. It was agreed that the Chairman should make it clear to her that subject to further detail being provided concerning the nature of the mediation she proposed, members were content to proceed given this is seen as a way of improving relations within the Council. He was asked to establish whether or not Ms Wellman had already communicated the outline to Cllr Byrne? Council would consider her proposal again.

12.2. **Small Claims Court:** The Chairman agreed to contact the Small Claims Court once again to clarify the situation as set out in the Court Services most recent letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2009.

13. **Election results:** It was noted that County Cllr. Alan Ham had been re-elected on June 4<sup>th</sup> with a majority of 2,108 votes and that the turn-out of electorate in the parish had been 44.9%

14. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** July 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.40 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .......... Chairman

DATE: .....8-7-09.....

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Mrs. Rix, Parker, Rolfe Warner, and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** The council was invited to consider an appeal for funding being made by a local athlete to support her attendance at a competition in America.

The local representative of Farm Watch drew members' attention to the existence and purpose of the organisation and reported a theft of farm machinery from a farm in the parish.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Byrne had apologised to the Chairman through a third party for his absence and this was accepted
2. **Approval of minutes:** The monthly meeting held on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne.
  - Cllr Rolfe declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne.
  - Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in item 12 on the agenda.
  - Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in item 12 on the agenda
  - Cllr Mrs Rix declared personal interest in item 12 on the agenda

4. **Matters arising:**

- 4.1. In respect of item 4.2 of the previous minutes Cllr Parker asked if there was any further information on action likely to be taken by Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) Chief Executive Kerry Rickards involving the Standards Board for England. The Chairman said that no further action could be expected and members accepted this situation.
- 4.2. In respect of item 4.4 of the previous minutes, Cllr Windmill asked if the Chairman had managed to obtain a copy of a model Public Sector Equality policy from Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC). This had not yet been arranged and the clerk was asked to contact SALC for such a document.
- 4.3. In respect of item 12.2 of the previous minutes, Cllr Windmill asked if any further action had been taken in respect of the Small Claims Court. The Chairman explained the situation that there was no realistic prospect of further progress without some acceptance of liability by Cllr Byrne, which so far was not forthcoming.

5. **Finance:**

- 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** Subject to an amendment to the "carried forward" figure in the Community Account and consequent adjustments, the Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 presented by the clerk. The forward position is set out below:

**Asset balances at 25<sup>th</sup> June**

Business Money Manager	£1,471.89
Community Account	£3,012.63
Less uncleared cheques (2)	£125.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,359.52</b>

- 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19)	£188.07
Clerk's salary adjustment (9 weeks of difference between Pt18 & Pt 19)	£13.77
Cross Memorial Hall	£81.00

It was RESOLVED that on receipt of an invoice from Cheddar Signs Ltd. For work at Kennel Lane, this should be paid up to a maximum of £160.00.

- 5.3. **Future Projects and grants:** It was RESOLVED that the Chairman should write to local landowners explaining the council's wish to investigate the provision of a children's play area and/or allotments. They would be invited to sell, make available or lease land for this purpose. It was considered that these two projects stood more chance of grant funding than possible improvements to Public Rights of Way (PROW). The clerk was to continue to press SDC (Mrs Carol Ensor) for information in respect of available grants and the necessary application procedures.

Cllr. Parker offered to draw up an outline Action Plan in respect of a possible new pathway from Axbridge to Cross using existing PROW's and the roadside verge. This was accepted as a first step.

6. **Planning:**

- 6.1. The Council noted comments made by the Planning Advisory Group to SDC in response to a request for views on a proposal by the Caravan Club to certificate a "5-van site" at Southcroft Farm, Cross Lane. Whilst this was not a planning application the council had been invited by SDC to respond. The members confirmed support for the Group's comments that such a certification raised a number of serious concerns.



It was recognised that the Caravan Club, for the purposes of certification was exempt from seeking planning permission.

6.2. Councillors noted the decision by SDC to refuse development permission for land to the rear of Wavering Down House. This would have been the second dwelling on land to the north of the existing property.

7. **Environment:** There were no reports.

7.1. Council noted that the "Hanging Basket" competition was underway.

8. **Highways:**

8.1. ***A38 issues:*** The Council noted a response letter from Somerset County Council (SCC) Highways (Mrs Bev Norman), which in general terms appeared not to propose any acceptable improvement to the A38 crossroads. It was agreed that the Highways Advisory Group should meet to produce its own proposals. This would then be put to the Joint Parishes Group before inviting SCC to another meeting.

Concern was expressed that the junction of Old Coach Road with the A38 at Cross was inadequately signed for northbound traffic, giving insufficient warning of the existence of Old Coach Road to drivers unfamiliar with the junction.

The "Red Route" Improvement Scheme (A38) was to be regarded as a separate issue from the Cross-crossroads problem.

The clerk was asked to contact Liam Gill (SCC) to ask the status of any improvement scheme that may exist for Cross Lane aside from the current A38 discussions.

8.2. ***Kennel Lane notice board:*** This was now in place and had been photographed for parish records. The Clerk was invited to remove and dispose of the old board and where possible repair the damage to the fence. He would also ensure that all parish boards had headers indicating that they are Parish Council boards and would display contact details for Chairman and Clerk.

8.3. ***Other Highways matters:***

8.3.1. The Clerk was instructed to discover if SCC still planned to put a "no turning space" sign at the Webbington end of Kennel Lane as agreed recently by Chris Betty (SCC Highways). It was noted that the vegetation obscuring the Cul-de-sac sign had been cleared. The lane sign needed to be secured.

8.3.2. The Clerk was instructed to discover also if SCC planned to repair the finger post at the Old Coach Road/Webbington Road junction.

8.3.3. SCC was thanked for refurbishing and re-instating the direction sign at Church Lane/Webbington Road.

9. **Springfield Wildlife Site:**

9.1. Council agreed to posters advertising the "Summer Nature Diary" competition being displayed on all parish boards and on the website; copies should be provided by the Clerk to Cross Connection's Chairman Mrs Claire Settle for circulation to interested people within their group. Members agreed that the decision to award £30 prize money last year (Minutes 09/07/08 refers), but not claimed by Dr Ayling, should be rescinded and that the sum (£30) should be considered to be part of the £60 prize money agreed for this year at the June meeting.

10. **Website:** Cllr Parker reported that this website was up to date.

11. **Correspondence:**

11.1. ***Avon and Somerset Police:*** Correspondence between Inspector Sam Williams (Burnham Police) and a number of councillors and others was discussed at length. In general, the review by the Inspector of Police handling of community issues in the parish had resulted in his concluding that the Police had acted appropriately. Councillors felt there were a number of serious issues that needed clarification and it was RESOLVED that the Chairman should invite the Inspector to meet those to whom he had written, for a fuller discussion.

*Note: At this point (21.07) the meeting was closed to ask a member of the public, who had received correspondence from the Police, if she wished to attend such a meeting. She said she would. The meeting was re-convened. (21.09)*

11.2. ***Mediation and Conciliation:*** Correspondence between the Chairman and Ms Wellman, Monitoring Officer at Sedgemoor District Council, was discussed at length. It was RESOLVED unanimously that the Chairman should write to the Monitoring Officer explaining that the members would not consider any form of mediation or conciliation until the outcome of the outstanding complaints made against Cllr. Byrne to SDC and forwarded by the District Council to the Standards Board Adjudication Panel, was known.

Councillors agreed that should any such mediation/conciliation take place then a first step would be to discover exactly what process was being proposed by Ms Wellman. To that end any material in the possession of the Council could be used to create a "position paper" if and when mediation was progressed.

11.3. ***PACT Meeting:*** It was noted that the next PACT (Police and Communities Together) meeting was to be held at Axbridge Town Hall at 19.00 hours on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Posters had been displayed.

