



## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

**6 JUNE 2024**

**BLACKDOWN VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. Rick Dyke (Chairman), Cllr. Chris Beck, Cllr. Tim Beer, Cllr. Rebecca Burt, Cllr. Garry Miller, Cllr. Sonia Raymond, Cllr. Nathalie Roberts.

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

The Meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and was opened by Councillor Dyke. Councillor Dyke welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting. There were three members of the public present.

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### **1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Curtis (Stephen), Curtis (Stuart), Dixon, Frampton, Harris and White 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.**

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.**

The Clerk reminded Councillors that their register of interests must be completed within twenty-eight days of signing their Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 May 2024 were confirmed as a true record, unanimously approved by the Council and duly signed by Councillor Dyke.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

The Clerk stated that she had reminded new Councillors about training opportunities and Councillor Dyke stated that the guidance documents as circulated by the Clerk were very useful.

#### **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

##### **a. Report from Councillor Simon Christopher, Dorset Council**

Councillor Christopher stated that he had not circulated a report on this occasion as although in many respects there has clearly been a change of administration, not a lot of things have actually happened. Councillor Christopher stated that to date there has not been a Cabinet meeting or a Scrutiny meeting. Councillor Christopher stated that he is taking part in retraining and had attended a planning seminar as he will be back on the Planning Committee, but not as Chair. Councillor Christopher asked for any questions. Councillor Dyke asked how Councillor Christopher sees planning decisions evolving with the new administration, Councillor Christopher stated that the new rules on permitted development will not necessarily affect us as most of Dorset is in what was previously known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Councillor Christopher stated that the interesting question will be when the new Local Plan for Dorset comes out and stated that when the Cabinet meeting convenes later on this month there will be a discussion about consultation with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP) about how Dorset Council cooperates in connection with BCP about unmet housing need. Councillor Christopher stated that there has been lots of discussion about the shortage of housing in the Dorchester area. Councillor Dyke stated that on the housing front, he knows that Councillor Christopher already appreciates the Parish Council's frustrations and that there has been the phosphate issue which has resulted in a number of approved developments not progressing further, albeit that it is preferred that they are more focussed on affordable housing for local people. Councillor Dyke stated that in terms of our Local Plan, the Parish Council would like to see more eco-friendly housing as well as affordable homes. Councillor Christopher stated that both North and West Dorset have a five year land supply and that it will be interesting to see what happens after the election.

Councillor Miller asked if there had been any update about the land by the Community Shop, Councillor Christopher stated that he had provided information about this to the gentleman who had attended the meeting. Councillor Beck asked how there can be a five year land supply if no-one is building anything anymore. Councillor Christopher stated that there is a process, it starts with a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to determine what land is available. Councillor Christopher stated that often the Council will have a call for sites as clearly there is always the idea that we need to be building more homes for people to live in and that there should be sufficient land to be able to do this. Councillor Christopher stated that under district councils there were local development plans but that those plans were now out of date, with the one for West Dorset being approved back in 2015. Councillor Christopher stated that there will be a new Local Plan and following the democratic process,

there should be consultation on where houses should be built rather than developers stating that the Council doesn't know where these houses are to be built and then submitting speculative planning applications.

**b. Report from Dorset Police**

In his absence, the Clerk read aloud the report from PCSO Bishop which stated that he has been advised of a suspicious incident in Drimpton a couple of weeks ago, when a couple of males were seen, appearing to check some livestock out in suspicious circumstances. PCSO Bishop also stated in his report that there have been several trailer thefts across the South Somerset area, into the Halstock area in the last few weeks. This seems to be localised at this moment, but as the Parish is adjacent, it is worth bearing in mind. In his report PCSO Bishop stated that he will be at Comrades Hall on Monday 10 June, from 11.00 am and that he will also be attending Drimpton Village Hall on the last Friday of the month, 28 June, which may also become a regular engagement. Councillor Dyke stated that attendance at Drimpton would be helpful.

**6. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES**

**a. Beaminster Town Council, Request for Financial Support for Community Bus**

Councillor Dyke stated that this item had been on a previous agenda. The Clerk stated that following the last meeting, she had circulated the current timetable and the reply from Beaminster Town Council which provided background information about the bus service. Councillor Dyke stated that in his view there are two issues to consider, firstly, how we can promote the service and the fact that they are looking for additional help and secondly there is the separate issue of funding. Councillor Dyke stated that at the previous meeting Councillor Harris raised the issue that the service does not go through Drimpton but Councillor Dyke stated that in his opinion he felt that if it goes through part of the Grouped Parish then it still warrants some funding. Councillor Dyke stated that we need to get feedback from the Steering Committee about including Drimpton and that given that Councillor Harris had raised some concern, he felt it only right to wait until he was in attendance to discuss possible funding. The Clerk reported that a new stop had just been added to the route. Councillor Roberts stated that the Parish Council needs to find out if there is sufficient demand. Councillor Beck stated that people in Drimpton have spoken about the lack of a bus service to Bridport but that he was unsure as to how well a bus would be used. The Clerk suggested adding something to the Drimpton Newsletter, this was agreed.

