



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
10 NOVEMBER 2025
BLACKDOWN VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. Rick Dyke (Chairman), Cllr. Chris Beck, Cllr. Tim Beer, Cllr. Rebecca Burt, Cllr. Andrew Frampton, Cllr. Bob Harris, Cllr. Garry Miller, Cllr. Sonia Raymond, Cllr. Nathalie Roberts, Cllr. Kevin Webb, Cllr. Yvonne White.

ATTENDANCE: Councillor Simon Christopher (Dorset Council), Helen Cudmore (Clerk).

The Meeting commenced at 7.30 pm, there was one member of the public present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Councillor Stephen Curtis and Councillor Sewell, and from PCSO Bishop 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.

Councillor Dyke expressed an interest in Agenda Item 6a.

b. To receive requests for dispensations.

None received.

c. To grant any requests for dispensation.

None.

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

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 October 2025 were confirmed as a true record, unanimously approved by the Council and duly signed by Councillor Dyke.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Beer, seconded by Councillor Miller and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved the minutes from the meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 October 2025.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No comments.

a. Report from Councillor Simon Christopher, Dorset Council

Councillor Christopher reported that he had recently discussed housing associations with Councillor Dyke and encouraged Councillors to research local examples, particularly Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA), which is active in Dorset and currently involved in building new homes in Sturminster Newton and Weymouth. Councillor Christopher referred to the forthcoming removal of Section 21 “no fault” evictions, noting that many private landlords are now selling properties, leading to increased demand for affordable housing. He advised that a range of housing associations operate locally, including Aster, Magna, Hastoe, and BCHA, and that these organisations could be approached when considering future affordable housing opportunities within the Grouped Parish. Councillor Christopher went on to report on agricultural matters, noting that the Law Commission is reviewing both the Agricultural Holdings Act and Farm Business Tenancies. The review reflects concerns that the current system does not encourage tenant investment and may favour landlords. Councillor Christopher mentioned the Dorset County Farms Estate, which manages around three dozen farms, and advised that the current administration is considering redeveloping one farm on the edge of Weymouth as a solar farm, a proposal that has divided opinion locally. On highways matters, Councillor Christopher advised that Tony Burden, Dorset Council’s Road Safety Manager, has offered to visit and assess local roads. Councillor Christopher expressed concern following recent fatalities on the A35 and A37, emphasising the importance of continued work to improve road safety across Dorset.

Thanks were expressed by Councillor Frampton to Councillor Christopher for his sponsorship of the Broadwindsor Cricket Club fireworks event, which raised £1,000 for the club and village and attracted over 700 attendees. A query was raised about the poor condition of the road between Kittwhistle Garage and the school. Councillor Christopher confirmed that the matter would be discussed at the upcoming Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council meeting and encouraged Councillors to email him so he could raise the issue further with Dorset Council. Councillor Beer reported that a milestone in the hedgerow along the main A35 near the site of the proposed Vearse Farm Roundabout has recently been uncovered and is now fully exposed. Councillor Beer stated that as the planned roundabout would be constructed directly over its location, the milestone needs to be removed and protected. Councillor Christopher asked for details to be emailed to him so that he could follow this up. Councillor Webb asked whether Dorset Council has ever considered installing solar panels in car parks,

as seen elsewhere. Councillor Christopher welcomed the idea and asked for it to be sent to him by email for wider consideration.

With regard to the footpath to Broadwindsor Cricket Club, Councillor Dyke expressed his disappointment with the response from the Community Highways Officer which referenced an outdated decision and not the support expressed by Jan Britton, who had been very positive. Councillor Dyke stated that he suspected that the project has the potential to be treated as a capital scheme eligible for government grant funding and wished to challenge the response. Councillor Dyke asked Councillor Christopher for any update on the C.G Fry & Son case at the Supreme Court, Councillor Christopher was unsure and advised looking online.