11.4. **Community Payback:** Cllr Mrs Rix drew members' attention to the fact that under the Community Payback Scheme, a workforce of offenders was available to carry out community tasks and that the Chairman of Winscombe Parish Council could supply details details.

12. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** August 12th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.45 hours.**

**SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:** .....Chairman

**DATE:** .....

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on August 12<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Parker, Warner, Byrne and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** *There were no issues raised by the public.*

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Mrs Rix and Cllr Rolfe had apologised for their absence; their reasons were accepted. County Councillor Alan Ham had also sent apologies.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the monthly meeting held on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record, having incorporated the amendment to minute 8.1 "Cross" not "Weare"
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - Cllr Byrne declared personal interest in agenda item 6.2.
  - Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in all agenda items of which he was the author
  - Cllr Parker declared personal interest in item 8 on the agenda and in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
  - Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne's newsletters should they occur under "Correspondence" – specifically item reference 08/06
4. **Matters arising:**
  - 4.1. The clerk was reminded of the need to obtain a copy of a model Public Sector Equality Policy document from Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC).
  - 4.2. Taken out of sequence councillors agreed that the Chairman should respond to Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) on the matter of the "Sedgemoor Charter", which attempts to set out the relative obligations of service between parish and district councils.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> July 2009 presented by the clerk.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19)	£236.02
Refund to clerk for sundry payments (amount checked prior to the meeting by Cllr Warner)	£81.31

(It was agreed that in future any such payments would be listed as "Sundries" and the term "Petty Cash" no longer used.)
  - 5.3. **VAT reimbursement:** It was noted that notification of the sum of £547.33 being transferred to the account had been received from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs as reclaimed VAT paid by council over the past 3 years. The clerk was instructed to make annual application for VAT reclamation in future.
  - 5.4. **Insurance claim:** A cheque for the sum of £430.02 had been received from the council's insurers in respect of two claims. This had been banked by the clerk. It allowed for 2 excess charges of £125 each. The clerk would make contact with Allianz to obtain a clear breakdown of how the company had arrived at their figures.
6. **Planning:**
  - 6.1. The Council noted a report produced by the Planning Advisory Group in response to a proposal to build affordable housing at Hellier Lane Cheddar, which it was felt would have effects on A38 traffic to the detriment of the parish. The report would be forwarded to SDC.
  - 6.2. The Council RESOLVED to recommend to SDC that any decision to vary a Tree Preservation Order on a tree in the grounds of Wavering Down House, should be based upon advice from its own arboriculturalist.
  - 6.3. The Council RESOLVED to support the following application:

Application No:	21/09/00007	Parish/Town Council:	Compton Bishop
Registered Date:	30/07/2009		
Type:	Full Planning Permission		
Applicant:	Mr and Mrs A Haines		
Location:	16 Big Tree Close, Compton Bishop, Axbridge, BS262EY		
Proposal:	Erection of two-storey side extension and new vehicular entrance.		
7. **Cheddar Valley Cluster Group:**
  - 7.1. The Chairman presented a report of his attendance at the Cheddar Valley Cluster Group held on 4th August. A decision had been made to support partially an LRT3 bid for £25,000 by Allerton Cricket Club; a sum of £7000.00 would be made available by SDC.
  - 7.2. SDC officers had explained proposed changes in the Planning Policy documentation that guides their decisions. These changes were determined by government policy and were designed to streamline the planning process. Councillors would be invited to attend training to enable them to understand the revised policy document that would be produced.
8. **Environment:**
  - 8.1. Councillor Parker reported on the Bristol International Airport proposed expansion and on Somerset County Council's responses to the planning application and its submission to North Somerset Council. One major effect on the parish was the predicted increase in traffic along the A38 once the expansion is complete. Although a sum of money was included for improvement to "infrastructure" there was no certainty that the

A38 through Cross would receive any benefit. It was agreed that the parish should respond to the application through SDC and SCC. The Chairman and Cllr Parker would produce the response.

**9. Land Project:**

- 9.1. The clerk had produced a paper setting out the possible sources of finance in the form of donations and grants from both local authority and charitable sources, should the council decide there was a need to provide activity space in the parish. He was thanked for his efforts.
- 9.2. The Chairman reported that he had received some positive responses to his enquiries about land for sale or lease. He thanked those who had replied. He also tabled a report, which was accepted by councillors. The following recommendations were APPROVED:
  - 9.2.1. That council thanks the residents for their responses.
  - 9.2.2. That a working party is formed comprising 3 Council members with co-option, if considered necessary and as required by the working party to enable financially acceptable and practical recommendations to be made including a strengths and weaknesses benefits' analysis.
  - 9.2.3. That Council is to be kept informed of progress and the working party should aim to conclude their work by way of recommendation(s) concerning the project within a 6-month's timescale. Personal and Prejudicial interests are to be declared and taken into account during any deliberations made, as should the need for confidentiality.
  - 9.2.4. That the working party be given delegated authority to discuss informally with landowners and those who have responded concerning the scheme possibilities, without making any firm commitment, which will be subject to Council's approval.
  - 9.2.5. That expenditure by the working party on this project for meetings, mail or advice should not exceed £100 and where possible local government resources such as SALC should be utilized.
- 9.3. It was further RESOLVED that a working party lead by Cllr Windmill and including Cllrs Parker and Warner be set up to further this project.
- 9.4. The file containing the material gathered thus far was passed to Cllr Byrne for his perusal. He would return it to Cllr Farley within 24 hours. All councillors were to regard the contents of the file as confidential as there were potential commercial issues involved.
- 9.5. Cllr Parker gave an update of the situation in respect of the Severn Tidal Power proposals. His report was noted, particularly that the barrage scheme was still in the list but that other more advanced technologies were being considered.
- 9.6. Cllr Parker reported incidents of noise and misuse of the Cross Quarry by youngsters leaving debris, including abandoned tents. The National Trust (NT) was aware of the problem and urged that the area be treated with respect. Any future incidents should be reported directly to the NT.

**10. Highways:**

- 10.1. The clerk reported that SCC had the renovation of the finger post at Webbbington Road/Old Coach Road junction on its list, but with no date for completion. The "No turning place ahead" notice for Kennel Lane was also in the programme. There was no specific plan for any improvement to Cross Lane. The bus shelters (Church lane and Coronation) were on land deemed to be the public highway. The clerk was asked to see if he could reconcile that statement with SCC's refusal to repair the concrete apron in front of the Coronation shelter. The Asset Register should reflect this statement by SCC.
- 10.2. Cllr Parker presented a draft outline plan for Cross Lane footpath enhancement for members to look at and would develop this for presentation at the next meeting.
- 10.3. Concern was expressed that the Coronation Shelter was becoming messy and seemed to be a point of congregation for youths from the district. The clerk would ask if a PCSO could occasionally look at this.
- 10.4. The Chairman passed a Highways Survey to the clerk for completion and onward transmission.
- 10.5. Concern was expressed that recent roadworks outside "Sunnymead" Webbbington Road may be causing drainage problems in the highway. The clerk would enquire what had been done.
- 10.6. The clerk was also asked to contact SCC Highways:
  - 10.6.1. about overhanging vegetation on the footpath on A38 south of Wavering Down Rise;
  - 10.6.2. to request that grass in the south side gutter of Old Coach Road be removed.
  - 10.6.3. to request that the verge at the west end (south side) of Cross Lane be cut to enable pedestrians to walk more safely away from traffic. The chairman undertook to ask the landowner to cut back the hedgerow to give more room on the verge.
- 10.7. Concern was expressed at the quantity of loose gravel that had been washed from the Scaurs Path onto the highway. The clerk would contact Crawford Estates accordingly.