**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 24 May 2024 was £42,111.53. There were no questions.

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

**b. To note and approve the End of Year Accounts 2023/2024**

**Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Raymond and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved the End of Year Accounts 2023/2024.**

**c. To approve payment of £200.00 for Citizens Advice Bridport & District (Grant)**

**d. To approve payment of £134.06 for C Edgerley (War Memorial Maintenance)**

**e. To approve payment of £83.25 for Focus (HS) Limited (Internal Audit)**

**f. To approve payment of £66.00 for Universal (Sports Equipment) Ltd (MUGA Safety Inspection)**

**g. To approve payment of £278.04 for Andy Shute Ltd (MUGA Clean and Treatment)**

**h. To approve payment of £84.00 for HMRC (NI)**

**i. To approve payment of £52.44 for the Clerk (Expenses June 2024)**

**Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Dyke, seconded by Councillor Burt and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved payments c to i.**

**8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**a. Applications Received and Circulated for Consultation**

**P/PABA2/2024/01461, Manor Farm, Rookery Lane, Burstock, DT8 3LH**

The Clerk stated that this application had originally been reviewed by Councillor Frampton and Councillor Stephen Curtis and that no concerns or objections had been raised.

**b. Other Applications**

None.

**c. Results**

None.

**9. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS**

**a. To review the Council's Standing Orders**

Councillor Dyke stated that he and the Clerk had a number of suggestions for amendments and asked for any other comments. There were no other comments. Councillor Dyke proposed the following changes:

- Item 2.1: Given the intention to hold meetings across the Group Parish, this should be reflected by adding Drimpton and Blackdown Village Halls.
- Item 2.4: Reduction of maximum meeting time from three hours to two hours.
- Item 3.2 v + vi: Although there are currently no formally structured committees, the work around climate change should probably be formalised.
- Item 18.5: 'Draft minutes will not be published, only minutes approved at a Full Council Meeting will be posted on the Council's website' be updated to reflect the fact that draft minutes are now published.

- Item 31: Communicating With District and County Councillors be amended to reflect the change to Dorset Council.

**Resolved: Proposed by Councillor Dyke, seconded by Councillor Beck and agreed by a show of hands, the Council unanimously approved the changes to the Parish Council's Standing Orders.**

#### **10. D-DAY MEMORIAL EVENT, 6 JUNE 2024**

Councillor Dyke reported that there will be a service at the new war memorial at 10.30 am. The Clerk read aloud the programme for the service and stated that a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council and community will be laid. The Clerk reported that the lighting of the beacon will take place at the Allotments at 9.15 pm and that the bells will ring out in Broadwindsor at 6.30 pm.

The Clerk stated that she had been asked to raise the matter of ongoing maintenance of the new war memorial and whether it would be helpful to seek a number of volunteers. Councillor Dyke stated that this area very much goes hand in hand with the land opposite and stated that the WI had very kindly agreed to maintain this. Councillor Dyke stated that it was too much to ask them to take on the war memorial site as well and questioned whether this should be something that the Parish Council pays for or whether volunteers are asked to come forward. Councillor Dyke referred to a previous comment by Stefan Nikolov that sometimes we ask too much of volunteers. Councillor Dyke asked the Clerk to add this matter to the July agenda to allow for further consideration.

#### **11. CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY**

##### **a. To review the BGPC Draft Strategy and Action Plan**

Councillor Dyke stated that the Draft Strategy and Action Plan had been circulated and that he was still working on the Terms of Reference. Councillor Dyke stated that there are two strands, he would like Councillors to review or challenge the drafts and for them to then be adapted appropriately and secondly, there needs to be community awareness and support and that a number of workshops will be held. Councillor Dyke stated that historically, getting people to attend these types of events has always been difficult. Councillor Dyke stated that he would like to see a number of projects coming forward for the Parish Council to prioritise and concentrated effort made to get these projects over the line, but that feedback from parishioners is needed for this to happen. Councillor Dyke stated that he welcomed comments now or after the meeting and thanked Councillor Raymond for her feedback. Councillor Dyke stated that he was comfortable with all strands except for farming and that with his limited knowledge about the issues faced by farmers he was struggling to understand how the Parish Council can realistically support farmers. Councillor Dyke stated that consideration of whether farming should be included or looked at separately in its own right should be given. Councillor Dyke asked that this be added to the agenda for the July meeting and stated that at that meeting he would like to start to plan the community events.

