

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Litton Cheney Parish Council held on 7:30pm on Tuesday 09 July 2024 At Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

The council is recommended to resolve that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 12 by reason of the confidential nature of the items of business to be transacted, in accordance with section 1(2) of the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960.

Present: Cllr Orchard CHAIR, Cllr Firrell VICE, Cllr Blacke, Cllr Price, Cllr King, Cllr Matthews, Lucy Beasley CLERK

1. Apologies for absence:

None received

Invited: not present: Cllr Sally Holland

2. Declarations of interest:

Cllrs King and Firrell declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grant for LATCH.

3. Democratic time

Two parishioners attended.

One parishioner enquired about results from a housing survey undertaken 7 years prior and suggested that a new housing survey might be undertaken. The council agreed that further discussions on affordable housing in the village were important and would consider another survey.

4. Approval of Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on 14 May 2024 and 27 June 2024

Proposed Cllr Firrell. Seconded Cllr Matthews and unanimously agreed to be a true record.

5. Matters arising since previous meeting not part of this Agenda

Regarding the Chimney Flue for Fry's Paint Shop:

Mike Pinney, Contract Director at Fry's was amenable to changing the colour of the flue and proposed 'anthracite' to match existing fittings, subject to approval from Philip Fry.

6. Dorset Council overview - Ward Councillor for Chesil Bank: Cllr Sally Holland N/A

7. Clerk's/RFO's report including:

- To note that the exercise of public rights and external auditing is underway.
- To adopt and approve NALC's Model publication of financial regulations (appended) These supersede the previous regulations adopted in 2020.
Proposed Cllr. Firrell, seconded Cllr Orchard and unanimously agreed.
- Approval of invoices for payment (appended to this agenda)
Proposed Cllr Blacke, seconded Cllr King and unanimously agreed.
- Approval of Schedule of Regular Payments (appended to this agenda)
Proposed Cllr Firrell, seconded Cllr King and unanimously agreed.

8. Councillors' Portfolios:

- Planning: Cllr Orchard

Dorset Rural Housing Association had been commissioned by DEFRA to push for affordable rural houses, available as rural exception sites. The council felt it would be of use to have a representative from Dorset Rural Housing Association visit to discuss the steps needed to search for exception sites. Cllr Orchard to arrange. Clerk to include a presentation on the agenda.

BO LB

- Removal of hedgerow near Court Farm

A section of hedgerow had recently been removed opposite the entrance to Court Farm.

Discussions were undertaken around the legislation that covers removal of hedgerows during nesting season and the potential for bat roosts. The council considered that the landowner had permission to remove the hedge and had done so lawfully. The landowner attended and advised that he and his contractors had personally conducted a search of the hedgerow and not seen evidence of nesting or roosting prior to removal.

It was noted that a condition of the permission to remove the hedge was to notify Dorset Council's Tree Officer prior to the work commencing and this had not been done.

The landowner advised that he hoped to gain planning consent to utilise the land adjacent to the removed hedge for residential properties and that a planning application was being prepared.

The landowner also advised that permission would shortly be sought to demolish 'Whitethorne' and erect two semi-detached cottages set back from the road in its place and invited the council to visit the site to discuss the proposal.

The council considered that in view of the landowner's plans to build several properties around the village, it would be positive to meet with him regularly to informally discuss current/future applications and proposals.

Cllr Orchard agreed to arrange a meeting between the landowner and available councillors. **BO**

- Highways/Transport: Cllr Price
 - The white line at entrance to Charity Farm was to be reinstated.
 - Whiteway and HGV weight limit

Dorset council had now designed the signs to be deployed along the A35, awaiting approval from National Highways. It was hoped that new MP Edward Morello could be called upon to assist with the project. It was noted that Dorset Council do not currently have the funds to erect the signs.

- Road Condition

Dorset Council's Community Highways Officer Stuart Smith had travelled around the area and noted key problems including the national cycle route stretch, but didn't feel that Litton Cheney had a strong case for carriageway improvement against other priorities in the Bride Valley, although Parks Lane and Looke Lane, both outside the parish, were in line for in-situ recycling of road surface.

- Closures

The Looke Lane closure was due to finish on 19 July

- Playground/ Playing Field/Allotments: Cllr King

Grass cutting was up to date. Cllr King to request a copy of the contract from Dorset Council **AK**

Enquiries had been made regarding replacement hard standing under the swings which was in poor condition. Wet pour safety surface replacement was around £3000 from Redlynch, comprising £2400 for new material and £600 for removal of the old material. Further quotes could be sought.

