



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

14 APRIL 2025

BLACKDOWN VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. Rick Dyke (Chairman), Cllr. Chris Beck, Cllr. Tim Beer, Cllr. Rebecca Burt, Cllr. Stephen Curtis, Cllr. Stuart Curtis, 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, Councillor Dyke welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting. There were six members of the public present.

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCE

Apologies were received 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 7j, and Councillor Frampton declared an interest in Agenda item 8a.

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 10 March 2025 were confirmed as a true record, unanimously approved by the Council and duly signed by Councillor Dyke.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No comments.

a. Report from Councillor Simon Christopher, Dorset Council

Councillor Christopher stated that Dorset Council has a new Chief Executive, Dr Catherine Howe and reported that she will receive £200,000 a year in salary and an £8000 relocation package. Councillor Christopher asked the Council whether they supported this salary given the state of Dorset Council's finances and stated that he voted against the appointment. Councillor Christopher stated that a Planning Committee meeting was held during the last month, and that Dorset Council is obliged to take to Committee any applications involving its own land. Councillor Christopher stated that Dorset Council had submitted an application to extend a car park in Weymouth to create twenty six new bays. Councillor Christopher stated that the Conservative Councillors and the Green Party Councillor voted against the application as the proposal would mean that a tree would have to be removed. Councillor Christopher stated that Dorset Council is spending more money than it has in its budget and that its reserves are being reduced and that a recent change in accounting policy means that loan terms have been extended from twenty to forty years which makes its financial position appear better. Councillor Dyke stated that all too often comparisons are made with the salary of the Prime Minister and stated that this was unfair and asked what the market rate was for such a position as he did not know, and stated that it may be the right salary for a position which is incredibly demanding. Councillor Frampton asked about Dorset Council's overall budget and stated that it may well be the case that the Chief Executive could make efficiencies which would recoup her salary level. Councillor Christopher stated that it is a large budget especially given that over 4500 people work for Dorset Council. Councillor Frampton stated that Dorset Council had made a very good job of recent road repairs and asked for this to be relayed back to those involved. Councillor Burt stated that many other councils do not have the reserves that Dorset Council does and there are many who will lose their jobs as budgets are cut within these councils. Councillor Webb stated that Dorset Council had made a very good job of the resurfacing works on Clan Hill but after a short period of time, a hole appeared. Councillor Webb asked who will pay for the repair, Dorset Council or the contractor as it would not be fair for taxpayers to have to pay for this. Councillor Beer stated that he had been informed that the hole had been caused by a collapsed drain and that Dorset Council should have addressed the problem with the drain before tarmacking. Councillor Christopher asked the Clerk to forward him an email about this matter for him to progress with officers. Councillor Christopher stated that he had spoken with the Police and Crime Commissioner and had stressed that in rural areas it is important to have as much Police coverage as possible especially in evenings and noted the recent serious burglary in Lyme Regis.

Councillor Dyke made reference to the Audit and Governance Public Participation minutes as forwarded by Councillor Christopher and stated that he read with interest that the resident challenging Dorset Council on its spending was from Weymouth, as Councillor Christopher had remarked earlier that a great deal of Dorset Council's money goes to Weymouth. Councillor Dyke reported that the resident had stated that with regard to Care Dorset, Dorset Council was spending 38% of its budget on just 1.09% of its population. Councillor Dyke stated that more worryingly the resident had stated that Grant Thornton, the independent auditors had reported that on financial sustainability, governance, and procurement, Dorset Council was given a triple red light. Councillor Christopher stated that over 60% of Dorset Council's expenditure is demand led.

b. Report from Dorset Police

No report. Councillor Dyke stated that PCSO Bishop attends the FareShare at Drimpton Village Hall on Fridays and asked that this be publicised.

6. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES

None.

7. ACCOUNTS

a. To receive the Finance Report

Councillor Dyke referred Members of the Council to a spreadsheet highlighting income and expenditure which had previously been circulated. The current balance as of the 31 March 2025 was £35,224.84. There were no questions.