**11. Police matters:**

- 11.1. Council noted a report of a Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting held at Axbridge on 5th August.
- 11.2. Council noted a report of the Chairman's recent meeting with Inspector Sam Williams at Burnham Police Station. Cllr Byrne reported that he was due to meet the Inspector on Thursday 13th August. Cllr Parker expressed the view that Inspector Williams had incorrectly associated personal reports of harassment with council business which is incorrect. Inspector Williams has instigated the first phase of mediation without the agreement of those who submitted harassment complaints. This compromises the Parish Council and its declared intent to await the outcome of Standards Committee and Standards Board investigations.
- 11.3. It was noted that Inspector Williams was to be replaced at Burnham by Inspector R. Tolley

12. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** Cllr Rix had reported to the clerk that the site was showing signs of extreme growth following the wet period.
13. **Website:** Cllr Parker reported that the website was up to date.
14. **Correspondence:**
- 14.1. **Circulation of papers:** The clerk was asked to ensure that all relevant papers be forwarded to Group Leaders as soon as practical after receipt and that any items that were time constrained (meetings, events) should also be circulated well in advance of the date. Cllr Warner expressed disappointment at missing a conservation day.
- 14.2. **East Brent Division:** The Chairman referred to correspondence from Cllr Alan Ham and submitted a report on a meeting of the parishes in the East Brent Division. As a result of possible new structures for the distribution of the Members' Community Grants, the clerk was instructed to write to known organisations within the parish to establish whether or not they are able to suggest a project worth around £500 for grant consideration in the immediate future. The selection would be determined by the Parish Council and forwarded to the responsible County councillor with its recommendations.
- 14.3. **Standard Board Hearing:** It was noted that there was to be a Standards Board Adjudication Panel Hearing in Taunton on the 29<sup>th</sup> October to decide on action in respect of complaints against Cllr. Byrne.
15. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** September 9th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.40 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....Chairman

DATE: .....  
9-9-09

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Mrs Rix (Vice-Chairman), Parker, Warner, Byrne,) and Windmill, Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** No residents or general public were present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Rolfe had apologised for his absence and this was accepted.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the monthly meeting held on August 12<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in agenda items 9.3 and 11.2 of which he was the author
  - Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
  - Cllr Mrs Rix declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
  - Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne's newsletters should they occur under "Correspondence" – specifically item reference 09/03
4. **Matters arising:**
  - 4.1. The clerk reported that he had been advised by Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) that a model Public Sector Equality Policy document was being created by the National Association for use by councils and that SALC would inform members when that was complete.
  - 4.2. Allianz Insurance had not yet provided a breakdown of its recent settlement of claim.
  - 4.3. Somerset County Council (SCC) Highways had not responded to a query about the ownership and responsibility for the concrete slab in front of the Coronation bus-shelter. Once this is established the information should be added to the Parish Council Asset Register. The clerk was asked to see if the contractor had billed the recent repair to the slab as a separate item.
  - 4.4. Mr James Crawford had indicated by email that he would consider transferring the ownership of the Scaurs path to the National Trust in order to have it better maintained. Cllr. Parker would act as "go-between" with the National Trust to bring about this transfer. It was suggested that the National Bridleways Association might have an interest in the path and be able to help with the maintenance.
  - 4.5. It is understood that the results from the Standards Board consultation will be available in mid September.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> August 2009 presented by the clerk.
    - 5.1.1. The clerk was asked to produce a forward budget to the end of the financial year for information at the October meeting.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19 and includes "sundries")	£190.14
Tim Baker – grass-cutting (Invoice 257)	£155.00
  - 5.3. **Donation to Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau:** Council RESOLVED to make a donation of £50.00 to the Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau.
    - 5.3.1. A request for a donation from Victim Support Charity would be considered at the October meeting, after members have read the details in the monthly correspondence. It was agreed that donations of this kind should be factored into future annual budget calculations.
  - 5.4. **Reference book on Council Procedures:** Members voted not to buy a copy of Charles Arnold Baker's standard work on Council Procedure as advice could be sought from Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) on any difficult matters.
  - 5.5. **SCC Community Grant:** The Chairman presented a paper for the guidance of applicants for funding available from SCC member Cllr. Alan Ham. This included a proposed procedure for the Parish Council to decide which of the local organisations' bids should be supported and provided a timetable for action. Some local groups had already been made aware of the availability of the grant, but the Chairman hoped members might make other suggestions. Members approved the timetable and guidelines and the Chairman was asked to proceed in contacting all known local groups. A key feature was that any project must be that it is capable of being completed in this financial year and be of benefit to the community. The funding would be controlled by the Parish Council and be distributed to the successful bidder-group against invoices to be paid by the Parish Council, thus permitting the reclaim of VAT. The sum granted was likely to be £695.00 excluding VAT. St. Andrew's Church representatives had advanced one proposal, which has been noted. It was noted that grant funds (or any residue after disbursement) must not be absorbed into the parish account.

**Note:** Cllr Byrne left the meeting 20.00 hrs to attend a meeting of Cross Connections.

6. **Planning:**

- 6.1. There were no applications for discussion.
- 6.2. The clerk was asked to contact Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) to clarify why some farm buildings appeared not to require a planning application e.g. Mr & Mrs J Feltham field no. 5382, where it has been observed that additional buildings have been added, whilst others required a full procedure, e.g. Clover Farm, Southcroft Farm, Bramble Farm.
- 6.3. The Planning Advisory Group would attend a Training session at Shipham Village Hall on 22nd. October. The Clerk will submit the members' names as being expected to attend.

7. **SALC Annual General Meeting:**

- 7.1. The Chairman and Cllr Warner would attend the SALC AGM at Woolavington on Saturday, 26th September. The Council RESOLVED to meet the cost of the councillors' lunches at £10.00 each and the clerk would inform SALC accordingly.
- 7.2. It was agreed that Cllr Rolfe should be invited to attend the Axbridge Carnival as the Council's representative on 26th September.

8. **Environment:**

- 8.1. ***Land Project:*** Councillor Windmill had provided members with notes of the first meeting of "The Land Project Group" and went on to give details of the proposed next steps. These included further discussions with landowners who may be willing to provide land. A proposed questionnaire is to accompany the Council's Autumn newsletter to judge responses to the "Land Project" to establish the principle for open play space or allotment land. The group will liaise with Cross Connections on the play area concept in particular. Ownership of the parcel of land to the South of Wavering Down Rise and abutting the A38 has yet to be established. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Windmill and the group for their efforts. Notes of the Community Land Project Group's first meeting had been circulated to group members only, with copies to Chairman and Clerk. A copy will be in the October correspondence box, for viewing by all other members.
- 8.2. ***Hanging Basket Competition:*** This year's winner had been announced at the Gardening Society Show. The present organiser wished to relinquish the post and Cllr Mrs Rix agreed to take on the organisation and judging for 2010.
- 8.3. ***Cross Quarry:*** Cllr Parker reported that the National Trust had plans to restore the dew-pond in the quarry and to clear saplings and undergrowth. It was noted that some unauthorised camping had taken place recently.
- 8.4. ***Vacant land/housing:*** The Clerk was asked to contact SALC and SDC, Mr Harvey respectively, to discover what might be done about bringing apparently vacant land or abandoned housing, e.g. property between Wessex and Alcasta in Old Coach Road, into better use. Cllr Windmill declared a personal interest in one abandoned property on the grounds that he was friend of the owner.

