



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
13 NOVEMBER 2023
BLACKDOWN VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. Rowland Hibbard (Chairman), Cllr. Tim Bassett, Cllr. Rebecca Burt, Cllr. Steve Chubb, Cllr. Stephen Curtis, Cllr. Stuart Curtis, Cllr. Rick Dyke, Cllr. Andrew Frampton, Cllr. Bob Harris, Cllr. Fraser Hughes, Cllr. Sonia Raymond, Cllr. Nathalie Roberts, Cllr. Yvonne White.

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

The Meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and was opened by Councillor Hibbard. There were no members of the public present. Councillor Hibbard welcomed Councillors to the meeting. A minute's silence was observed to remember those who had lost their lives in war.

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCE

Apologies were received from PCSO Bishop and from Councillor Sewell 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.

None.

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.

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 9 October were confirmed as a true record, unanimously approved by the Council and duly signed by Councillor Hibbard.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Frampton reported that the Fireworks event had been well attended by an estimated four hundred people and had raised £1400 for the Cricket Club and Comrades Hall. Councillor Frampton stated that the PTA had a stand at the event and raised over £200 towards their play equipment project. Councillor Frampton thanked all those who had helped organise and support the event. Councillor Hibbard thanked Councillor Frampton and all those who had helped with the event. Councillor Hughes reported that the revised Post Office Outreach Service will begin at Comrades Hall on Monday 20 November between 1.15 pm and 1.45 pm and on Thursdays between 9.15 am and 10.45 am.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

a. Report from Councillor Simon Christopher, Dorset Council

Councillor Christopher stated that he had forwarded a report and asked for any questions. Councillor Hibbard asked that condolences on behalf of the Parish Council be sent to the family of Councillor Tony Ferrari who had sadly passed away. Councillor Christopher stated that he was pleased to hear of the success of the Fireworks event and the involvement of the school. Councillor Frampton stated that there had obviously been some progression on the speed reduction matter and asked what the next stage is and whether money had been allocated. Councillor Christopher stated that the Parish Council should respond to Jon Lake's recommendation and copy him into the communication and then this can get moving at pace. Councillor Christopher stated that after that the Parish Council needs to argue the case for all of the other entrances to the village and that he will work with Chris Loder MP to support this. Councillor Chubb asked whether there was any update on the footpath, Councillor Christopher advised that a letter should be sent to Councillor Ray Bryan who had been out to see the road and stress again the safety aspect of why the footpath is needed. Councillor Christopher stated that he was unable to provide a timetable, as the most pressing issue for Highways currently is flooding and then there will be gritting so delays are expected. Councillor Christopher stated that the Leader of Dorset Council had stated that although Dorset Council is like many councils, financially challenged, there will be no cuts to services. Councillor Chubb stated that the Parish Council has already written such a letter in the past and asked if there was someone in a more senior position who could be contacted. Councillor Christopher stated that if the letter was copied to Chris Loder MP, then it clearly becomes an election issue. Councillor Chubb stated that he had reported a flooded road in Drimpton twenty days ago and no action had been taken by Dorset Council. Councillor Chubb also stated that there are so many potholes which haven't been attended to despite being reported. Councillor Christopher stated that any issue not actioned should be sent to him and that he will take the matter directly to the Council. Councillor Chubb stated that he had contacted Dorset Council last year about a road which needed gritting and should have received a response in the summer and despite chasing again, they had not been in contact. Councillor Chubb stated that a child had been hit by a car on that particular road and that the lack of

communication was not acceptable. Councillor Christopher asked that these matters be forwarded to him. Councillor Christopher stated that there has been acknowledgement by Blair Turner that the highway across the Marshwood Vale Ward is not in good condition. Councillor Chubb expressed his frustration at the amount of time he has spent emailing Dorset Council without any action being taken and stated that it was not good enough.