Councillor Christopher stated that there has been much conversation within Dorset Council about sites being removed from the draft Local Plan. Councillor Dyke reported that at the DAPTC conference, he questioned those responsible for the Local Plan. While they were not speaking formally, they were present to answer questions. Their response clarified that a recent item in the Bridport News, suggesting that several sites would be removed from the plan, was premature. They emphasised that the Local Plan must follow due process, and that the suitability of land can change over time, land considered inappropriate at one point may be deemed acceptable at a later date.

Councillor Christopher stated that the move towards an agreed Local Plan is a marathon, not a sprint. In the absence of a five-year land supply or an up-to-date Local Plan, Officers are expected to co-operate, as there is a presumption in the National Planning Policy Framework in favour of sustainable development. Where mitigation is possible, it should be addressed through comments by Council Officers. Councillor Christopher emphasised the importance of the concepts of mitigation and conditioning. Using examples, he explained that mitigation might involve reducing a proposed development, for instance, asking a developer seeking permission for 1,000 houses to reduce it to 500. Conditioning could require developers to fund measures such as traffic calming as part of a planning permission.

b. Report from Dorset Police

The Clerk read aloud the report from PCSO Bishop, which provided an update on recent local incidents and general safety matters:

Drone activity: Earlier this month, Broadwindsor School reported a drone being flown nearby, which landed in a nearby garden. There are currently no concerns that this was suspicious. Drones are commonly used by hobbyists or commercially, such as photographers or estate agents. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Drone Code offers guidance for drone users.

Theft and security incidents: Between 1 and 3 October, a container in the Seaborough area was broken into and a go-kart stolen. In Halstock and Melbury Osmond, heating oil was stolen last month. A pick-up vehicle was stolen in Halstock last week; the suspect, from South Wales, was arrested in Somerset while driving the stolen vehicle and towing a stolen tractor. Both

items have been recovered and returned to their owners. A van stolen in Beaminster last week was recovered in Crewkerne and returned to the owner.

In his report, PCSO Bishop encouraged residents to remain vigilant and review home and property security. He also offered advice and home visits for anyone requiring assistance. He will be available at the Post Office Coffee Morning on 24 November at 11.30 am.

6. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES

a. White Lion Community Pub Broadwindsor, Green Space Project

It was reported that The White Lion Community Pub has decided to approach other organisations for funding rather than applying to the Parish Council for a grant. They are in discussion with the charity Pub is the Hub, which may provide a grant to install benches on Bernards' Place for community use. The proposal includes three benches at the bottom of the green, for general community and pub use and one additional bench at the top of the green, primarily for parents supervising children on the play equipment. The pub has requested a letter of support from the Parish Council, confirming that the project would benefit the wider community. A letter of support has already been received from Comrades Hall. Councillors discussed potential safety concerns regarding people carrying food or drinks from the pub across the road. It was confirmed that the risk is covered under the pub's liability insurance, the route requires minimal road crossing, with good visibility, and any crossing is at the individual's own risk and no additional warning signs were deemed necessary as the 20 mph zone already provides traffic calming. Councillors unanimously supported providing a letter of support for the project.

7. ACCOUNTS

a. To receive the Finance Report

Councillor Dyke referred Members of the Council to a report highlighting income and expenditure which had previously been circulated. The current balance as of the 31 October 2025 was £44,152.77. There were no questions.

b. To receive and approve the Internal Audit Report

Councillor Dyke thanked the Clerk for circulating the Internal Audit Report and congratulated her on her efforts.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Beer, seconded by Councillor Beck and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously noted and approved the Finance Report and Internal Audit Report.

c. Budget and Precept Request 2026/2027

Councillor Dyke confirmed that the annual budget and expenditure to date had been circulated and noted that projecting figures forward at this stage is difficult, and it remains uncertain whether the Council will exceed or fall short by the end of the financial year. The Clerk advised that the projected revenue for the year is approximately £39,000, comprising the Precept, FMR Trust MUGA grant repayment, FMR Trust administration, loan repayments

from the Community Shop, Allotment income, and VAT reclaim. The Clerk reported that last year's Precept request was £34,292.26, representing a 5% increase from the year before, which equated to approximately £46.28 for a Band D household. The new tax base will be released in early December, after which the impact of any potential increase can be calculated. Councillors discussed the financial position, noting that while the Council had sought to minimise any additional financial burden on parishioners last year, the Council continues to operate at a deficit of around £5,000. If grant levels are to be maintained, the Council will need to consider either reducing expenditure, increasing the Precept, or a combination of both. It was acknowledged that the Parish Council charge represents a small proportion of the overall council tax bill. Councillors agreed that a detailed discussion would take place at the January meeting, once updated figures and the tax base are available. In preparation, Councillors were asked to give thought to possible budget adjustments or Precept increases.