9. **Highways:**

- 9.1. ***Actions taken:*** The clerk reported that SCC had identified the road-works outside "Sunnymead" Webbbington Road as being work carried out by Wessex Water on a pipe leak. Overhanging vegetation on the footpath on A38 south of Wavering Down Rise had been cleared. The verge at the west end (south side) of Cross Lane had been cleared and the hedgerow cut back to a degree. The Chairman had yet to identify and contact the landowner at the west end (south side) of the lane to seek further limitation of the hedgerow.
- 9.2. ***Cross Lane footway:*** Cllr Parker presented a scaled plan of the west end of Cross Lane to illustrate what might be done to create a safe footway to the beginning of the Public Right of Way leading to Axbridge. This made clear that if the hedgerows and highway signage could be adjusted there would be room for a footway along the south side of the lane. There was uncertainty as to the limits of ownership of the hedgerows. Members agreed that the clerk should set up a site meeting with SCC Highways – either with Mr Gill or Mr Betty to explore improvements.
- 9.3. ***A38 proposals:*** The members of the Highways Advisory Group had met and the Chairman had produced a paper setting out their proposals to limit the number of traffic movements at the New Inn crossroads. This would be sent to the Joint Parishes Group for its endorsement before presenting it to SCC as the basis for discussion and action. The Council approved the paper and the proposed actions subject to any minor amendments notified to the Chairman following the meeting.
- 9.4. ***Bus services:*** The clerk was asked to contact First Bus to ask for a bus-stop sign on the south side of Cross lane – opposite Manor Farm; for an up to date time table at that stop and another for information only at the Coronation shelter.
  - 9.4.1. It was noted that the fares on Route 126 seemed to be at a level likely to deter bus-users rather than to encourage the use of public transport.

10. **Police matters:** PC Tom Pether had agreed to schedule visits by a Police Community Support Officer to the village after being informed of noisiness at the Coronation bus-shelter. Members hoped this was just a summer-time problem and also that the Cross Connections initiative of providing meeting space for youngsters might alleviate the situation.

11. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** Reports had been received of garden waste material being dumped in the site. Council agreed that all residents of Springfield Close and Chardet Place should be asked, by letter, to help deter this unwanted addition to the site. A letter and distribution list was approved.

11.1 **Nature Diaries:** There had been no response to the Nature Diary competition set up for youngsters during the Summer Holiday. It was suggested that the local schools might be invited to promote this in 2010.

12. **Website:** Cllr Parker reported that the website had not received agenda details for the September meeting for which the clerk apologised.

13. **Correspondence:**

13.1 **Circulation of papers:** The clerk was asked to provide Cllr Byrne with the Correspondence File following the meeting.

13.2 A number of complaints submitted to the SDC Standards Committee by individuals were set for review, but progress at SDC seemed to have stalled. Cllr Parker would enquire about this apparent delay on a personal level.

13.3 Chairman reported that he had provided feedback to SDC regarding the Sedgemoor Charter.

14. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** October 14th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.34 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:  Chairman

DATE: 14-10-09



**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Parker, Warner and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** No residents or general public were present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Mrs Rix, Rolfe and Byrne had tendered apologies for their absences and these were accepted.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the monthly meeting held on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2009 were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - 3.1. Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in agenda item 7 as author of the report
  - 3.2. Cllr Parker declared personal interest in item 6.1 and personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
  - 3.3. Cllr Windmill declared personal interest in item 6.2 as he is a friend of the owner of the unoccupied house in question
4. **Matters arising from minutes of the previous meeting:**
  - 4.1. Ref: Minute item 4.5 Cllr Parker reported that there had been a delay in the Standards Board for England's report of national consultations on the working of the Code of Conduct.
  - 4.2. Ref: Minute item 11 Council RESOLVED to rescind its decision to make a £30 sum of money available for the 2009 Summer Wildlife Diary competition. There had been no entries, perhaps partly because Dr Ayling's contact details had been wrongly advertised on posters. The clerk was asked to check that he had her correct telephone number.
    - 4.2.1. The chairman had circulated a letter to householders near to the Springfield Wildlife Site asking that they keep alert for anyone using the site as a dumping area for garden waste.
  - 4.3. Ref: Minute item 4.3 It was noted that there had been no definitive response by SCC Highways in respect of the ownership of the verge on which the Coronation bus-shelter stands.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009 presented by the clerk.
    - 5.1.1. The clerk was asked to identify any non-essential expenditure on such items as recorded delivery postage.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19 and includes "sundries")	£235.72
Clerk's pay adjustment needed as a result of NJC pay agreement	£33.51
Moore Stephens Annual Audit fee	£155.25
P. Freeman - website hosting reimbursement	£24.95
P. Freeman - website domain name fee reimbursement	£17.25

    - 5.2.1. Council RESOLVED to make a donation to Victim Support Somerset in the sum of £25.00
  - 5.3. **Allianz Insurance:** The insurers had responded with a detailed breakdown of sums claimed and re-imbursed by them in respect of the sign at Webbington and the notice board at Kernel Lane.
    - 5.3.1. There had been an overpayment error, which the company would not reclaim. The exact amount was unclear from the information given in the letter.
    - 5.3.2. The council was made aware that its current assets were not insured on a "new for old" basis and so on every claim there would be both a shortfall and an excess payment.
    - 5.3.3. The clerk was asked to review assets currently insured and to produce an estimate of current replacement costs with a view either to changing the level of insurance cover, the company, or both.
  - 5.4. **Income and Expenditure estimate to 31/03/10:** Members noted an estimate of projected income and expenditure for the rest of the current financial year produced by the clerk.
    - 5.4.1. There would be an estimated balance of £5,595.11.
    - 5.4.2. Part of this would be "ring-fenced" for specific projects such as "The Community Land Project" and "The Cross Lane Footpath Improvement Scheme".
    - 5.4.3. The clerk was asked to enquire of the bank what extra costs might be incurred if a separate "Project Account" were set up in order to ensure that when funds are sought from other bodies, there would be significant "matched funding" available.
  - 5.5. **Annual Audit Report 2008/9:** The external auditor, Moore Stephens, had completed the annual examination of the accounts and had no concerns to report. Councillors thanked the clerk for his work in producing accurate papers for audit.
  - 5.6. **Budget-making process:** The clerk was asked to prepare budget figures for the year 2010-11 in conjunction with the Finance Advisory Group. This would allow members to agree a Precept figure for 2010-11 at the November meeting.
  - 5.7. **Community Initiative Grant:** The Chairman reported that the Churchwardens of St. Andrews Church had put forward a bid for Community Initiative Grant funding (managed by County Cllr Alan Ham) to make the oil tank at the church more secure
  - 5.8. Council RESOLVED to make a sum of £25.00 available to support the organisation of community carols by Mrs Margaret Jordan, for which receipts will be requested.

6. **Planning:**

- 6.1. **Application number:** 21/09/00009/CG  
Land to the north of Wavering Down House  
Outline Planning Permission - Land to the north of Wavering Down, Webbington Road, Cross  
Erection of single storey dwelling

Council RESOLVED to recommend to Sedgemoor District Council that this application be refused.

- 6.2. **SDC policy on unoccupied houses:** The clerk reported that SDC had no plans to bring unoccupied housing within the council's control. The Chairman would write to the resident who had raised the issue to explain the District Council's position.

- 6.3. **Field 5382:** SDC Enforcement Officers were now aware of possible further development at this site and would visit the site to inspect and ensure that any development was in line with planning regulations.

7. **SALC Annual General Meeting:**

- 7.1. The Chairman presented a report of the SALC AGM held at Woolavington on Saturday, 26th September and highlighted:

7.1.1. The new administration at County Hall would seek to direct Aggregates Levy Board funding to those parishes directly affected by the companies' activities rather than to place it within the overall county budget as is done at present.

7.1.2. The Standards Board for England had completed its national consultations on the Code of Conduct and its enforcement, but publication was delayed (see 4.1 above)

7.1.3. Aspects of the TV digital switchover were discussed. It was decided that a special meeting was not required.

8. **Environment:**

- 8.1. **Community Land Project:** Councillor Windmill presented members with a report on progress thus far. The next step was to finalise a questionnaire prepared by Cllr Parker aimed at judging support for either allotments or a playing space. Information sought should not be too broad and as a priority should ensure that the answers required to meet the project's objectives were achieved. This would be circulated with the next Parish Council newsletter once the project leader had approved the content.