The Clerk stated that she had replied to Jon Lake confirming the Parish Council's support for his proposal and stated that she had been informed that the next steps would be to seek support from Councillor Christopher and the Police. Councillor Dyke asked Councillor Christopher if he has formally given his support. Councillor Christopher stated that when asked he will do so.

b. Report from Dorset Police

In his absence, the Clerk read aloud the report provided by PCSO Bishop which stated that fortunately there was nothing to report regarding the Broadwindsor Group Parish area but that he would like to advise residents of a couple matters. In October, a farmer in Mosterton reported vehicle tyre marks throughout a field and the body of a deer was found. It is possible that this was linked to poaching, however, due to the types of marks and the deer being untouched, PCSO Bishop believed that this was young people using the field for racing around and doing "doughnuts". The report stated that there were a couple of incidents near Bridport last month where unknown offenders attempted entry into an outbuilding on a farm. However, there was someone staying in the building, who reacted to the offenders gaining entry, before they ran off. There was also another incident just outside Bridport, where unknown offenders broke into an outbuilding, disturbing the owners who reacted. Unfortunately, they managed to get away with a chainsaw, but made off quickly once the owner was disturbed. PCSO Bishop advised in his report to vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the Police. The report stated that PCSO Bishop would be at Comrades Hall for his monthly engagement on Tuesday 14 November.

6. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES

a. DAPTC, Annual General Meeting, 18 November 2023

The Clerk reported that the DAPTC Annual General Meeting will take place online on 18 November 2023 between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. The Clerk stated that if anyone wished to attend, to inform her and that she would register them.

7. ACCOUNTS

a. To receive the Finance Report

Councillor Hibbard referred Members of the Council to a spreadsheet highlighting income and expenditure which had previously been circulated. The current balance as of the 31 October was £48,523.98. There were no questions.

b. Budget and Precept Planning 2023/2024

Councillor Hibbard stated that he supported retaining the Precept at the same level as the previous year given the financial pressures facing Dorset Council and parishioners. Councillor Harris stated that given the increase in staff related costs, it may be necessary to increase the Precept. Councillor Chubb asked if there were any other large expenditure items for the remaining financial year. The Clerk stated that grants will be paid out in April and stated that there is approximately £5000 of CIL monies to be taken from the current balance. The Clerk stated that she would produce a draft budget and circulate before the next meeting.

c. To approve payment of £86.76 for HMRC (NI & Tax)

d. To approve payment of £245.93 for HMRC (NI & Tax Underpayment)

e. To approve payment of £44.00 for Comrades Hall (Hire Charges)

f. To approve payment of £60.00 for DM Payroll Services Ltd (Payroll Services)

g. To approve payment of £78.27 for the Clerk (Expenses October & November 2023)

h. To approve payment of £60.00 for Dorset Council (Repair and SID Screen Protector)

i. To approve payment of £45.00 for DAPTC (Clerks' Conference)

j. To approve payment of £25.00 for the Royal British Legion (Poppy Wreath)

Councillor Bassett proposed that items 7c to 7j be voted for en bloc, this was agreed.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Bassett, seconded by Councillor Chubb and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved items 7c to 7j.

The Clerk reported that she had reviewed the Parish Council's insurance policy and stated that there is a £100.00 excess for any claim made and therefore given that the charge from Dorset Council was only £60.00, it was not prudent for a claim to be submitted.

k. To resolve that the Council will participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme on behalf of the Clerk.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Bassett and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously resolved that the Council would participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme on behalf of the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer Helen Cudmore from 1 October 2023. A required notice of this intention has been placed on Grouped Parish noticeboards.

Councillor Dyke asked why the Clerk had not been provided with a pension before this time, the Clerk stated that the increase in hours and pay had only recently made her eligible for enrolment into a pension scheme. Councillor Chubb asked if the Clerk required any other provision to support her in her role. The Clerk stated that she was aware of a professional body which supported professional development for clerks and stated that she would look at the costs for affiliation and report back.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. Applications Received and Circulated for Consultation

P/VOC/2023/06015, Carmoor Farm, Hollis Hill, Broadwindsor, DT8 3QS

The Clerk reported that Councillor Sewell had consulted on this application and had forwarded her reply which was read aloud. The report stated that the application was another example of someone buying/living in a property with an AOC (Agricultural Occupancy Condition) for more than ten years that is not employed in or retired from Agriculture - which is the criteria for the AOC to automatically be removed, and therefore this application should be approved. Councillor Sewell raised the question as to whether it would be possible to make a charge back on the Council Tax for those ten years of occupancy as all properties with an Occupancy Condition automatically go down one band which could amount to a considerable amount of underpayment of Council Tax. Councillor Sewell in her report asked if Councillor Christopher could investigate to see if this could be considered. Councillor Christopher stated that reconciling council tax banding is hugely difficult and must be done through the Valuation Office Agency which is no longer based in Dorchester.