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

b. Timetable for Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/2025

The Clerk referred Councillors to the report as circulated and provided an overview of the timetable. The Clerk stated that all information must be submitted to the external auditor by 30 June. Councillor White asked about risk assessments, the Clerk stated that in her report, the internal auditor raises any issues for the Council to assess and that no areas of concern have been reported.

c. To resolve that there is no conflict of interest with BDO LLP

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Burt, seconded by Councillor Miller and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously confirmed that there is no conflict of interest between Broadwindsor Group Parish Council and BDO LLP. Councillor Dyke duly signed the presented form.

d. To approve payment of £84.20 for HMRC (NI)

e. To approve payment of £31.00 for Comrades Hall (Hall Hire)

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Burt, seconded by Councillor Miller and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved payments d and e.

- f. To approve payment of £2000.00 for Comrades Hall (Grant)**
- g. To approve payment of £2000.00 for Drimpton Village Hall (Grant)**
- h. To approve payment of £2000.00 for Blackdown Village Hall (Grant)**
- i. To approve payment of £2000.00 for Broadwindsor Stores (Grant)**

Councillor Harris proposed that payments f to i be approved en bloc. There were no objections.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Raymond and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved payments f, g, h and i.

j. To approve payment of £2000.00 for the White Lion Community Pub (Grant)

Councillor Dyke left the meeting room. Councillor Harris stated that he recalled that at a previous meeting, it was stated that the grant to the White Lion pub was a one off and that no additional requests would be made. Councillor Harris stated that at the time, there was some doubt as to whether the community pub would be a viable project but that the Parish Council decided to support it. Councillor Harris stated he was not aware that the Parish Council would be required to subsidise the pub on an ongoing basis and stated that Drimpton has its own pub which is not subsidised by the Parish Council. Councillor Frampton stated that he understood the conflict for people in Drimpton. Councillor Beck stated that the Parish Council should ask to see a copy of the accounts and if it is making a profit then no support should be needed. Councillor Beck asked if the pub was making a profit now and Councillor White stated that it would be helpful to understand what future plans the pub has. It was agreed that a representative from the White Lion be asked to attend the next Parish Council meeting and that a copy of the accounts be provided to the Council.

k. To approve payment of £55.00 for Broadwindsor Allotment Group (BAG Fee Reimbursement)

l. To approve payment of £65.43 for the Clerk (Expenses April 2025)

The Clerk reported that the amount now payable to BAG was £60.00 as an additional £5.00 fee had been received.

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Dyke and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved payments k and l.

m. To note £1977.70 for the Clerk (Salary Adjustment January to March 2025)

n. To note payment of £1816.69 for T Beer (Fingerpost Restoration)

Payments m and n, both approved previously, were noted by the Parish Council.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. Applications Received and Circulated for Consultation

P/FUL/2025/00778, 1 Spear Mead, Drimpton, DT8 3RW

Councillor Harris reported that both he and Councillor Beer had reviewed the application, and confirmed that the applicants were in attendance at the meeting. Councillor Harris stated that the design of the timber shed was perfectly reasonable. During the site visit he had spoken with the new residents of the property next door, they stated that they were not aware of the planning application, so Councillor Harris provided further information. Councillor Harris stated that following that, the residents of the neighbouring property lodged a formal objection online based on the effect to their amenity, they had stated that the new structure would be close to the back of their garden, very visible and would reduce the amount of light coming into their home. Councillor Harris stated that he suggested that the applicants and neighbours got together to discuss the application in an attempt to resolve their differences. The first applicant addressed the Council and stated that he had made contact with the neighbouring property and had looked at the proposed location of the timber shed, he had offered to move it a little further away from the boundary but stated that this compromise was not accepted. The applicant stated that he therefore wished for the original plan to still stand. Councillor Harris stated that if a revision to the location was made, a new plan may have to be submitted. Councillor Beer stated that he was not aware of the site visit and subsequent conversations with the applicant and neighbour. The second applicant stated that the neighbouring property would have been aware of the application as this was the second time an application had been submitted. In summary, Councillor Harris stated that he had no objection to the design of the proposed timber shed but could understand the reasons for the objection and therefore would like to include in the Parish Council's submission to Dorset Council, that the Case Officer consider the concerns raised. The Clerk stated that it is common in such cases for the Case Officer to make contact with both parties to try and resolve the matter.