- 8.2. **Cross Quarry:** The dew pond at the quarry had been cleared by National Trust volunteers.

- 8.3. **Mendip Hills AONB:** The Management Plan for the AONB was in the process of being reviewed by Countrywide Consultants

- 8.4. **"Pay-back" scheme:** Members agreed not to pursue this scheme, which uses offenders on community service sentences to work on local projects for the present. It was noted that scheme users would have to contribute to workers' transport costs from Taunton, and provide any necessary tools.

- 8.5. **Renewed building work at Wavering Down Rise:** It was noted that building work had recommenced at the Wavering Down Rise site and the clerk was asked to check with SDC if this was in line with planning permissions granted.

- 8.6. **Preferred Option Report - Spatial Strategy for Sedgemoor:** The Council's Planning Advisory Group would consider this document and report back to the November meeting.

- 8.7. **National Grid** was offering consultation dates and was open to comment on two routes for pylons to connect Hinkley Point with Avonmouth. For councillors, Cllr Ham had arranged a meeting at Mark Village Hall for Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 19.30 to 21.00 hours. Cllrs Farley, Parker and Windmill agreed to attend, the clerk to advise Cllr Ham. There were other dates and locations for members of the public.

9. **Highways:**

- 9.1. **Cross Lane footway:** A site meeting had been arranged with Dan Martin of SCC to discuss the proposals to improve the footway from A38 to the beginning of the Public Right of Way leading to Axbridge. This meeting would be on October 21st. at 11.00 a.m.

- 9.2. **A38 proposals:** The clerk was asked to contact Axbridge, Weare and Cheddar councils to confirm their support or otherwise for a paper setting out Compton Bishop's proposals to be forwarded to SCC Highways. If all accept the proposals then the paper will be forwarded to SCC between meetings.

- 9.3. **Bus services:** The clerk had contacted First Bus to ask for a bus-stop sign on the south side of Cross Lane - opposite Manor Farm and for an up-to-date time table at that stop.

9.3.1. The company had agreed to provide the timetable, but no new stop sign could be erected until a clearly defined stopping place had been created. This would be discussed with Dan Martin (9.1 refers).

9.3.2. The clerk was asked to request a timetable and case for the Coronation bus-shelter for both Route 126 and Route 831

- 9.4. **Scaur's Path:** Members were told that the "bridleway" designation of the Scaur's Path would be unaffected in the event that Crawford Estates transfer the ownership of the path to the National Trust.

- 9.5. **Lodge Memorial bench:** The clerk was asked to contact RJB Builders to obtain an estimate for treating the Lodge Memorial bench with either oil or varnish.

- 9.6. **Speed Indicator Device (SID):** The chairman is to ask Mr. Dave Grabham, SCC, about the use of the SID (Speed Indicator Device) in Old Coach Road.

10. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** The clerk was asked to contact Mr. David Aggett at SDC to discover when he intends to carry out the work at the Wildlife Site as requested by Dr Sarah Ayling.
11. **Cross Memorial Hall – representative report:** Cllr Warner reported from their meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> September that:
- The committee had changed most of its principal officers. The following are the current post holders: Mrs Margaret Easey, Chairman; Mrs Yvonne Bell, Secretary; Mr Dick Tyas, Treasurer; Mrs Laelia Gold, Booking Secretary
  - That its finances were in good order with sufficient reserves.
  - That the Committee had achieved Hall Mark 1 status
  - That booking fees were being revised to make administration easier, but not to increase the charges
  - That Cross Connexion's representatives had indicated that they might put forward a bid for Community Initiative Grant funding (item 5.1 refers) for work at the hall to benefit the play-group. Cllr Warner would confirm this as soon as possible.
12. **Website:** Cllr Parker reported that the agenda for the October meeting had not been passed to the webmaster.
13. **Correspondence:**
- 13.1. **Somerset Waste Partnership – Sort-it Scheme:** The Chairman would contact SWP to clarify aspects of the Sort-it Scheme, which is due to be introduced in the parish; in particular how terraced houses would deal with wheelie bins and why such large containers were being supplied to those who produce minimal waste.
- 13.2. **Grass-cutting:** The clerk was asked to contact Tim Baker to ensure that he does not carry out grass-cutting of the northern verge in the stretch from Bourton Lane to Newtown as this has been done by some other agency.
- 13.3. **Speed Indicator Device (SID) statistics:** Members felt that the most recent set of statistics produced by the SID device in Old Coach Road had been completely meaningless, as the device had been vandalised during the period that it was *in situ* and as there was an absence of original readings to verify whether there had been any improvements.
- 13.4. Cllr Windmill agreed to respond on Council's behalf to the NHS return seeking views on stroke, arthritis and heart and additional services to be provided at the redeveloped Bridgwater Community Hospital.
14. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** November 11th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.25 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:  Chairman

DATE: 11-11-09

**Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Parker, Rolfe, Warner and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).  
**Public Participation:** No residents or general public were present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Mrs Rix, and C. Byrne had tendered apologies for their absences due to a college course and sickness and these were accepted.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the monthly meeting held on October 14th, 2009, subject to minor typographical amendments to item 13.4, were unanimously approved by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - 3.1. Cllr Farley declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and in agenda items 7.2 and 10 as author of the reports
  - 3.2. Cllr Rolfe declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
  - 3.3. Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
4. **Matters arising from minutes of the previous meeting:**
  - 4.1. Ref: Minute item 9.3.2 The Clerk reported that First Bus had agreed to place time tables for service 126 in both Coronation and Church Lane bus shelters and that 2 other services through the parish were operated by Coombes Travel, numbers 491 and 831. If possible First Bus would also post timetables for these.
  - 4.2. Ref: Minute 6.3 Sedgemoor District Council had confirmed that the building work at Wavering Down Rise was in line with previous planning permissions.
  - 4.3. Ref: Minute 5.8 The Clerk had informed Mrs Jordan of the financial support to be made available by the Parish Council for Community Carols.
  - 4.4. Ref: Minute 9.5 The Clerk was awaiting a quotation from RJB Builders for renovation work to the Lodge Memorial seat. Council RESOLVED that two further quotations should be sought from Mr Brian Fishlock and Mr Simon Grant.
  - 4.5. Ref: Minute 10 The Clerk had received no response from Mr Aggett (SDC) about work to be carried out at Springfield Wildlife Site so far. He was to try again.
  - 4.6. Ref: Minute 5.3.5 The Clerk had not yet completed a review and re-valuation of the Councils Asset Register.
  - 4.7. Ref: Minute 5.1.1 The Clerk indicated that the monthly cost of recorded delivery postage and larger envelopes to contain papers for councillors not on email, who received copies electronically, amounted to approximately £2.50 per councillor per month – dependant largely upon the weight of paperwork sent.
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> October 2009 presented by the clerk.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19 and includes "sundries")	£204.08
Victim Support (Somerset) approved at previous meeting (Ref: 5.2.1)	£25.00
Tim Baker – grasscutting	£95.00
Cross Memorial Hall	£52.00
  - 5.3. **Budget and Precept for 2010/11:** Council RESOLVED to accept a budget for the next financial year and instructed the clerk to request a Precept of £6,800.00 from SDC at the appropriate time.
    - 5.3.1. It was noted that this approved budget would mean a reduction in Precept from the current year.
    - 5.3.2. The budget included a sum of £5,000.00 to be held in a new Savings Account as funding for any future community project requiring capital expenditure.
  - 5.4. **New Savings Account:** Council RESOLVED to open a new Savings Account with HSBC Bank to be entitled "Community Projects Account", the purpose of which would be to hold funds, added from Council's budget, to enable council to carry out any future community projects requiring capital expenditure.
  - 5.5. **Community Initiative Grant:** There had been two bids for a share of the Community Initiative Grant made available by Somerset County Council, through County Councillor Alan Ham.
    - 5.5.1. It was RESOLVED to recommend to Cllr Ham that Cross Connections be granted £150.00 for sound equipment and that the remaining £545.00 be made available to St. Andrews Church to help pay for security measures around the oil-tank at at Compton Bishop.
    - 5.5.2. It was noted that both projects could be completed by 31st March 2010
    - 5.5.3. It was noted that the sums involved would be transferred to the Parish Council's account for onward transmission.
    - 5.5.4. It was agreed that there should be a formal handover of the sums in recognition of the County's involvement in the two schemes.
  - 5.6. **Contact magazine:** Council RESOLVED that the clerk should inform Mr Alf Small (Contact magazine treasurer) that a sum of £250.00 will be available as a donation from the 2010/11 budget.
6. **Planning:**
  - 6.1. Application number: 21/09/00010/SJR  
16 Big Tree Close. Applicants: Mr & Mrs Haines 2 storey side extension  
The Council RESOLVED to recommend to SDC that this application be approved.