P/FUL/2023/05685, Dorset Farm, Littlewindsor, DT8 3QU

Councillor Harris reported that he and Councillor Roberts had consulted on this application and carried out a site visit. Councillor Harris stated that this was a re-application and that similar applications have been reviewed before, most recently in September 2022, when no objection was raised by the Parish Council. On this occasion, the application was refused by Dorset Council due to the adverse impact of increased nutrient inputs from the residential development. Councillor Harris stated that this revised application now includes a proposal to replace the existing septic tank with a package treatment plant, to achieve a net reduction in phosphorous outputs, supported by a Nutrient Neutrality Assessment Report. Councillor Harris stated that there are no nearby neighbours and there is no significant visual impact. Councillor Harris stated that he had no objection to the application.

P/HOU/2023/05730, Havendale, Drimpton Road, Broadwindsor, DT8 3RS

Councillor Harris reported that this application seeks consent to demolish an existing double garage and replace it with a new garage building with an office in the loft space and that a planning application was approved in 2022 to construct a similar building (Ref P/HOU/2023/04011) but the applicant would now like to have three small dormer windows on the Northwest roof elevation added to the proposal and therefore a further submission has been made. Councillor Harris stated that all other considerations remain the same and that the addition of three dormer windows will improve natural light and therefore he supported the application.

P/HOU/2023/02249, Castlewood Farm, Marshwood, DT6 5QQ

Councillor Hibbard reported that he had carried out the consultation for this application and stated that the proposal was seeking permission to modernise an existing old barn which will have the same footprint and use materials which will blend well with the existing surroundings. Councillor Hibbard stated that the building will become a two bedroom

occasional overspill accommodation for the family and that the improvements will be positive. Councillor Hibbard stated that he supported the application. Councillor Hibbard stated that the applicant had informed that although he had installed a new sewerage system for a previous conversion which would provide sufficient capacity for the new conversion, Dorset Council had informed that due to the nitrate and phosphate problem, they may insist that he plant a two acre woodland to mitigate. Councillor Hibbard stated that the applicant has stated that he may withdraw the application if it comes unviable financially.

Councillor Dyke asked about the Levelling Up Bill, Councillor Christopher stated that he hopes that this will proceed. With regard to the phosphate and nitrate issue, Councillor Christopher stated that the head of a large building company recently stated that unless things improve, many small and medium sized building companies will go out of business and stated that although he cannot tell the Parish Council what to do, he would perhaps suggest writing to Chris Loder MP to express the Parish Council's concerns. Councillor Christopher stated that Prof Sir Chris Whitty had commented that the UK faces a rural and coastal ageing crisis.

b. Other Applications

None.

c. Results

None.

d. Neighbourhood Plan Update

Councillor Hughes stated that he had been asked by a local resident when the Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed as they have a piece of land which they wish to be submitted for inclusion. Councillor Chubb stated that it may be helpful to contact Jo Witherden, Councillor Hibbard agreed that he would make contact and report back.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

a. Working Group Update

Councillor Dyke stated that he will be attending two webinars relating to the Dorset Community Tree Project and Litter Free Dorset and that they are in the process of organising a litter pick for Broadwindsor and a working party for Hursey Common. Councillor Dyke stated that he had received an update from Sheila Hawkins who had attended the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Annual Forum in Bridport on 1 November 2023 and read aloud her report as follows.

Tom Munro outlined brief a history of the establishment of the AONB as part of a network of partnerships and organisations to look after the special landscape of Dorset and hand on to future generations in good shape. Strands of work over the last year have included:

- Provision of grants towards conservation of cultural assets
- 120 farming projects in a protected landscape
- Working to reach young people through youth groups to find out what they consider to be barriers to access to nature

- Responding to planning applications on landscape quality
- Provision of tree felling advice e.g., for Ash Dieback
- Participating in the National Grid project to underground powerlines (across the South Dorset Ridgeway)

Table discussions were held to gauge how parish and town councils and community groups felt that the AONB could assist activities to benefit local landscapes through their Community Fund. Suggestions included:

- Tree planting in community-owned spaces
- Encouraging citizen science through river sampling
- Funding support networks through training for parish/town council tree wardens etc
- Establishing a Nature Buddy network to help people to access nature
- Access to all – improvement projects

There was also the opportunity for suggestions for the future, for possible inclusion in the revision of the Dorset AONB Management Plan, currently being worked on. Ideas put forward included:

- More renewable energy – either wind turbines or solar panels, bearing in mind the maxim “the right thing in the right place within a protected area”
- Diversification within agriculture, at the right level and low impact
- Neighbourhood planning – supporting local parish and town council Neighbourhood Plans, drawn up within local communities

Dorset AONB will share the results of these consultations once all area meetings have taken place.

