



Sutton Poyntz Society

**Minutes of the Sutton Poyntz Society AGM
held at the Mission Hall 7.30 p.m. Wednesday April 13th 2016
Mike Blee in the chair**

1. Opening Remarks: The Chairman welcomed the 60 or so villagers at the meeting. In particular he welcomed the various newcomers to the village who were attending, and expressed his hope that they would be very happy in Sutton Poyntz. For those that did not know, he introduced the three Officers of the Society.
2. Apologies were received from Jacqui Atkinson, Tamzin Hyde and Peter & Anne Dye.
3. Previous Minutes: The minutes of the AGM held on April 15th 2015 had been distributed at the start of the meeting, and were accepted (proposed Katrina Blee; seconded Pam Dawson-Hollis).
4. Matters Arising: None.
5. Annual report: The Annual Report had also been distributed and was approved (proposed John Crisp; seconded Rita Riley).
6. Treasurer's Report: John Sutherland gave his thanks to John Bellis who had examined the accounts.
 - a. He noted that the balance was about £350 down on the previous year, at £4453.
 - b. The reduction was due to three main items: the fee for the Representation that had been commissioned on the "Land off Plaisters Lane" planning application; a final Solicitor's fee relating to the "Top of the Pond" (as we are now calling what was previously known as the Springhead car park); and various capital projects including improvements to the Top of the Pond area. The costs for these items are lumped in the accounts into a single Miscellaneous Expense item.
 - c. To offset against some of these Miscellaneous Expense items, the Society has received various donations, including a donation from the Wilson family for the new village Noticeboard, in memory of John & Lesley Wilson, and a donation from Cllr. David Mannings' County Council Community Fund.
 - d. The accounts show that the Society made a profit on the project to replace Margaret's Seat, as a result of a number of donations including another one from the County Council Community Fund. One of the donations was from Mick Hobson, Margaret's widower, and he told us that he was very happy to let us use the excess for other village projects.
 - e. The Committee tries to maintain a Society balance of about £5000 against contingencies. Given a fairly normal year, the Treasurer and Committee believe it should be possible to restore the balance to £5000 without any need for an increase of Subscriptions.
 - f. The report, including the recommendation for no change to the subscription, was accepted by the meeting (proposed Margaret Brown; seconded Jez Cunningham).
7. Sutton Poyntz Ltd report: Bill Egerton reminded people that this Limited Company had been created in order to allow the village to purchase the Top of the Pond land. At present the Limited Company has two members (John Sutherland and Bill Egerton), who also serve as Directors of the Company. Some of the proposed changes to the Society's Constitution (item 9b below) are intended to formalise the relationship between the Society and the Limited Company. The Directors have to submit an Annual Report and annual accounts. For the accounts, John Allen had kindly given advice; as a result, the Limited Company's accounts show a single asset (the Top of the Pond land) valued at £2086 (made up of the actual purchase price of £1, plus £2085 in legal fees). This is funded by means of a loan of £2086 from the Sutton Poyntz Society, repayable if the land should ever be disposed of.

John Bellis asked whether the Articles of Association of the Limited Company allow the sort of relationship with the Society envisaged in the Society's draft Constitution. Bill replied that the Articles of Association allowed the Directors to create Rules for the administration of the Limited Company, and this would be done to mirror the new Society Constitution rules.

Liz Brierley noted that the loan to the Limited Company ought to be shown as such in the Society's accounts; it was agreed that the Committee would investigate how this should be done in time to implement in next year's accounts.