P/VOC/2024/07030, North Dibberford Farm, North Dibberford Road, Beaminster, DT8 3HD

Councillor Stuart Curtis reported that despite many attempts, he was unable to contact the owners of the property.

P/VOC/2025/01730, Sandpit Cottage, Drimpton Road, Broadwindsor, DT8 3RS

Councillor Roberts reported that the local area is in need of more homes for local people, and that in principle she supported using an existing building for a home rather than holiday accommodation as building new dwellings in a National Landscape area is limited. Councillor Roberts asked that the Case Officer consider two issues, the entrance to the property has fairly bad visibility when coming out onto the main road due to the hedge and a bend and with regard to waste water, a house used full time would need an appropriate septic tank/waste treatment plant. As the property has large ponds between the main property and the cottage, an appropriate wastewater management plan should be in place. Councillor Roberts stated that she could not see any reason for the Parish Council to object to the application.

b. Other Applications

P/PAPA/2025/01616, Honeydown Farm, Seaborough Hill, Seaborough, TA18 8PL

The Clerk reported that this application was for information only.

c. Results

The following results were reported.

P/LBC/2025/00839, Manor Farm, Pitmans Grave Crossroads to Junction Littlewindsor Farm, Littlewindsor, DT8 3QU: Granted

P/PABA/2025/01022, Land East of Norton Hill, Littlewindsor, DT8 3RS: Prior Approval Required

d. Review of Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk stated that a report about the Neighbourhood Plan had been circulated prior to the last meeting. Councillor Dyke stated that the Parish Council's Plan is over five years old now and no longer carries the same weight as it did previously. Councillor Dyke stated that there is more pressure to build more housing, but it was still unclear as to Dorset Council's view on where that should be. Councillor Dyke stated that an up to date plan should help ensure that any new houses are built in accordance with the Plan, thereby avoiding speculative development. Councillor Dyke stated that if the Parish Council wishes to carry out a review, there are different approaches and that a review could be full or light touch and stated that the consultant used previously had stated that she was very busy and may not be able to support the Parish Council should they wish to take on a review. Councillor Harris stated that he disagreed with updating the Neighbourhood Plan and stated that he did not think that having a Plan in place protects the Grouped Parish in any way now or in the future. Councillor Harris stated that Dorset Council will update their Strategic Housing Land Accessibility Assessment (SHLAA) and that they will decide what land is available for housing. Councillor Harris stated that there is no prospect of the Neighbourhood Plan being left intact in terms of the sites already identified and that there is almost inevitable pressure from Dorset Council so any consultant used will advise to double the number of sites. Councillor Harris stated that a change to sites identified will involve a call for sites, surveys, consultation and a referendum which will require a lot of time and effort. Councillor Harris stated that it would be better leaving the Plan as it is.

Councillor Dyke stated that there may well be other pockets of land suitable for development within the Grouped Parish and stated that a debate looking at both sides is needed. Councillor Harris stated that Dorset Council will decide. Councillor Beck stated that he was unsure if a light touch review would actually achieve anything as no matter how many houses are identified, it will not be enough and stated that he gets a sense that this approach is seeking to bring house prices down. Councillor Dyke asked for other opinions from members of the Council, Councillor Miller stated that the land originally identified for development is still there and the Parish Council doesn't have to do anything. Councillor Beck stated that an out of date Plan carried a lot less weight, the Clerk stated that it carries no weight at all. Councillor

Dyke stated that a light touch review may just be a review of the land and that other parts of the Plan will not need amending. Councillor Dyke stated that he had reported at a previous meeting that Dorset Council had already had a call for sites and there may well be new sites identified within the Grouped Parish which landowners would like included in the Plan. Councillor Beck stated that land named in the Plan already had community approval and if new sites are added, they surely need to go through the same process. Councillor Webb asked if infrastructure in areas of new development is considered at all. Councillor Dyke stated that he very much appreciated the amount of work required for a review and asked all Councillors to consider this prior to a further discussion at the May meeting.