10. ALLOTMENTS

No update.

11. MUGA UPDATE

Councillor Hibbard stated that it had been reported by Broadwindsor School to the Clerk that someone had slipped on the MUGA due to wet moss and that he had inspected the MUGA thereafter and stated that it did need removing in some areas. Councillor Raymond stated that it is not advisable to pressure wash the surface and stated that the school had previously arranged for it to be swept. Councillor Raymond stated that the corner of the MUGA often floods due to a blocked drain which doesn't take water away and stated that this had been previously reported to Highways and a visit to the school had been carried out. Councillor Raymond stated that when the drain is full, the cover loosens and comes away from the drain itself. Councillor Chubb stated that this must be looked at immediately. The Clerk was asked to contact Dorset Council. Councillor Hibbard stated that the school must themselves inspect the MUGA, the Clerk stated that this responsibility had been outlined in a letter to the Head Teacher.

12. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE GROUPED PARISH AREA

Councillor Dyke stated that digital switch over is back in the news again and between now and 2025, telephone providers will be moving their customers over to digital technology which for most will mean plugging into the back of their router. Councillor Dyke stated that what concerns him the most is what will happen in an emergency as digital landlines cannot carry a power connection and will not work in a power cut. Councillor Dyke stated for those without a mobile telephone, telecoms providers must provide a solution but that no detail about how has been provided and needs challenging. Councillor Dyke stated that his mobile will not work without a power supply. Councillor Dyke stated that he will be attending a webinar on this matter and will report back thereafter. Councillor Burt stated that she believed that telecoms providers have a legal obligation to ensure that everyone across the country are connected. Councillor Dyke stated that they have stated that if you have no other means of contacting the emergency services then they will offer a solution but stated that he was not sure what that actually meant. Councillor Raymond stated that a bus had hit overhead cables which resulted in Blackdown being without broadband for the last two weeks and stated that the telecoms provider had been poor in resolving the problem.

13. HIGHWAYS

a. Proposed 40 mph Speed Limit on the B3163

Councillor Hibbard stated that this item had been discussed under Agenda Item 5a.

b. Salt Bins and Dumpy Bags 2023/2024 Season

The Clerk reported that Dorset Council had started their gritting in October and asked if any bins have cracks in, to report it to her as soon as possible. The Clerk stated that the first fill of each bin is free of charge and thereafter a charge is made. The Clerk asked if any additional dumpy bags were required, it was agreed that no further salt was required at this time.

c. Fingerpost Restoration Programme

The Clerk stated that if a charge is to be made for the restoration work, then to be compliant with financial regulations, a notice to tender must be published in the first instance. Councillor Hibbard suggested that setting an upper limit for each fingerpost is advisable and stated that £250.00 was the figure used previously. Councillor Hibbard asked that this be added to the accounts for the next meeting.

d. Broadwindsor Tree Concerns Update

The Clerk reported that she had received a response from the Tree Officer and read loud his reply. The Clerk stated that with regard to St Albans Cottage, the Tree Officer had stated that the hazel tree in the neighbouring garden is not within the conservation area nor protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and he can see that the tree is causing issues with leaves and shade. The Tree Officer reported that permission has been granted by the neighbouring property for it to be felled, the property does not want to pay for it and because the tree is not dead or dangerous Dorset Council has no jurisdiction in this issue and as the tree is not protected Dorset Council will have no issue if the tree is removed provided the tree owner is

in agreement. With regard to the property at West Hill Grange, the Clerk stated that the Tree Officer had commented that the trees overhanging their property are within Hursey Common, which is maintained by the Parish Council and protected by the Woodland TPO. The Tree Officer had stated in his reply that the resident has done some cutting which he has advised needed TPO consent but that it was only minor. The Tree Officer had stated in his reply that the trees are quite low over Hursey Lane and could do with being crown lifted to statutory highways height of 5.2m and that if the Parish Council wishes to undertake works to these trees, then an application must be submitted to Dorset Council. Councillor Dyke stated that with regard to St. Albans Cottage, unless there was a willing volunteer, there was nothing more that could be done but stated that there was another tree which wasn't mentioned by the Tree Officer which was also causing problems and that this could be pursued with Magna. There was general agreement that the trees in Hursey Lane should be reduced and that an application should be submitted to Dorset Council. Councillor Hibbard stated that he would contact contractors for a quotation. Councillor Stephen Curtis stated that there are trees on the West Hill side growing out at an angle and that vehicles have to come across to the right to miss them.