Councillor Harris noted that Dorset Council is expected to increase its Precept by up to 5%. Councillor Dyke stated that this historically been the upper limit for the Parish Council's own increase, however, the Parish Council is not restricted by this limit and could, if justified, increase by a higher percentage, for example, to help fund the Neighbourhood Plan review, now that central funding is no longer available. It was agreed that the Clerk would work on projecting costs to the year end, including identifying fixed and non-fixed expenditure and that this would be discussed further.

d. To approve payment of £160.16 for HMRC (NI)

e. To approve payment of £55.00 for Comrades Hall (Hall Hire)

f. To approve payment of £90.89 for the Clerk (Expenses October - November)

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Roberts, seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved payments d to f enbloc.

8. RECRUITMENT OF CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

a. To confirm agreed leaving date

The Clerk confirmed that her final working day would be Friday 14 November.

b. To approve the final salary payment to include accrued holiday pay

The Clerk advised that she had 22.5 hours of annual leave remaining and requested that these hours be paid rather than taken. Councillors agreed that payment for untaken leave was the most practical option, as otherwise necessary work would not be completed.

c. Update on recruitment process

The Clerk provided an update on the recruitment process. The closing date for applications is Friday 14 November. The advertisement has been circulated through a range of platforms including DAPTC, social media, LinkedIn and the Parish Council website. A recruitment working group has been formed, consisting of Councillors Dyke, Roberts, White, Beer, Beck, Dixon and the Clerk. The group has met to review the job description, advertisement,

interview questions, and contract revisions, and will meet again after this meeting to agree next steps in the shortlisting and interview process. Interviews are scheduled to take place at Comrades Hall on 19 and 20 November.

d. Transitional arrangements

The Clerk confirmed that although her formal employment ends on 14 November, she is willing to provide limited ongoing support to ensure the Council remains compliant and functional until a new Clerk is in post. This would be on a paid basis, at her existing hourly rate, subject to Council approval. It was noted that as Councillor Dyke will be away for part of November and December, it will be important to nominate another Councillor to act as point of contact during this period. Councillor Beck agreed to be this point of contact. Councillor Dyke proposed, and Councillors agreed, that the Council may engage the outgoing Clerk for limited paid support where required until the new Clerk takes up the role.

Councillors agreed that the full Council should have the opportunity to review applications and provide feedback, even if not serving on the working group. The working group will take these views into account during shortlisting and decision-making. Councillors also discussed the hours and salary for the new post, noting that final arrangements will depend on the duties and responsibilities required.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. Applications Received and Circulated for Consultation

P/VOL/2025/06099, Whetley Farm, Main Road, Mosterton, DT8 3HE

Councillor Beer reported that he had previously visited Whetley Farm earlier in the year. Having reviewed the submitted plans and drawings, he confirmed that there was no significant change proposed and no reason to warrant a further site visit. The application was considered to be a procedural matter only, and no objection was raised.

b. Other Applications

The following applications were reported for information purposes only.

P/PABA/2025/06184, Moorlands Farm, Drimpton Road, Broadwindsor, DT8 3RS

P/TRC/2025/06454, Domwellare House, Common Water Lane, Broadwindsor, DT8 3QR

The Clerk reported a new application, received after the publication of the agenda.

