Combe Hay Annual Parish Meeting

The annual meeting of electors took place on 15 May 2019 in Combe Hay Church, starting at 7:45pm. It was attended by 17 parishioners, Ward Councillor Matt McCabe, two representatives from the Great Western Ambulance Charity, one representative from TrueSpeed and the Parish Clerk, who took the minutes

#### MINUTES

**1. Welcome**

Parish Council Chairman Malcolm Austwick welcomed all present and introduced Phil West from the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC).

**2. Presentation by GWAAC**

Mr West gave an interesting presentation, including a short video, on the history and operation of the air ambulance. The helicopter is leased and operates from a modern base. The audience was surprised to learn that the charity is not eligible for lottery funding and relies entirely on donations. Mr West was warmly thanked.

**3. TrueSpeed broadband questions and answers**

Samantha from TrueSpeed said that network testing would be completed the following week. Subscribers would then be invited to book a connection slot. The earlier the slot accepted, the sooner connection would be made. There would not be any other priority.

Parishioners asked questions on the connection of outlying properties (next after the village), poor communication by TrueSpeed (all information given to her is passed on; complaints are indeed kreceived prior to but not after installation), when to cancel existing contracts (not until the line is ported to TrueSpeed), porting of phone numbers (remind TrueSpeed if required), email addresses, and routers (don’t re-set but call for support if there is a problem).

She apologised that the process of getting Combe Hay onto full fibre broadband had taken so long and agreed that a better process for providing updates was needed. She could be contacted via Malcolm Austwick, who thanked her for attending.

**4. Minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting**

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting were agreed to be a true record (proposed Trevor Osborne, 2nd Sarah Phillips). They were signed by the Chairman.

**5. Parish Council Chairman’s report on the past year**

The annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 had been distributed. Malcolm Austwick noted that The Avenue trees had been dead-wooded and the railings painted; transfer of the new cemetery land kindly offered by Trevor Osborne was now proceeding; Parish Council email addresses had been provided to members; work was continuing on the living archive, with the eventual aim of producing a website. He invited Sue Saker to comment further on the archive.

Mrs Saker referred to the recent successful showing of a film of elderly residents’ local memories. Cataloguing of the archive was continuing. It was a big task and more volunteer help would be very welcome.

**6. Parish Council Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019**

Parish Council accounts for the year to 31st March 2019 were presented by Robin Campbell, Responsible Financial Officer. No matter was raised.

**7. Sulis Down**

The Chairman said that the Sulis Down development had loomed large for a number of years. The B&NES Local Plan allowed for a development of 300 houses, including on land taken out of the Green Belt. Permission had to date been granted to the Hignett Family Trust (HFT) for 170 dwellings.

In its Plan, B&NES had included two Strategic Development Sites. In a last-minute submission to the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) HFT had said that B&NES had incorrectly assessed the Sulis Down Site and should have included it when considering Strategic Development Sites. As such, it would be capable of supporting up to 800 dwellings in total. The JSP project director had indicated that the JSP inspector (who begins work in July) will not consider any new site for strategic development land. However, there will be a section on legal compliance and the scope of the plan, which is where HFT will argue its case.

B&NES’s current view was that Sulis Down is totally unsuitable for 800 houses. South Stoke Parish Council, having taken advice from a planning consultant, was considering a letter of support to B&NES. Combe Hay would liaise with South Stoke and with the South of Bath Alliance.

Parishioner Trevor Osborne, noting an excellent summary, said it was a rare example of the Parish Council and B&NES being of one mind.

**8. Other business**

* Action on an enforcement matter was urgently requested by a parishioner
* The meeting noted a list of highway deficiencies on Combe Hay Lane, considered at the Parish Council meeting just ended. Various actions were outlined.
* Trevor Osborne thanked Councillors for their work during the past year.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9:20pm.