



MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING 10 AUGUST 2020 ONLINE MEETING

PRESENT: Cllr. Rowland Hibbard (Chairman), Cllr. David Leader (Vice Chairman), Cllr. Tim Bassett, Cllr. Cindy Bodycombe, Cllr. David Chumbley, Cllr. Steve Chubb, Cllr. Peter Hardwill, Cllr. Bob Harris, Cllr. Kevin Madder-Smith, Cllr. Dorothy Rowe, Cllr. Jacqui Sewell.

ATTENDANCE: Helen Cudmore (Clerk).

ABSENT: Councillor Lloyd Curtis

The Meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and was opened by the Chairman. There were two members of the public in attendance. Councillor Hibbard welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the third online Parish Council Meeting.

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCE

Apologies were received from PCSO Bishop and from Councillors Hughes, Laurie and Frampton and unanimously approved by the Parish Council.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS, DISPENSATIONS AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS UPDATES

a. To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors and employees on matters to be considered at the Meeting.

b. To receive requests for dispensations.

None.

c. To grant any requests for dispensation.

None.

d. To receive any updates to the Register of Interests from Councillors.

Councillor Leader informed that he is now the Chairman of the Comrades Hall Committee.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes from the online meeting held on 13 July 2020 were confirmed as a true record and unanimously approved by the Council. Councillor Hibbard duly signed the approved minutes.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a. Adoption of Broadwindsor and Drimpton Telephone Kiosks

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting, she had informed BT of the Parish Council's wish to adopt the Broadwindsor and Drimpton telephone kiosks. The Clerk stated that BT will now commence the consultation for the Broadwindsor kiosk and that it will be late October to early November before they will be able to inform the Council if it can proceed or not. With regard to the Drimpton kiosk, the Clerk stated that Dorset Council is due to feedback their final notification by 7 October and that BT will contact the Parish Council thereafter.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillor Hibbard invited members of the public to address the Council. No comments were made.

a. Report from Councillor Simon Christopher, Dorset Council

No report provided.

b. Report from Dorset Police

In the absence of PCSO Bishop, the Clerk read aloud his report. The report stated that on 29 July Dorset Police had a report of two dogs loose around livestock with no owner in sight. Although the dogs were not seen to do so, a lamb was found killed and from speaking with the owner one of the dogs was known to chase sheep. The report stated that on this occasion strong words of advice were given but should any dogs be seen to chase, attack or worry livestock, Dorset Police can issue dog behaviour contracts, or in the worst case scenario they could be shot by the owner of the livestock, although this is a last resort. The report asked the community to check fields fully before letting dogs run loose and if there are livestock or other animals in the field, keep them on a lead. The report also noted that at around 10.00 pm on 3 August, a victim returns to a caravan he is staying in, in the Stoke Abbott area, to find it insecure. The victim notices a chainsaw and bill hook are missing. A van is seen parked near the property and two males were seen by the victim to return to the van. The males stated that they were hare coursing but quickly left. The vehicle was stopped in the Poole area with one occupant, who was arrested and the investigation is on-going. Councillor Sewell stated that she had spoken with PCSO Bishop who had informed her that he had hoped to have started the surgeries again at Comrades Hall but he is still not allowed to carry out face to face meetings. PCSO Bishop stated that as soon as this changes, he will be back in Broadwindsor.

6. PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

a. Brief Community Updates from Councillors

Councillor Rowe stated that before she had left for her vacation, she had contacted those members of the community whom she had been supporting and made sure as much as possible that they were all okay and that she had managed to secure some additional support for a vulnerable elderly lady. Councillor Chubb reported that after carrying out a risk assessment, the Committee are looking to reopen Drimpton Village Hall in the next couple of

months, possibly with a low-key event. Councillor Chubb stated that Government guidance seems to be ever-changing and that the Committee were looking at wearing masks at events and possibly fogging. Councillor Hibbard stated that Government advice may be more clear as time moves on. Councillor Sewell stated that Comrades Hall had an advantage as it has more entrances and exits which allows for people to be separated and stated that the Servery, Main Hall and Lewesdon Room, which has a separate entrance can all be accessed independently.

Councillor Sewell stated that the Committee had purchased hand sanitizers from the Community Shop and that they must be provided at each entrance and exit. Councillor Sewell stated that they can be used as soap dispensers at a later date and stated that the goal posts seem to be changing all of the time. Councillor Hibbard stated that he believed that the wearing of face masks and the use of hand sanitizers will be required for some considerable time yet.

7. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES

a. Letter from Dorset Race Equality Council

The Clerk reported that this letter had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillor Hibbard stated that he very much believed that the Parish Council treats everyone with great respect and helps anyone in need and does not feel that the Parish Council needs to alter how it functions. Councillor Chumbley stated that at first glance, he thought that the letter had come from Dorset Council given the wording used, and stated that he concurred with Councillor Hibbard. Councillor Hibbard stated that with the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council and community had shown their true spirit and that he did not think that it could be improved. Councillor Sewell stated that Comrades Hall Committee had its own safeguarding policy and along with the Parish Council, it operates openly, honestly and with transparency and treats everyone with respect. Councillor Hibbard stated that he did not believe that the Parish Council needs to reply to this communication, there were no further comments.

b. Note of thanks from Broadwindsor Community Shop

The Clerk reported that a note of thanks had been received from Mr. Andrew Hookings on behalf of the Community Shop for the two grants received. This was noted.

c. Dorset Council, Draft Climate Emergency Strategy Published

The Clerk reported that she had circulated this communication prior to the meeting. Councillor Sewell stated that she could not determine the references used within the report as it was not possible to check the data. Councillor Hibbard stated that the visit from Low Carbon Dorset had been very useful and that Blackdown Village Hall would certainly look at the possibility of installing solar panels and LED lights in the Hall.

8. ACCOUNTS

a. To receive the Finance Report

The Clerk referred Members of the Council to a spreadsheet highlighting income and expenditure for the first and second quarters of 2020/2021, which had previously been circulated. The current balance as of the 31 July 2020 was £30,573.20. There were no questions. Councillor Bassett proposed that Agenda Items c to f be approved en bloc. This was agreed.

b. To Note the Notice of Public Rights

The Clerk stated that this had been circulated to Councillors and posted on noticeboards. The Clerk asked if keyholders could amend the end date for the period to Monday 7 September as she had not factored in a bank holiday at the end of August and therefore the period allowed was twenty-nine days and not the required thirty. This was agreed.

c. To approve payment of £24.00 for Comrades Hall (Room Hire)

d. To approve payment of £68.12 for Focus (HS) Limited (Internal Audit)

e. To approve payment of £1.80 for HMRC (NI)

f. To approve payment of £13.07 for Councillor Leader (Reimbursement for Hand Sanitizer for MUGA)

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Sewell, seconded by Councillor Rowe and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved Agenda Items c to f.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. Applications Received and Circulated for Consultation

WD/D/20/001414, Hursey Farm, Main Street, Hursey, DT8 3LN

WD/D/20/001415, Hursey Farm, Main Street, Hursey, DT8 3LN

Councillor Chumbley reported that he had made contact with the neighbouring property and that they had not expressed any concerns about the planning applications. Councillor Chumbley also stated that he had visited the applicant and was reassured that correct procedures would be followed. Councillor Chumbley stated that all the works will be carried out behind the house and that there would be no negative visual impact. Councillor Chumbley stated that he could not see any reason to raise any objections to the applications.

WD/D/20/001499, Cambridge House, The Square, Broadwindsor, DT8

Councillor Leader stated that he was the nominated lead for this consultation and reported that this was a perfectly reasonable application which was seeking the removal of a chimney which was causing damp problems between the applicant and neighbour's properties. Councillor Leader stated that this would not cause any visual difference as the chimney was located at the rear of the house and that he could not see any reason to raise any objections.

WD/D/20/001582, Notification of intention to remove 23 public payphones

The Clerk reported that this application was discussed at the previous meeting under 'Other Applications' but had not been listed on the Agenda. The Clerk restated that she had logged interest in adopting the Drimpton Kiosk with BT and had included this intent in its corporate view as submitted to Dorset Council.

WD/D/20/000052, Blackbird Cottage, The Square, Broadwindsor, DT8 3QD

WD/D/20/000053, Blackbird Cottage, The Square, Broadwindsor, DT8 3QD

Councillor Madder-Smith stated that he would be the lead for these consultations and would report back at the next meeting.

b. Other Applications

None.

c. Results

The Clerk reported the following results:

WD/D/20/000954, Castlewood Farm, Marshwood, DT6 5QQ: Approved

WD/D/20/000943, 4 Netherhay Lane, Drimpton, Beaminster, DT8 3RL: Approved

10. ALLOTMENTS

a. Japanese Knotweed Update

The Clerk stated that Dorset Council had now sprayed the infected area and that the Broadwindsor Allotment Group (BAG) would be reviewing the area for any further outbreak.

b. First Aid Box

Councillor Hibbard thanked Sheila Hawkins for her reply and stated that this was satisfactory. Councillor Chumbley stated that BAG need to log their inspections to evidence that checks on items are taking place.