The council felt this work was important and would comprise a good use of the CIL funds.

Allotments were fully occupied, and dues had been paid to the council.

- Countryside Matters/Footpaths/Rights of Way: Cllr Blacke
 - Maize field footpath

It was noted that the footpath running through the maize field near the village was hard to discern. The landowner was present and agreed to mow the footpath.

- Proposal to establish an all-weather permissive path from Redway to School Lane

The council was asked to consider whether a safe route from Redway to School Lane that would allow children to walk to school off the road was feasible. It was noted that the current permissive path flooded badly and was wet most of the year. A parishioner noted that an improved path would

make the village more accessible to those with access needs. Due to livestock grazed in adjoining fields and the need to fence both sides of the path it was considered a potentially difficult and costly proposal. The council proposed that a costed plan and identifying funding sources would be the next step.

Cllr Blacke to investigate the costs involved in upgrading the permissive path and share at next meeting. **QB LB**

- Village Fabric/ Maintenance: DAPTC/BLAP/Administration and Probity: Cllr Firrell

Cllr Firrell noted that DAPTC and BLAP meetings were mostly productive and useful, offering an opportunity to network with other councils/councillors from across Dorset and a bridge between the unitary authority and the smaller councils.

A letter was to be sent to new MP Edward Morello from BLAP on behalf of all local PCs outlining the main issues faced by small parishes in Dorset.

- Telecommunications/IT: Cllr Matthews

Cllr Matthews had been using social media to encourage local householders to apply for ultra fast (fibre) broadband where it was available and noted that Openreach had been in the village making fibre upgrades to the existing poles. It was hoped that 'full fibre' would reach most of the village in 2-3 months.

- Digital Switchover

It was noted that the 'end date' for analogue phone lines was now January 2027 and those with burglar alarms or phone systems that required analogue connection would need to switch to VOIP or a digital service ahead of time.

9. Planning Matters

Cllr Firrell and Cllr Price were due to attend a meeting at County Hall regarding possible enforcement action at Parks Farm (ACE) and hoped to have information to share at the September meeting. **JF AP**

- P/FUL/2024/03321 Proposal: Erection of general-purpose storage building.
Location: Land Known As Litton Lakes, Litton Lane

It was noted that although the campsite was in operation for 6 months of the year, infrastructure like storage sheds and amenity blocks could be permanent. The landowner was present and advised that the store would comprise 3 partitioned sections: Wood storage, Woodwork workshop, Mower storage. It would incorporate storage for the café. The landowner noted that as the mower and equipment were already stored on the hardstanding there would be no loss of parking, and that parking for the site was already sufficient for their needs.

Proposal to support the application:

Proposed Cllr Firrell, Seconded Cllr Matthews, passed 5:1

10. Community Infrastructure levy (CIL): To discuss proposals and potential uses for the CIL.

- LATCH Solar PV System: To consider £4000 grant towards installation costs and purchase.

Cllr King advised that the Solar Project at LATCH was underway with installation due on 25 July with completion due by 29 July. Grants from the school and Low Carbon Dorset had secured £10000 of funding and a further £4000 was sought from the PC.

Proposal to fund a grant of £4000 to LATCH for the installation of solar panels.

Proposed Cllr Orchard, seconded Cllr Blacke and unanimously agreed (Cllr Firrell and Cllr King did not vote) **LB**

- Village road sign refurbishment: To seek costs for refurbishment and to consider funding same from CIL payments.

Whiteway, Hinds Mead Lane, Garden Close, School Lane and Paddocks all had traditional metal cream and green signs that the council considered were due for repair, refurbishment or replacement. It was agreed that quotes for the same should be sought from suitable professionals and to be added to September's meeting agenda for consideration. **LB.**

11. Motion to exclude members of the public due to the confidential nature of the following agenda item.

Proposed Cllr Firrell, seconded Cllr Orchard, unanimously agreed. The parishioners were thanked for their attendance and welcomed to attend again.

12. Staffing review.

It was proposed to delegate the power to recruit a new Clerk to the Chair and Vice-Chair in conjunction with present Clerk, Lucy, and Shipton Gorge PC.

Proposed Cllr Matthews, seconded Cllr Blacke and unanimously agreed.

13. Date of next meeting: The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday 10 September.

Meeting closed 21:44

Lucy Beasley, Parish Clerk