P/HOU/2025/05128, 11 Greenham Yard, Greenham, TA18 8QE

Councillor Beer reported that the original application had been refused by planning officers and that he had previously visited the site and observed that the proposal would tidy up a scruffy area. Councillor Beer stated that he had reviewed the new application and had no major concerns with the revised proposal. Councillor Beer stated that he noted the presence of a small but established hedgerow, which could provide habitat for species such as dormice, and highlighted that this had not been mentioned in the planning application. The Clerk was asked to include this within the comments to Dorset Council.

c. Results

The following results were reported:

P/FUL/2025/04285, Cuckoo Farm, Cuckoo Lane, Winsham, TA20 4NX: Granted

P/CLE/2025/04793, Old Drimpton Farm, Chard Road, Drimpton DT8 3RF: Granted

P/FUL/2025/03479, Childhay Manor, Wood Lane, Childhay, DT8 3LQ: Granted

P/VOL/2025/02762, Seaborough Court, Seaborough Court Access, Seaborough, DT8 3QY: Granted

P/VOC/2025/02750, Seaborough Court, Seaborough Court Access, Seaborough, DT8 3QY: Granted

10. REPORT FROM A FRESH START: DEVOLVING DORSET EVENT

Councillor Dyke provided a report on the recent DAPTC Conference, which focused on devolution and “double devolution” and explained that he had initially assumed devolution from Dorset Council to parish councils would depend on devolution from central government to Dorset Council. However, Dorset Council appears keen to devolve certain responsibilities directly to parish councils regardless of that process. Councillor Dyke noted that the scale and capacity of each parish council would determine what could realistically be devolved. For smaller parish councils, there is limited scope, as most services are beyond what they can manage. The process will therefore have the greatest impact on larger parishes and town councils. While some mid-level responsibilities, such as bus shelters, might be taken on by larger parishes, Councillor Dyke concluded that for a parish of Broadwindsor’s size, no significant changes are anticipated in the foreseeable future.

11. BROADWINDSOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

Councillor Dyke reported there was no significant update to report. Water quality testing remains the main focus, with a gathering planned for next week involving those who have now been trained in testing, known as dipping. Testing is expected to commence soon, and members agreed it will be valuable to have baseline results before any new housing developments begin, to allow future comparison.

12. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

No update.

13. MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA) UPDATE

No update.

14. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE GROUPED PARISH AREA

No update.

15. HIGHWAYS

a. Report on meeting with Community Highways Officer, Dorset Council

The Clerk stated that she had circulated the report from the Community Highways Officer (CHO) following a meeting held approximately a month ago. Councillors expressed

disappointment with the response regarding the proposed path to the Cricket Club, noting that it was less positive than expected and that no formal update had yet been received from Jan Britton. The Clerk confirmed that some items had been actioned, while others remained outstanding. Members agreed to review the list and prepare a response to the CHO highlighting areas where further action is needed. Councillor Harris noted that the HGV signage at Drimpton Cross was not in the report and Councillor Beer also reported that there had been no response to an earlier email sent to the CHO requesting chevrons at Race Down. The Council welcomed the CHO's commitment to meet regularly going forward.

b. Review of temporary closure of B3164, Broadwindsor

Councillor Dyke reported that he had written to Dorset Council providing feedback on the recent road closures and suggesting improvements for future works. During the second, shorter closure, some of these suggestions had been adopted, including clearer advance signage in local villages and from Beaminster, which represented positive progress. Councillor Dyke noted that a warden had been appointed to oversee the works and ensure that traffic management rules were followed. However, there was initial confusion when the warden focused on preventing access to Back Lane, rather than monitoring compliance with the temporary one-way system. This led to disruption on the first day, but the situation was corrected thereafter. Councillor Dyke observed that such issues were likely unique to the centre of Broadwindsor, but that it was valuable to have opened a dialogue with Dorset Council, who have agreed to provide further feedback on the points raised. Councillor Dyke also expressed disappointment with the lack of Police involvement, noting that the matter had been referred to the PCSO, but he did not consider monitoring one-way compliance part of the Police's remit. Councillor Dyke stated that he intends to pursue this further.