The Clerk stated that Sheila Hawkins had contacted her to report that she had received an enquiry about Allotment availability and the only remaining half plot now available is Plot 20 Bottom. The communication stated that in early 2019 the Parish Council had agreed to a request by Beaminster Eco Group that they could have, at no cost, part of Plot 20 as a tree nursery and they visited the site around March/April 2019. Sheila Hawkins had stated that she had emailed the Eco Group at the beginning of 2020 to ask if they were still interested in the Plot, and they said yes at that time, but nothing further appears to have progressed on site since then. The Clerk stated that she was asked to seek permission from the Parish Council to offer the Plot to the person making the enquiry. Councillor Hibbard stated that he could not see a reason for not offering the Plot and asked the Clerk to contact the Eco Group once more.

11. HIGHWAYS

a. Report from the Footpaths Officer

Councillor Rowe stated that she had nothing to report at this time and stated that she had spoken with Russell Goff and was still hoping to have some dialogue with Councillor Christopher.

b. Verge Management in the Grouped Parish Area

Councillor Rowe stated that Councillor Leader had been looking after the wildflower verges and that she believed that they were still looking good. Councillor Sewell reported that she was surprised to be contacted by a high-ranking Botanist Dr. Tony Farmer, who had been contacted by Councillor Christopher and asked to examine the verges to ensure that no invasive species had been planted. Councillor Sewell stated that at the April 2019 Parish Council Meeting Councillor Rowe had provided an excellent presentation and provided information about the planting, which had all been recorded in the minutes and approved at the May meeting and stated that Councillor Christopher would have been aware of the planting by reading these minutes. Councillor Sewell stated that the plants are not invasive, and that this was part of a national initiative by the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew and suggested that the Clerk send a list of the species planted to Councillor Christopher. Councillor Rowe stated that she was bemused by this matter and would like to see details of the review that had taken place, Councillor Rowe asked whether the plants had been tested and what is the next step. Councillor Sewell reported that Dr. Farmer stated that he had just been asked for his opinion and stated that his opinion was that there are no invasive species and that they are correct for their setting. Councillor Leader stated that the wildflowers were still looking good and that there had been lots of positive comments.

c. Installation of Kissing Gates

Councillor Leader reported that with regard to the footpath situation on Lewesdon Hill, he had as requested put up signs, and had received help with the wording from Councillor Frampton. Councillor Leader stated that he had spoken with Councillor Christopher, Councillor Frampton and others about the footpaths and asked that this be a standing item of future agendas and it is a matter which needs to be resolved. Councillor Leader stated that he had been informed by Councillor Christopher that he is working flat out to resolve the matter by creating footpath entrances alongside the five-bar gates, which will mean that walkers will not have to use the five-bar gate and the new gates will be self-closing so should always remain closed. Councillor Leader stated that this was quite an undertaking as there are five gates to the top of Lewesdon Hill but stated that on a fine day, the path can take a couple of hundred walkers and that it was imperative to protect local farmers. Councillor Rowe stated that she very much agreed with Councillor Leader and stated that she was of the opinion that Dorset Council is not keen to install additional self-closing gates and stated that it will be important to keep the pressure on and have this matter as a standing agenda item.

Councillor Hardwill asked what had happened to his proposal at the last meeting asking that an external contractor be commissioned to install a number of gates and stated that if intense pressure is put on Dorset Council, it would most likely mean a further wait for any action to be taken. Councillor Chubb reported that a kissing gate had now been installed between Netherhay and Oathill, which had taken nine months to complete. Councillor Chubb stated that he had been asked to look at a sign which had been erected stating that a footpath had been closed due to Coronavirus and will contact Dorset Council to see if approval has been granted to shut the path. Councillor Chubb stated that self-closing gates through Dorset Council was the best way forward as Dorset Council will fund half of the cost and stated that it will take time and it will be important to keep the pressure on the Council. Councillor Sewell stated that Councillor Knox was in attendance at the meeting and as the previous County Councillor, suggested that she may be able to add weight to this matter. Councillor Rowe stated that she now has a good dialogue with Russell Goff and believes that she can now get things done with his support. Councillor Leader stated that he has spoken with Councillor Christopher and stressed the importance of the matter and that he had been told by Councillor Christopher that it is achievable in a short time scale. Councillor Leader suggested that after the meeting, the Clerk write on behalf of the Parish Council or Chairman to Councillor Christopher to reiterate the importance of getting this done and stated that he could see no reason why it cannot be completed, commenting that the weather is good at the moment and it would be much more difficult to complete later in the year.