8. Neighbourhood Planning

- a. Mike Blee outlined the reasons why the Society Committee has concluded that a Neighbourhood Plan would benefit the village. He noted first that the Borough Planning Committee were under extreme pressure to approve new developments, both because the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a strong presumption in favour of development unless there are overriding policy arguments against, and because of the Borough's limited availability of development land identified in its recent Local Plan. As a result we are aware of several planning applications for development outside Development Boundaries that have been approved recently.
The Borough Council (working with West Dorset) are already working at a Local Plan revision, which must be in place in 5 years' time, and which must show an improved supply of development land. This means inevitably that Development Boundaries will be reviewed. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan for Sutton Poyntz, decisions on the Development Boundary for Sutton Poyntz will be taken by the Borough Council.
Mike explained that a Neighbourhood Plan gives us the chance to influence the review already under way. If we work quickly enough, then we can make decisions for our own community, which will then be given the same legal standing as the revised Local Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan allows a local community to define a vision for its own development, along with planning policies and green space allocations.
Mike warned that the Neighbourhood Plan must comply with National and Local policies, and that as a result we have already been warned that a "no growth" option would not be accepted by an Inspector. What a Neighbourhood Plan does allow us to do is to make decisions about the form of that growth, in order to improve the village's Sustainability, as measured by the three key elements of Economic, Environmental and Social.
Mike warned that a Working Party created to develop a Neighbourhood Plan would face very real challenges in finding solutions that satisfy village aspirations and higher level policies. But, he advised, the potential gain to the village justifies that work.
- b. There followed a debate and opportunity for questions. In answer to a question from Pam Dawson-Hollis, it was explained that we envisage a time of about 2 years to produce the Plan, which should allow it to be used in the Local Plan revision. Sue Jones stressed (and it was agreed) that the plan must focus on protecting the village's character, preventing developments that do not fit in with what already exists. On the relationship with the AONB, it was noted that the Working Party will need to show that they have given due importance to the village's heritage assets, which include the AONB and the Conservation Area. Andrew Price stressed again that the Working Party will need to generate a vision for the village, and that this will need to identify opportunities for the village's sustainability to be improved.
- c. A question was asked about what happens to the Sutton Poyntz Society while the Neighbourhood Plan is being drafted. It was explained that the Society would continue with all its present activities, including social activities and protection of the village environment; however, because the Society as a Neighbourhood Forum needs to show an even-handed approach to all the strands of Sustainability, the Society will also need to show a care for the economic well-being of the village. Sections of the proposed Constitution (see item 9c below) had been drafted to show how this would be done.
- d. Several people asked for the detailed boundary of the Neighbourhood Area to be reconsidered in the area adjacent to Puddledock Lane, including the 3 cul-de-sacs south of Chipps Cottage. It was explained that the focus in drawing up the draft Neighbourhood Area had been more on identifying the areas we wished to protect, and that the area in question, being already

developed, was not a particularly sensitive one. However, it was agreed that the focus should have been more on the occupants of those houses, who have historically regarded themselves as living in Sutton Poyntz. After debate it was agreed that the boundary should be moved to include all the houses in that area with Sutton Poyntz postcodes (i.e. five houses south of Chipps Cottage in DT3 6LZ Puddledock Lane, four houses in DT3 6RN Reynards Way, four houses in DT3 6RL Millers Close, and three houses in DT3 6SD Rimbrow Close).

- e. Some people living on or near the southern end of Sutton Road had also submitted representations in response to the Newsletter, asking for that area to be included. However none of those people were at the AGM, so final decisions on this were left to the Working Party.
 - f. Katrina Blee expressed her opinion that creating a Neighbourhood Plan was important for the village. She therefore proposed the following (seconded by Sue Stuart): “That the Society agrees to create a Neighbourhood Plan for Sutton Poyntz, and to apply to become a Neighbourhood Forum with a Neighbourhood Area amended to include those houses on and near Puddledock Lane with Sutton Poyntz postcodes”.
 - g. This motion was approved by a large majority.
9. Society Constitution: Bill Egerton then led the Meeting through the various changes that were proposed to the Society’s Constitution. He explained that these fell into three groups: changes needed to define the relationship between the Society and Sutton Poyntz Ltd; changes needed in order for the Society to qualify as a Neighbourhood Forum and therefore to create a Neighbourhood Plan; and finally a number of more minor ‘tidying’ changes that had been identified while the rest of the Constitution was being looked at. He proposed to lead the meeting through these groups of changes in reverse order, starting with the simplest.
- a. General tidying: These changes consisted of the following:
 - i. Simplify the definition of a Quorum for the Committee, and remove the minimum size of the Committee. After debate, it was agreed that the minimum size should be left as is (i.e. 7);
 - ii. New paragraph making the Committee responsible for the Society’s affairs and accounts;
 - iii. Specification of when the subscription becomes due;
 - iv. AGM to receive a single Committee Report, rather than separate reports from the Chairman and Secretary;
 - v. AGM to elect Committee, and to appoint one Auditor (wording changed from Auditor to Independent Examiner);
 - vi. Remove requirement for a week’s notice of written nominations for Committee and Officers;
 - vii. Remove the special provision for changing the Membership rule, which it was agreed was not clear;
 - viii. Add new Rule dealing with how to handle Declarations of Interest. This provision caused some debate, and it was agreed that the Rule as proposed would be adopted, but the Committee will carry out further studies in order to provide a redraft for next year’s AGM;
 - ix. Adding new Rule dealing with the Winding Up of the Society, should this ever be wished. It was agreed that if this ever happened, the assets of the Society would be donated to a suitable Charity.