Councillor Frampton raised a query regarding the recently rebuilt wall associated with the first road closure, asking whether the wall was listed, as a plaque had been inserted into it which appeared out of keeping with its original appearance. Councillor Dyke agreed that the matter should be checked, noting that if the wall was listed, the plaque should not have been added.

c. Request for Hursey Common Occupier Agreement, Wessex Internet

An updated plan from Wessex Internet had been circulated and a provisional request for an additional section of work which may not ultimately be required was included to allow the Parish Council to comment in advance, noting that the Council would not be meeting again until January. It was reported that running the cable along the roadside had been discounted due to the potential to damage the highway, and that poles along the field edge remained the preferred option. Councillors discussed concerns regarding the potential impact on the common land, particularly the risk of soil compaction and disturbance from heavy machinery. It was confirmed that Wessex Internet had advised that no works would take place until spring, to avoid disruption during wet weather. Councillor White noted that similar work carried out in summer months elsewhere had caused minimal disturbance, and Councillors agreed that provided conditions are suitable, there should be no lasting damage. The Council

noted the importance of being aware of future plans for the field, such as possible orchard planting, but agreed that with accurate records of cable location, this could be managed. It was agreed to proceed with the proposal, and that two Councillor signatures would be required on the Occupier Agreement. Councillor Dyke volunteered to be one signatory, and Councillor Webb agreed to act as the second signatory.

d. Consideration of 20 mph zone for Drimpton

Councillor Harris referred to an email previously circulated to Drimpton Councillors and the Chairman suggesting that a public meeting be held which would allow for a more robust way of gathering public opinion on the proposed 20 mph limit. It was proposed that attendees could record their views on lists at the back of the hall, giving their name and address so that responses from Drimpton residents could be distinguished from those living elsewhere. It was also suggested that some door-to-door canvassing might be carried out by Drimpton Councillors on a sample basis to obtain a representative spread of opinion. In addition, residents could be invited to submit written comments directly to the Clerk. Councillors agreed that this combination of methods would help demonstrate that the Parish Council had made a genuine effort to gather balanced and representative feedback to present to Dorset Council. It was noted that timing before Christmas would be difficult, and it was therefore agreed that a public meeting should be held in February. Councillor Dyke agreed to chair the meeting.

e. Annual review of sandbag stores and salt bins

The Clerk reported that she had contacted both flood wardens, Rob Hedditch for Drimpton and Councillor Stuart Curtis for Broadwindsor. Councillor Curtis confirmed that he does not require any additional sandbags, as his current stock is sufficient and in good condition. Rob Hedditch has reviewed the sandbag provision in Drimpton and has requested an additional 40, which are expected to be delivered shortly. It was noted that grit bins are being refilled from late October. Councillors were asked to report any bins that appear unfilled or damaged by emailing their location to the Clerk. Councillors who checked the grit bins last winter were asked to repeat their inspections. The Clerk will re-circulate the map showing the location of all grit bins across the Grouped Parish.

16. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION

a. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Council

Councillor Dyke expressed his disappointment that the Sunday Remembrance event at the war memorial did not go ahead and that given the size of the Parish Council, no-one was able to, in his absence, lead the service. Although the Parish Council did not promote any event at the war memorial, messages had already circulated suggesting a combined event involving the Church and the Royal British Legion. Councillor Dyke noted that the confusion was not due to any action by the Parish Council, but regretted that the situation did not reflect well publicly.

Councillor Dyke expressed appreciation and gratitude for the Clerk, acknowledging over ten and a half years of dedicated service. Councillor Dyke highlighted the Clerk's role in transforming the Council's record-keeping and effectiveness, noting that the Council could not have achieved its current progress without such committed support. Councillor Dyke acknowledged that it was unfortunate to see the Clerk leave, but understood that this move offered the opportunity to take on a full-time role. Councillor Dyke concluded by conveying the Council's sincere thanks and best wishes for the Clerk's future endeavours.

b. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Public

None.

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No comments.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be at 7.45 pm on Monday 12 January 2026 at Comrades Hall.

19. CLOSE

The meeting of the Parish Council was formally closed at 8.44 pm, Councillor Dyke thanked everyone for attending and for their participation.