The Clerk read out an update on behalf of Councillor Frampton, stating that his brother had met with Councillor Christopher and Russell Goff, they walked the footpath to Lewesdon Hill from the Toll House and Mr. Frampton had highlighted the problems that they have had with gates being left open. A possible footpath diversion was discussed at a cost of £2500 (diverting the footpath along the hedge in a straight line following the course of the river against the land that borders Fullers and Trusthams heading straight to Lewesdon picking up the two other footpaths that spur off from Lewesdon View and Fir Farm). Councillor Frampton's update also stated that his brother has offered to dig out the places for new kissing gates to be installed and then if people start to use them instead of the existing field gates an official footpath moving may not need to occur. The update also stated that only three kissing gates need to be installed at a cost of £170 each and two can be put in easily alongside existing field gates and one in an already carved out gap in the hedge. Councillor Frampton stated in his update that both Mr. Goff and Councillor Christopher had been very helpful and keen to help in any way they could to progress the issue. Councillor Hibbard asked Members of the Council if they were happy to let Councillor Christopher continue with progressing the matter with pressure from the Parish Council to get the gates installed. Councillor Harris stated that he agreed with this proposal. Councillor Hardwill stated that his opinion had not changed from the start of the meeting and that he should be informed once the job has been completed.

12. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

a. Report from the Broadwindsor Group Parish Community Land Trust

Councillor Leader reported that after fourteen months, Dorset Council has recommended approval of the planning application and has completed a detailed report which he believes is both fair and balanced and comes to the right conclusion. Councillor Leader stated that this recommendation must now be ratified at the Planning Committee on 13 August so approval is not yet a given. Councillor Leader stated that the Community Land Trust has done everything that it could. Councillor Hibbard wished Councillor Leader the best of luck with the planning application. Councillor Hardwill asked that the result of the meeting be circulated by the Clerk, the Clerk agreed.

13. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION

a. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Council

Councillor Sewell stated that the Government has published a new paper, 'Travel Safe this Summer on Public Transport' and announced extra funding for buses and trams in England as part of wider efforts to safely get people back to education and work. Councillor Sewell stated that it may be too late for the September Agenda, but she was hoping that the Parish Council could write to Chris Loder MP and Councillor Christopher to express their support for this initiative and also stated that additional funding had been promised for rural transport and if a bus could be secured for the area, then people could 'eat out to help out' and use public transport across West Dorset. Councillor Sewell stated that this should be supported. Councillor Leader asked that an update about Comrades Hall be included for the September meeting. Councillor Sewell asked if there should also be an update from Drimpton and Blackdown Village Halls, Councillor Hibbard suggested that an update from all village halls could be provided.

b. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Public

None.

14. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public were invited to address the Council by Councillor Hibbard. Councillor Knox as a member of the public asked for feedback from the Parish Council regarding Zoom meetings. Councillor Sewell stated that she has found online meetings to be very informative, and having overcome initial teething problems such as people talking over each other, the protocols in place are now working well. Councillor Sewell stated that she was disappointed that some Parish Councils such as Chideock and Char Valley could not operate online meetings due to poor broadband. Councillor Knox stated that Dorset Council is seeking feedback on how these meetings are working and stated that she personally believes that there is far more engagement and that there is a way forward using both physical and online meetings, so members of the public are not excluded. Councillor Hibbard stated that he does like online meetings but is aware that not everyone has the technology to be able to fully participate and that physical meetings will still need to continue. Councillor Sewell stated that online meetings allow members of the community to take part from their own homes. A member of

the public stated that she very much supported the use of online meetings, and had found the opportunity to take part from home very useful. Councillor Hibbard thanked members of the public for their comments. Councillor Sewell stated that online meetings were helpful for the Clerk when producing the minutes as meetings are recorded. Councillor Bodycombe stated that she very much supports Zoom meetings and that the environmental issues of reducing cars journeys and not attending unnecessary in person meetings should not be underestimated. Councillor Rowe stated that she was thrilled that the use of online meetings had allowed her to take part from France. Councillor Chubb stated that Dorset Community Action had held a series of webinars which he had attended and that he had found them very helpful and informative. Councillor Chubb stated that they had been well attended and he welcomed the fact that he had not had to travel to Dorchester to take part.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk confirmed that the date of the next online Parish Council meeting would be Monday 14 September. Councillor Rowe stated that she will be away on holiday but will try and attend the meeting. Councillor Sewell asked if she should book Comrades Hall for later in the year to host meetings, the Clerk stated that the current advice from NALC is that if online meetings can be held then they should be but stated that perhaps dates for later in the year could be pencilled in and confirmed at a later date.

16. CLOSE

The Council Meeting was formally closed at 8.16 pm. Councillor Hibbard thanked everyone for attending.