- 6.2. The Chairman and Cllr. Rolfe had attended a Planning Training session at Shipham. A combined report was noted.
- 6.2.1. The Planning Advisory Group was mandated to produce a response to the strategy document and to ensure that this was sent to SDC before 18th December.
- 6.3. **SDC Local Development Framework (LDF) – Core Strategy:** Cllr Parker gave a resume of a report he had produced, which set out how the parish and its neighbourhood would be affected by the proposed changes to the LDF.
- 6.4. **White Hart Inn – Planning Appeal:** The Council RESOLVED to recommend to the Planning Inspectorate's Appeal Panel that the appeal by the owners against refusal of planning permission to convert the public house into two houses be dismissed. A letter would be sent by the Chairman and would include reference to the Council's previous grounds for recommending refusal. It would also point out the danger of considering the White Hart application in isolation from the proposals put forward for developing the car-park opposite the premises.
- 6.5. **Cluster Group meetings 28th October and 4th November:** The meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> October was a working party concerned with the development of local strategy concerns to assist SDC in preparing their plan. That on the 4<sup>th</sup> November concerned the budget, Bridgwater Hospital, Local Development Framework, Peat extraction and RL T3. A report was submitted covering these topics including slides from a presentation on the Core strategy Preferred Options Report.
- 6.6. It was RESOLVED that in view of a proposal to return the Aggregates Levy funding from County to local level that an approach should be made to the Levy for a contribution towards the establishment of a footpath in Cross Lane; this approach would be subject to clarification of the policy by County Cllr. Maddocks
7. **Environment:**
- 7.1. **Sort-it waste collection in the parish:** There was no firm date yet for this waste collection system to be introduced to the parish. The Chairman will attend two "stakeholder meetings" (20/11 and 27/11) at which more will be learned and concerns could be raised for questions to be answered.
- 7.2. **National Grid presentations:** The Chairman had produced an information document following his and Cllr Windmill's attendance at a meeting in Mark on 9<sup>th</sup> November about the proposed new pylons to be erected at the west end of the parish.
- 7.2.1. The Council RESOLVED that 40 copies of the document should be printed and distributed to those properties most likely to be affected. The cost was not to exceed £50.00
- 7.2.2. Responses to National Grid about its Route Corridor proposals, and to SDC about its Local Development Framework Core Strategy document would be formulated, approved and submitted following a special Parish Council meeting to be arranged for later in the month.
- 7.3. **Community Land Project:** Cllr Windmill provided a report to all councillors on progress thus far and copies of letters to landowners who may be interested in making land available. The questionnaire to discover residents' views on how any land obtained may best be used will be ready for distribution with the Winter newsletter.
- 7.4. **Straying livestock:** Concern was expressed that there appeared to be no obvious point of contact to report straying livestock in the parish other than either "Farmwatch" or "Neighbourhood Watch". In the case highlighted where animals strayed off the hills, it is the responsibility of owners of land adjoining common land (which the hills are) to ensure they are fenced and stock-proofed. Containment of stock on privately owned land is the responsibility of the landowners.
- 7.5. **AONB:** Cllr Parker reported that he planned to attend their meeting to discuss their management plan.
8. **Highways:**
- 8.1. **Cross Lane footway:** A site meeting with Mr Dan Martin of SCC to discuss the proposals to improve the footway from A38 to the beginning of the Public Right of Way leading to Axbridge had been held on October 21st. It was felt that this had been useful and further feedback from SCC was awaited.
- 8.2. **A38 proposals:** The paper setting out Compton Bishop's proposals is to be forwarded to SCC Highways with appendices from Cheddar and Weare Councils.
- 8.3. **Bus timetables from SCC:** The clerk had requested copies of a new slimmed down leaflet setting out the bus timetables for the North Sedgemoor area. These would be sent out by SCC in the New-Year and would then be made available in the Memorial Hall and on notice boards.
- 8.4. **Speed Indicator Device (SID):** The Chairman reported that SCC would be using the same site in Old Coach Road for the SID. It was hoped that the next period would be vandal-free.
- 8.5. **Salt bags:** It was noted that 3 salt bags had been deployed by Rackley Lane, National Trust car park and the M5 motorway bridge.
9. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** A report had been made available to Cllr Parker for inclusion in "Contact". This would also be placed on the council's website.
10. **Newsletter:** The topics to be covered in the newsletter were agreed. Material would be produced by councillors and passed to Cllr. Parker for collating. A sum of £50 was anticipated for the production of the newsletter together with the Land Project questionnaire.
11. **Correspondence:**
- 11.1. **Transport priorities:** It was agreed that copies of the A38 crossroads document and the proposals for the Cross to Axbridge footpath should be sent to Mr Stephen Wafford at SCC – the Transport Policy Manager.

- 11.2. **Road salting:** The clerk was asked to contact SCC to ask that the bus route through Old Coach Road should be included in the winter road salting programme as in the past.
- 11.3. **NHS consultations:** Cllr Windmill agreed to consider two items of correspondence from NHS requiring a consultative response and, where appropriate, he was mandated to respond on behalf of the council.
- 11.4. **Change to system of circulating correspondence:** It was noted that Cllr Warner had attempted to contact Cllr Byrne to pass on the correspondence file, but received no reply from him and so retained it for the meeting. Neither had both Cllrs Rix and Rolfe seen this month's file. Council approved a trial period in which the clerk would update members with email on a regular basis as correspondence is received. A paper copy of the list will be provided to members without email well prior to the monthly meeting. Any member may request to see an item of correspondence or ask for more details at any time during the month.
12. **December meeting:** The chairman offered his apologies for absence at the December meeting and Cllr A. Rix will act as chairman.
13. **Correspondence:** A response to SCC Taunton will be included on the agenda of the forthcoming special meeting.
14. **Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting:** December 9th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.00 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: ..... *A. Rix* ..... VICE Chairman

DATE: ..... *9-12-09* .....

**Minutes of a Special Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting**  
**held on November 24<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Farley (Chairman), Mrs. Rix, Parker, Warner and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** Three residents and County Cllr Alan Ham were present.

Mr Garland, representing residents from Kennel Lane, addressed the council to express concern that the proposed route for both the options for upgrading of the National Grid network would be in close proximity to Kennel Lane.

The residents of Kennel Lane, without exception, have stated their opposition to the National Grid proposal for towers and overhead cabling and would prefer under-grounding as proposed by Loxton Parish Council who had made informal contact. The current proposals would severely impact the visual beauty of the valley and also cause considerable devaluation of property in the area. He also pointed out that some houses in Kennel Lane are contained within Route Corridor 2, so that in theory the new line could pass over their rooftops.