e. Speed Indicator Devices Update

Councillor Harris reported that a meeting had taken place with the SIDs Team from Dorset Council and the volunteers as a refresh on how the devices operate and how to change the settings using the App. Councillor Harris stated that the SIDs Team had stated that volunteers must wear high visibility jackets and stated that he was unsure of which type as there are different ones depending on what they are being used for. The Clerk stated that there were some used by the Speedwatch Team and suggested that the kit be returned to the Parish Council as the Broadwindsor Speedwatch team are no longer operational. Councillor Hughes stated that he was willing to house the kit. Councillor Harris asked whether volunteers were insured, Clerk stated that the Parish Council has in place public liability cover and stated that a full volunteer protocol needs to be put in place for all volunteers carrying out tasks on behalf of the Parish Council.

f. Blocked Road Drain, Drimpton

Councillor Chubb stated that he had raised this issue under Agenda Item 5a.

14. FOOD LARDER PROJECT UPDATE

Councillor White stated that she wished to thank everyone involved with getting the project to where it is now including Councillors Sewell and Chubb, Drimpton Village Hall Committee and the wonderful group of volunteers. Councillor White stated that there are now fifty three members, and the project provides affordable food to between sixty and seventy people each week. Councillor White stated that going into the winter, Drimpton Village Hall had kindly agreed for them to use the hall in bad weather. Councillor White stated that FareShare had encountered some problems with the supply of food as they had opened many new larder projects in a short space of time but that it was hoped that this would improve. Councillor White stated that as part of the 75th birthday celebrations for King Charles III, a Coronation

Food Project is to be launched which will see the establishment of more distribution hubs across the country. Councillor White stated that as the project receives support from Dorset NHS, other services would like to drop in and talk to people. Councillor White stated that Citizens Advice has already been and that on 24 November LiveWell Dorset will be at Drimpton Village Hall and on 8 December the Jurassic Coast Social Prescribing Team will be there. Councillor White asked for any other suggestions and stated that everyone was welcome. Councillor Hibbard thanked Councillor White for her efforts and hard work. Councillor Chubb stated that this was wonderful for the Grouped Parish.

15. DEFIBRILLATOR FOR SEABOROUGH

a. New Defibrillator for Seaborough

Councillor White reported that an application for funding had been made to the British Heart Foundation and that she had been informed that day that they have not made a decision yet.

16. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

a. Report from the Broadwindsor Group Parish Community Land Trust

Councillor Hibbard stated that all houses are now occupied and that there have been some issues with the noise from the air source heat pumps which is being investigated. Councillor Hibbard stated that the two benches have now been installed in the communal areas. Councillor Hibbard stated that they had received a note from Abri informing that a tree has Ash Dieback and is to be removed but that additional planting will take place. Councillor Stephen Curtis asked what species will be planted between the two fences, Councillor Hibbard stated that he was unsure but that he would raise the matter at the next CLT meeting and report back.

Councillor Chubb stated that he had heard a report that someone was climbing over the bank at Oxhayes and going into the field as the ditch is not that deep and there is no vegetation. Councillor Chubb stated that they have been informed that they should not do this. Councillor Harris stated that the ditch should be dug deeper as it takes water from behind the site. Councillor Stephen Curtis stated that the ditch was left in a bad state by contractors. Councillor Chubb stated that perhaps Dorset Council could put up a sign to highlight where the footpaths are when they install the new gate.

17. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION

a. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Council

Councillor Dyke asked that footpaths be added to the agenda for the next meeting and stated that the original plan for rights of way to be recorded by 2026 had been scrapped but that following discussions with the NFU, this plan had been reinstated but with an extended deadline of 2031. Councillor Hughes asked if the Welcome Pack could be added to the next agenda.

b. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Public

None.

18. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed for Monday 11 December 2023 at Comrades Hall.

20. CLOSE

The meeting of the Parish Council was formally closed at 8.51 pm, Councillor Hibbard thanked everyone for attending and for their participation.