With the amendments noted above, these Rule changes were agreed (proposed Dave Caddy, seconded Doug Watson)

- b. Sutton Poyntz Ltd: This group of changes was as follows:
 - i. Change wording of first Object of the Society to match the wording used for the Limited Company – this wording had been adopted so that the Company could qualify (if wished) as a Charity;
 - ii. Addition of a rule that specifically gives the Society’s Committee (retrospective) authority to create Sutton Poyntz Ltd for the purpose of holding land for the village;

- iii. Rules specifying that the Society Officers shall serve as Directors of Sutton Poyntz Ltd, and that the Society Committee members shall be members of Sutton Poyntz Ltd;
- iv. A rule making the Society Committee responsible for the management of Sutton Poyntz Ltd, and another requiring a Sutton Poyntz Ltd report to the AGM.

This group of rule changes was approved (proposed Katrina Blee, seconded Dorothy Emblen).

- c. Neighbourhood Planning: Bill explained that these changes were necessary to allow the Society to qualify as a Neighbourhood Forum, and had already been discussed carefully with Council Officers. This group of changes was as follows:
 - i. Definition, making the word “village” cover the same area as the Neighbourhood Area – a precise definition of the “village” has not been needed before;
 - ii. A new prime Object for the Society, to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the village;
 - iii. A new detailed Object, defining how the Society would undertake its new responsibility for the village’s economic well-being;
 - iv. A more detailed Object defining what the Society does socially for the village’s well-being;
 - v. A change to the Society’s affiliation objectives, to give a better balance between environmental, social and economic responsibilities. In addition, we will remove the “Affiliated to CPRE” statement from our letter-head;
 - vi. Changes to the Membership rule, to match what is required by the Localism Act (which requires us to be open to those working in or representing the village, as well as those living there);
 - vii. Provision for activities as a Neighbourhood Forum to be separately auditable (wording changed from “audited” to “examined”);
 - viii. Definition of the relationship between a Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, the Society Committee and the AGM;
 - ix. A change allowing the subscription to be set per household or per member.

This group of rule changes was approved with the one amendment noted above (proposed Shirley Davies, seconded Pam Dawson-Hollis).

10. Election of Officers, Committee and Independent Examiner:

Chairman: Mike Blee (proposed Bill Egerton; seconded Dave Caddy).

Secretary: Bill Egerton (proposed Mike Blee; seconded John Sutherland)

Treasurer: John Sutherland (proposed Bill Egerton; seconded Mike Blee)

Committee: All those elected last year with the exceptions of Tamzin Hyde were willing to continue. In addition to the Officers, the following Committee was therefore appointed: Jacqui Atkinson, Chris Balfe, Jez Cunningham, Hilary Davidson, Peter Dye, Peter Riley, Sue Wintle (proposed *en bloc* by Dorothy Emblen, seconded Maureen Morris).

Independent Accounts Examiner: John Bellis (proposed Sue Wintle, seconded Doug Watson)

11. AOB: Sue Stuart proposed a vote of thanks to the Officers and Committee.

The Chairman closed the meeting, with thanks to all those who had attended.