## **12. ALLOTMENTS**

Sarah Hunt introduced herself as the new Secretary of the Broadwindsor Allotment Group, taking over duties from Sheila Hawkins. The problem of deer entering the allotments and eating the produce was raised. Sarah Hunt stated that she had been informed that there used to be an electric fence on the field directly behind the allotments but was not sure if this was still the case. Councillor Raymond stated that this field was rented by Councillor Curtis and that usually if livestock are in the field, then the electric fence will be in operation. Sarah Hunt also reported that the bank at the side of the road by the allotments requires cutting, Councillor Beer stated that this would fall under the responsibility of Dorset Council but stated that it was too early in the season for them to cut it. A member of the public stated that during school drop off and pickup times, a number of cars were being parked in the grounds of the allotments, Councillor Raymond stated that she has complained about this and that the School has sent out a number of emails asking people not to park there. Councillor Raymond asked whether cones could be put out at the relevant times, Sarah Hunt stated that she had considered using a chain as a deterrent, with the aim that it may be too much of an effort for someone to get out of their car, undo it and get back in their car again to park. The Clerk stated that this land belonged to the Parish Council and that it was trespassing. Councillor Dyke suggested that a chain be purchased and that the Parish Council would fund the costs.

## **13. MUGA UPDATE**

### **a. Maintenance**

The Clerk reported that the MUGA had now been treated for moss and would be inspected again but that it had been advised that the surface should be swept regularly, and more sand was needed. The Clerk stated that going forward, some form of regular maintenance plan would be beneficial. The Clerk stated that the company which had installed the MUGA was no longer operating and that it had been difficult to seek advice about how to maintain the specific surface. Councillor Raymond stated that maintenance needs to be carried out by a contractor. Councillor Dyke stated that given the cost of the MUGA it was important that it was adequately looked after.

### **b. Opening and Closing Arrangements**

The Clerk reported that there are two volunteers who kindly open and close the MUGA, but it would be helpful to have more in order to cover for holidays or sickness and to prevent burdening the current volunteers.

## **14. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE GROUPED PARISH AREA**

Councillor Dyke stated that Wessex Internet had been awarded the Government grant to provide full fibre to this area. Councillor Burt stated that she would find out a local contact and report back.

## **15. HIGHWAYS**

### **a. Fingerpost Restoration**

Councillor Beer reported that he has now completed the fingerpost in Kittwhistle and has finished it off in black and white which was the preferred colours of such signs between 1933 and 1965. Councillor Beer stated that he has not as yet added the finial to the top as he is currently in discussion with Dorset AONB to see if a pattern could be made and retained by Bridport Foundry and made available for others with similar restorations. This would significantly reduce the costs for each finial from £85.00 to £35.00 plus VAT. Councillor Dyke stated that this must be the way forward. Councillor Beer also stated that he has made an agreement with the main AONB Co-ordinator for Dorset that in the meantime if brackets are required, then he can purchase at half price. With regard to the fingerpost by Pound Cottage, Burstock, this has been removed and taken to his house, ready for restoration. Councillor Dyke asked Councillor Beer if he has a running order of which signs will be repaired. Councillor Beer stated that the sign at Childhay needs attention and stated that the size of the lettering is unusual for this part of Dorset and that he is keeping prices as cheap as possible and will send an estimate to the Clerk. The Clerk asked for some photos to be forwarded as the Parish Council is funding the project. Councillor Beer stated that he would like to look at the fingerpost sign at the Cross Keys, Broadwindsor as Dorset Council changed it to aluminium with vinyl letters, some of which are now peeling off. Councillor Beer also stated that in his opinion the sign has too much information and is confusing for motorists and that he would like to thin it down. Councillor Beer stated that Dorset Council is only interested in the brown signs which generate income and given that, they can put their own post up next to the fingerpost for these signs. Councillor Dyke stated that costs needed to be considered and the Clerk asked if there were others more in need of restoration which need to be prioritised. It was agreed to review all signs and agree on those to be completed first.

### **b. Deterioration of Bridge, Bridleway W23/60 off Oathill Lane, Broadwindsor**

Councillor Dyke stated that the Clerk had contacted the Senior Ranger at Dorset Council, the Clerk stated that as the matter was first reported in 2023, in the first instance the Parish Council needs an update. Councillor Beer stated that after reviewing the map, access to the bridleway from Wayford is via a footpath which should not be used by horses. Councillor Dyke asked the Clerk to chase a response from Dorset Council and push to get these remedial works underway.

## **16. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION**

### **a. Items for next Agenda from Members of the Council**

None.

### **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 convene at 7.45 pm on Monday 8 July 2024 at Comrades Hall.

**19. CLOSE**

The meeting of the Parish Council was formally closed at 8.38 pm, Councillor Dyke thanked everyone for attending and for their participation.