9. MAINTENANCE OF NOTICEBOARDS

Councillor Beer reported that he will repair the Blackdown noticeboard in August when it is not being used to display an agenda. Councillor Dyke stated that the Broadwindsor noticeboard would need to be taken down temporarily and is looking tatty now and could do with some improvement. The Clerk stated that she had looked at prices for replacing the Seaborough noticeboard and for wooden boards, the prices were very high. Councillor Dyke stated that a parishioner may be able to make one. The Clerk suggested that works to all noticeboards in need of repair take place in August.

10. EVENTS

a. Annual Parish Meeting, 17 April 2025

Councillor Dyke reported that the Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 17 April at Comrades Hall from 7.00 pm and stated that Edward Morello MP would be attending and presenting a report. The Clerk asked that Councillors encourage members of the community to attend.

b. Lewesdon Hill, 26 April 2025

Councillor Frampton reported that the National Trust is promoting Lewesdon Hill and holding an event on 26 April. Councillor Frampton stated that the event will include a talk on the lost pilot, a talk on iron age settlements, an ecologist and archaeologist will be onsite and there will be a three mile walk. Councillor Frampton stated that the event is open to members and non-members of the National Trust and is free and that parking will be available in a nearby field. The Clerk stated that although free, tickets needed to be requested online.

c. VE Day 80th Anniversary, 8 May 2025

Councillor Dyke stated that there will be a service at the war memorial in the morning and an event in Comrades Hall in the evening. Councillor Dyke stated that a local resident who has researched her grandfather's role in the war has formed a presentation around the research and will be presenting this during the evening event. Councillor Dyke stated that it is hoped that a Broadwindsor resident who will soon be turning ninety nine will be able to join the celebrations. Councillor Frampton stated that he and Robert Hedditch will also be speaking about their great uncles and highlighting their personal stories.

d. Oak Apple Day, 31 May – 1 June 2025

Councillor Dyke reported that there will be a number of events happening to celebrate Oak Apple Day. Councillor Frampton stated that there will also be a live music event at the Cricket Ground on 30 May with a bar and BBQ. Councillor Frampton stated that parking would be available at Redlands Yard.

11. BROADWINDSOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

Councillor Dyke reported that following the workshops a number of priorities were identified, some such as buses and transport will be addressed separately but stated that other issues such as litter and water quality could be more easily addressed. Councillor Dyke stated that a group of willing volunteers could be set up to monitor the water quality of the Little Axe. Councillor Dyke also stated that another issue raised was the future use of the sports field in Hursey and stated that a number of suggestions had been put forward but that more thought and discussion was needed on this issue. Councillor Harris stated that he had read research which referred to the regular frequency of sewage discharge into the River Axe which was rather worrying and that he had seen the email from the Clerk stating that the sewerage infrastructure for Drimpton was at full capacity. Councillor Beck stated that the Northcombe Lea development was to originally have its own sewerage plant but now it is connected to the main system. Councillor Stephen Curtis asked why this had changed. The Clerk stated that she would seek clarification on this and report back.

12. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk stated that allotment renewals had been issued, and all payments received.

13. MUGA UPDATE

a. Update on request from BADCE to sub-lease land by the MUGA

The Clerk reported that Battens were now liaising with Dorset Council's legal department and BADCE and that she would obtain an update.

b. Update on drainage issues

Councillor Miller stated that he hadn't had the opportunity to go to the school but with good weather and light he intended on completing the modification shortly.

14. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE GROUPED PARISH AREA

Councillor Dyke stated that Wessex Internet had been seen in the area and that they are continuing with their work locally. Councillor Harris stated that he had spotted surveyors from Wessex Internet preparing the ground for cables and that he had been informed that some households had been contacted and that all could be ready to go within three to six months. Councillor Dyke stated that things are progressing which is good news.