Mr Garland was thanked for his contribution.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Rolfe had tendered his apology for his absence and this was accepted. Cllr Byrne was not in attendance and no information had been received.
2. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - 2.1. Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne as did Cllr E. Farley, who also declared a personal interest in the A38 report as joint author.

It was proposed, by the chairman, that in view of the public attendance, item 5 on the agenda should be brought forward as the next item on the agenda. This was approved unanimously.

3. **To approve a response to National Grid in respect of proposals for new pylons between Hinkley Point and Avonmouth Seabank**

3.1. Various points were raised on the consultation proposals published by National Grid

3.1.1. The new Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) is a non-government body, which would not be answerable to government, councils or planning authorities. It is required to conduct public consultations, but has the power to approve schemes without recourse to public opinion or democratic planning consent. This method is opposed by local authorities.

3.1.2. National Grid has produced this 'Pre-Planning' consultation, which is not a planning application. The proposals will, therefore, not be considered by Somerset County Council or Sedgemoor District Council whose resources are concentrating on the EDF planning application for Hinkley C power station.

3.1.3. The general size of the pylon towers and associated cabling would be significant and create an unacceptable intrusion on the sensitive visual nature of the parish and the surrounding environment. This was graphically illustrated by reference to the maximum permitted overall length of an articulated vehicle, 16.5 metres.

3.1.4. The proposed route would be detrimental to the Mendip AONB and the proposed Somerset Levels World Heritage Site. Both these areas include SSSI designated areas. Option 1A allowed for the replacement of the existing pylon route.

3.1.5. The main local industry in the parish is tourism, which relies on the visual beauty of the Mendips and Levels and would be severely damaged by these proposals and create an associated impact on local employment.

3.1.6. This parish is unique in that the route, for the proposals, is channelled through the narrow valley corridor between Webbington and Loxton.

*The meeting was adjourned between 20.20 hrs and 20.25 to receive comment from the residents present.*

3.1.7. The consultation process offered questionnaires to be completed by individuals and groups. There is no process to provide this information to local parish councils. Concern was expressed, that the Parish Council would not have an understanding of local opinions and could not, therefore adequately represent them.

3.1.8. If power cables could be located within the Severn Estuary, this would obviate the need for visually intrusive towers. This is not currently presented as an option by National Grid. A robust statement from The National Grid, including potential costs, is required.

3.1.9. The cost of 'under-grounding' cables should not rule this option out. Under-grounding is the Councils preferred option for the area of the Somerset Levels and AONB. In the exchange from pylons to underground cabling a terminal station the size of a football pitch will be required.

3.1.10. The proposed massive change to our landscape requires positive action to protect the visual amenities for this area, which supports significant holiday and visitor industries.

3.1.11. Residents are requested to send a copy of their National Grid response to the Parish Council to ensure the PC reflects the views of the electorate. Comments were due by January 2010.

3.2. The Parish Council resolved that it would produce a short response to the National Grid preliminary Consultation process based upon the Chairman's draft response. Authorisation was given for the Planning

*R. J. K.*

and Environment Advisory Groups to produce and submit an agreed response to the next Parish Council Meeting.

4. **To approve a response to Somerset County Council's request for information in respect of transport priorities within the parish; to include any developments in respect of A38 crossroads discussions.**
  - 4.1. Letters from The Environmental Directorate and Somerset County Council request a response on the subject of the impact of transportation on our Parish.
  - 4.2. The Council considered that the reports on the current A38 junction review and The Cross Lane Footpath project should be sent as a response also noting that responses had been requested by 6th November 2009, which had already passed.
  - 4.3. The council notes other areas of concern such as sustainability of transport, bus services to the villages, green issues and our ageing population who face the probability of moving out of the parish because of the lack of suitable accommodation and the inadequate public transport when they can no longer drive a car.
  - 4.4. It was resolved that the Highways Advisory group would consult with others and produce a report, which would be submitted as this Councils response. It will include reference to road noise and freight route concerns.
5. **To approve a response to Sedgemoor District Council's consultation document concerning Local Development Framework - Core Strategy**
  - 5.1. Cllr Parker briefly outlined a number of issues arising from the consultation document 'Core Strategy- Preferred Options' report Sedgemoor District Council. Inconsistent figures regarding housing and jobs were identified, whether the target housing numbers would be the maximum allowed, the commuter route from Axbridge and Cheddar, which is defined as coming through the Parish of Compton Bishop and the lack of planning for the infrastructure to support the Local Development Framework.
  - 5.2. It was noted that the 'Preferred Options' report specifically states that a detailed transport strategy is required. SDC and SCC will prepare a joint transport topic paper based on the emerging work from the Local Transport Plan 3 as referenced in item 5.46 of the Preferred Options report.
  - 5.3. The main issue, for the parish, was the lack of planning for infrastructure to support the planned housing and the development of Key Rural Settlements, which are to provide key services to smaller settlements.
  - 5.4. It was resolved that the Planning Advisory Group would consult with others and produce a report, which would be submitted as this Councils response.
6. **Response to Notification of Refusal of Planning Application 21 09 00009 - Conditions And Reasons**

It was noted that the conditions and reasons for SDC's refusal omitted the Councils comment on 'backfill'. It was resolved that the Planning AG will seek their reasons for this action.
7. **To resolve the date, time and place of the next Council Meeting December 9th 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours (9th December 2009).** Cllr Farley tendered his apologies and Cllr A. Rix agreed to take the chair for the 9<sup>th</sup> December meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.30 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:.....*A. Rix*..... Vice Chairman

DATE: 9.12.09.....



Minutes of Compton Bishop Parish Council Meeting held on December 9<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Cross Memorial Hall

**Present:** Parish Councillors Mrs Rix (Vice-Chairman), Parker, Rolfe, Warner and Windmill; Paul Passey (Parish Clerk).

**Public Participation:** One resident was present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr. Farley had apologised for his absence. This was accepted.  
*Note:* The Clerk was informed after the meeting that Cllr Byrne had left a telephoned recorded message for Cllr. Farley, in which he had explained that he would be unable to attend the meeting. Since the Chairman himself was not at the meeting this apology was not recorded.
2. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the monthly meeting held on November 11th, 2009 and November 24th, 2009 were approved unanimously by those present at that meeting and were signed by the Vice-Chairman as a true record.
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest:**
  - 3.1. Cllr Rolfe declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne and prejudicial interest in Planning Application (and item 6.1) on the grounds of his being a close neighbour to the property and any change may have an effect on his own property.
  - 3.2. Cllr Parker declared personal interest in all matters relating to Cllr Byrne
4. **Matters arising from minutes of the previous meeting:**
  - 4.1. Ref: Minute (4.4 - 24/11) The Clerk was awaiting a quotation or any response from RJB Builders, Mr Grant and Mr Fishlock for renovation work to the Lodge Memorial seat. Council RESOLVED that two further quotations should be sought from Mr Andy Laken (Axbridge Town Council Lengthsman) and a builder known to Cllr Windmill, whose details would be forwarded to the Clerk.
  - 4.2. The Clerk was advised by members that in valuing the council's assets a replacement value for benches should be based on prices from a commercial catalogue (Glasdon's) and that a wooden bench in mid-range should be taken as the example, valued at £700.00
5. **Finance:**
  - 5.1. **Monthly reconciliation:** The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the monthly reconciliation to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 presented by the clerk.
  - 5.2. **Payments due:** Council RESOLVED that all payments due and listed below should be made:

Clerk's salary etc. (Salary claimed at Scale Pt19 and includes "sundries)	£251.17
Tim Baker - grass-cutting	£5.00
Re-imbursment to Cllr Farley (National Grid papers)	£47.20
  - 5.3. **New Savings Account:** Councillors noted that a new Savings Account with HSBC Bank to be entitled "Community Projects Account" would require a simple letter of request signed by 3 listed bank signatories and that there would be no fee for managing this account.
  - 5.4. **Community Initiative Grant:** County Cllr Ham had agreed in principle that Cross Connections be granted £150.00 for sound equipment and that the remaining £545.00 be made available to St. Andrews Church. The Clerk had informed the two groups of this situation and that the council would make spending arrangements just as soon as the grant had been transferred to the council's account.
  - 5.5. **County and District Council's Budget constraints:** Cllr Warner reported that both Sedgemoor District and Somerset County Councils were anticipating severe budget constraints in the next two years. SDC predicted a deficit in excess of £900,000- for 2010/11 and a much larger deficit in 2011/12
6. **Planning:**
  - 6.1. Ref: 21/09/00011/DRT 12 Springfield Close, Cross, Axbridge BS26 2FE  
Erection of 2 storey extension, conversion of roof space above garage to living accommodation and enclosure of front porch.  
Applicants: Mr & Mrs G Beckett  
*Note:* Cllr Rolfe left the room during the discussion of this item  
Council RESOLVED to recommend that SDC approve this application with the request that the Advisory Group's comments be taken also into account.
  - 6.2. Ref: 21/09/00012/CJA Wheelwright and Gypsy Museum, Wheelwright's shop, Webbington, Axbridge BS26 6HX  
Conversion and alteration of existing building to a single live-work unit and associated works  
Applicants: Mr & Mrs Orchard  
Council RESOLVED to recommend that SDC approve this application with the request that the Advisory Group's comments and reservations be taken also into account  
*Note:* The meeting was suspended briefly during this item in order that members might ask for clarification on certain matters from the applicant who was present.
7. **Environment:**
  - 7.1. **Community Land Project:** Cllr Windmill reported that one more landowner had expressed a tentative willingness to make land available as the exact nature of the project became clearer. The group members had also visited a site, central to the community, which might serve well as allotment land, if that is an outcome of the project. Additionally another landowner had made the suggestion that he might be able to

- loan land for such temporary events as village fetes or sports days. The responses to the survey to be sent out with the Winter newsletter would be significant in deciding the next steps of the project.
- 7.2. **Scaur's Path:** Cllr Parker reported that the local National Trust views the transfer of the ownership of the path from Crawford Estates to itself as valuable.
- 7.2.1. The transfer would need to be at no cost to the Trust.
- 7.2.2. There should be no maintenance issue in respect of boundary walls along the length of the path.
- 7.2.3. The Trust would appreciate a formal letter of support from the Council for the proposed transfer.
- 7.2.4. The Trust asks that in the event of a transfer the Parish Council should arrange the installation of a "Dog bin" and to fund both its installation and its regular emptying.
- 7.2.5. The clerk informed members that such costs were likely to be in the region of £150 for installation and £2.50 per "emptying" visit from SDC.
- 7.2.6. It was RESOLVED that the clerk should write a formal letter of support.
- 7.2.7. It was RESOLVED that should the transfer take place then the "Dog-bin" and its emptying should be funded by the Parish Council; the location of the bin could be decided at that stage, although there was some discussion about siting it at the bottom end of the path, near Old Coach Road.
- 7.3. **North Somerset Local Development Framework - Core Strategy consultation:** It was agreed to defer discussion of this until the January meeting at which Cllr Parker would present a report on his findings and initial thoughts.
- 7.4. **SDC Local Development Framework - Core Strategy consultation:** It was RESOLVED that the response to this should be as set out by Cllr Parker after discussions with members of other Advisory Groups. He would email the response before 18th. December
- 7.5. **Response to National Grid consultation process:** Council RESOLVED that subject to any further comments from councillors in the next two days Cllr Parker should forward comments on behalf of the council.
- 7.6. **Recent NHS consultations:** Cllr Windmill reported on the responses he had made on the Council's behalf to two recent NHS consultations.
- 7.6.1. Consultation on Redevelopment of Bridgwater Community Hospital - Cllr Windmill had voted for provision of services for stroke, heart problems, osteo-porosis/osteo arthritis and associated pain management needs in addition to core services already confirmed.
- 7.6.2. The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust's bid for Foundation Trust status - Cllr Windmill had found this a sensible proposal and was especially pleased to see that the creation of such a trust would enable local residents to be more involved with its oversight and general management.
- 7.7. **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty:** Cllr Parker reported that a proposal by Mendip AONB to seek "Geopark" status, with the possibility of then receiving funding from the European Union was unlikely to proceed at present as the initial study required would cost around £60,000.
8. **Highways:**
- 8.1. **A38 proposals:** The paper setting out Compton Bishop's proposals was now with SCC Highways. It had been acknowledged but no response had yet been received.
- 8.2. **Request from Axbridge 2010 Pageant Committee:** Members considered a request from the Axbridge 2010 Pageant Committee that it be permitted to attach a temporary advertising notice to the back of the "Cross" village sign in Cross Lane. It was RESOLVED <sup>by a majority</sup> to accede to the committee's request subject to the arrangement meeting all the Highway Authority and Planning regulations, and to the period of display being of an acceptable length of time, which was suggested to be 28 days.
- 8.3. **Highways implications of proposed second reservoir at Axbridge.** Discussion of this issue would be deferred until the January meeting. Councillors noted the considerable number of major infrastructure projects possible in the area during the next few years - pylons, Hinkley Point power station, Severn Barrage, Bristol Airport expansion, housing at Cheddar and the reservoir. These were likely to seriously detrimental effects on the parish and surrounding areas.
- 8.4. Councillors expressed concern at the speed of traffic in the area of Webbington Road and Old Coach Road junction. There had been a near miss between horses from Wavering Down Farm and passing vehicles travelling eastwards. The Clerk was instructed to contact Somerset Highways to ask if any warning signs about horses could be erected and to point out the inherent danger from speeding vehicles in this area.
9. **Newsletter:** The Winter newsletter had been produced by Cllr Parker with material and ideas provided by fellow councillors. Further minor changes were agreed and the final document, together with a questionnaire/survey sheet produced by the Community Land Project Group would be send by email to the printer as soon as possible.
- 9.1. It was RESOLVED to meet costs associated with the production of this material.
- 9.2. Councillors were reminded of the areas in the parish to which they would make deliveries.
- 9.3. The Clerk would arrange printing and collection from Woodspring Resource Centre as soon as possible after the meeting as one item in the newsletter referred to a Carol Evening to take place on Friday 11th. December.
10. **Springfield Wildlife Site:** Cllr Mrs Rix had nothing to report, apart from the apparent difficulty being experienced by Dr Ayling and the Clerk in arranging with SDC to undertake necessary works at the site.
11. **Levels and Moors Action Group meeting**
- 11.1. Cllrs Warner and Farley had attended a recent meeting of this group and were told that there were still funds available to support appropriate projects, especially those promoting tourism.

- 11.2. The Axbridge to Cross footpath improvement project was seen as a possible recipient.
- 11.3. The Chairman had sent a copy of the footpath proposal document to Ms. Cooper at SCC and requested a grant application form.
- 11.4. It was RESOLVED to apply for grant aid to meet the costs of a professionally produced "Feasibility Study" for the project
12. Website update: Cllr Parker was satisfied that the website was running smoothly but suggested that early in the new year he and Mr Freeman (webmaster) would meet to consider some amendments.
13. Correspondence:
- 13.1. Councillors confirmed that the arrangements for listing correspondence were satisfactory, but that some amendment to the layout of the list may be appropriate. They were reminded that any items listed may either be had in advance of a meeting as copies or originals as appropriate and that the correspondence is always available on the table at monthly meetings.
14. Date, time and place of the next monthly Council Meeting: January 13th 2010 at Cross Memorial Hall at 19.30 hours

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.55 hours.

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: .....Chairman

DATE: .....13/01/10.....