15. HIGHWAYS

a. Review of reported highways concerns to Dorset Council

The Clerk stated that she had been informed that the overgrown hedge in Kittwhistle still needs to be cut back and that she had seen a video showing just how much rain water running down from Hollis Hill runs on to the car park at Comrades Hall and asked whether the Council wishes for her to progress this with Councillor Christopher as she recalled that the previous Community Highways Officer had refused to action a request for help. The Clerk was asked to progress the issue. Councillor Dyke mentioned that there was also the issue of poor road markings by the White Lion Pub, the Clerk stated that she had reported this online.

b. Parking in Broadwindsor

Councillor Dyke stated that most Councillors would agree that this is an issue but stated that he did not know what the solution is. Councillor Beer stated that he had attended the recent garage sales and reported that the one way system to the pub was full of parked cars and further stated that if an emergency vehicle had needed access, it would not have been able to get through and turn right. Councillor Beer stated that something needs to be done, and that one solution would be double yellow lines. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council could ask the Highway Safety Officer to attend a site visit. Councillor Dyke stated that Broadwindsor is a thoroughfare and was not designed for 21st century articulated lorries.

c. Dorset Council Review of Street Lighting

Councillor Dyke stated that Councillors may recall the new lighting which had been installed in Broadwindsor a little time ago which received mixed views from residents, some felt that the new lights were too bright and caused them difficulties in sleeping and others felt that the increase in brightness increased safety at night. Councillor Dyke stated that Dorset Council had now issued a consultation, which could be responded to by Councillors individually and by residents and asked whether the Parish Council should respond collectively. Given that it would require a lengthy discussion, Councillor Dyke recommended that individual responses would be best. Councillor Dyke stated that one comment he wanted to note, was that Broadwindsor had been referred to as an urban area by some at Dorset Council and that lighting was 'appropriate for an urban area'. Councillor Dyke stated that if Councillors are going to respond, to refer to this classification as clearly Broadwindsor is not an urban area and if it is, it should have access to all of the services offered to urban areas.

d. Hursey Sportsfield and Mower Update

Councillor Frampton reported that he had put sheep in the sports field for a couple weeks to get the grass down and that the lawn mower had been transported to Broadwindsor. Councillor Frampton stated that he will arrange for the mower to be transported on a trailer to Hursey when grass cutting is required.

e. Community Speedwatch Update

Councillor Dyke reported that a good number of volunteers have come forward and that training will take place on 24 April with Dorset Police. The Clerk stated that an additional date will be provided for those not able to attend on 24 April.

16. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION

a. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Council

Councillor Webb stated that he had noticed a number of drains blocked in Broadwindsor. The Clerk stated that this can be reported online to Dorset Council which is the preferred method of reporting as a reference number is provided and can be tracked to allow updates on any actions taken.

The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by Bill Rodda, the son of the former vicar of Broadwindsor between 1953 and 1959 and stated that he had sent her a number of photographs which had belonged to his father and that he would like to pass on to the Parish. The Clerk stated that she would inform the Team Ministry and also post a number of the images online for the community to see. Councillor Frampton suggested that they could be looked after by a member of the community who had lived in Broadwindsor all of her life.

b. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Public

None.

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public asked if he could make a comment on the planning portal. The Clerk informed that they could but stated that although the deadline had been extended, sometimes the dates are not changed on the system and the consultation reads as closed. The Clerk stated that if this should be the case, to send her the comments and that she would forward on to the Case Officer.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be at 7.45 pm on Monday 12 May 2025 at Comrades Hall.

19. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Dyke, seconded by Councillor Miller and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item due to their confidential nature.

20. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

a. Report on Clerk's Annual Review

The Clerk's annual review was presented and considered by the Council. The review confirmed that the Clerk's performance met the required standards for the role.

b. Review and Approval of Clerk's Salary Adjustment

It was resolved that, following the annual review, the Clerk's remuneration be adjusted to reflect a 4% increase in both the basic salary and the pension contributions, effective from 1 April 2025.

21. CLOSE

The meeting of the Parish Council was formally closed at 9.25 pm, Councillor Dyke thanked everyone for attending and for their participation.