

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of Litton Cheney Parish Council
held on Tuesday 14 March 2023

Present: Bill Orchard (Chairman); Quentin Blacke; John Firrell; Andrew King; Andrew Price; Bella Spurrier, Maggie Walsh (Clerk), Lucy Beasley (Clerk).

Also in attendance Cllr Mark Roberts and 3 Members of the Public

1. Apologies: Cllr Sue Hewish

2. Declarations of Interest: None

3. Democratic time:

- A parishioner reported a 'near miss' accident with a HGV on Whiteway and raised a number of safety concerns: Speed on the road, steep incline, gravelly passing places, blind bends and the blind summit. Cllr. Firrell explained that the Parish Council had been working with Dorset Council and National Highways for many years to improve road safety in Litton Cheney. The 30mph speed limit had been recently introduced and a weight limit stopping HGVs using Whiteway would be soon brought in it was hoped. Progress on this was slowed by lack of funds at NH and DC.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 09 January 2024: It was proposed by Cllr Firrell, seconded by Cllr Blacke and carried unanimously that these be approved.

5. Matters arising since the previous meeting not part of this agenda:

The council thanked Maggie Walsh for her hard work as Clerk.

The council welcomed Lucy Beasley as the new Clerk.

The council noted a road closure on Main Street and that notices had been posted.

6. Dorset Council overview: Cllr Mark Roberts gave a verbal report:

- Dorset Council had met and approved a balanced budget with no cuts to services and well managed reserves.
- Central Government had allocated a £700k Rate Support Grant for all of Dorset. Many authorities received a lot more.
- In the future DC may choose to combine with at least one other council to go to the government for infrastructure funding.

- Dorset are the number 1 upper tier council for recycling. Congratulations to all.
- There were 42 farms currently let by Dorset Council, who were looking at merging some farms and giving 10 year tenancies. It had been agreed that the DC farm estate should remain a constant size.

7. Finance Report and Invoices for approval: (Clerk and RFO)

Maggie Walsh shared a written report and gave a verbal summary:

Employee costs had increased due to a national pay award and outgoing salary being added.

Since the agenda was published an additional invoice had been received from the DAPTC Councillor Networking Event.

The new total of invoices due for payment was £1330.31

It was proposed by Cllr Orchard, seconded by Cllr Firrell and carried unanimously that these be approved.

It was noted that DAPTC had requested a voluntary donation of £30 towards the cost of producing their election videos that had been shared on the village website.

It was proposed by Cllr Firrell, seconded by Cllr King and carried unanimously that this donation be approved.

8. Councillors' portfolios:

Planning (Bill Orchard, Chairman) Cllr Orchard reported on the recent Councillor Networking event he attended at Kingston Maurward and had circulated written notes.

Other planning matters:

- No applications had been received.

Highways/Transport (Andrew Price)

Cllr Price gave a verbal report thanking parishioners for coming forward with information on 'near miss' incidents and asked that all incidents be reported to the council. Two incidents had been reported since the last meeting.

Cllr. Firrell and Cllr. Price had met with the case officer engaged in resolution of the problems at Parks Farm and the unauthorised excavation of the area car park. Further meetings and investigations were necessary in order to bring this to a mutually satisfactory situation.

Some small road closures had been necessary for Openreach work.

Major concerns over general roadway deterioration after flooding. Cllr. Price to review with CHO and ask for urgent repairs and improvements.

Cllr. Price urged parishioners to keep reporting potholes and repairs through the Dorset Council Website.

AP

Agricultural Liaison/Footpaths/Rights of Way/ (Bella Spurrier/Quentin Blacke):

Cllr. Blacke and Cllr. Firrell had a productive meeting with the new DC Ranger at LATCH. With regards to the bridleway at West End Farm, Robin Gale apparently has a document from the local authority indicating it is not a bridleway. This is an issue that will run and run dependent on which side you are on. At this point there is little the PC can do to contribute to a satisfactory resolution.

Cllr. Blacke advised that the bridge at Chilcombe Stream was not fixed. DC do not have funds to fix it but would match fund a contribution from the village. The approximate cost to fix the bridge was £1000.

The fundraising would be separate from the Bench Fund. It was hoped that walkers and residents may wish to contribute. Cllr Firrell to mention a new 'Bridge Fund' in the BVN.

JF

The previous Ranger, Russell Goff, was now the Green Spaces Manager for Dorset. The new local Ranger was Stuart Semple who had been very helpful so far.

Playground/Playing Field/Allotments (Andy King):

Cllr. King gave a verbal report and had met with the allotment group. The allotments were all full and there was one parishioner on the waiting list.

The allotments were very damp but otherwise fine.

Grass cutting costs had increased slightly.

The old goal posts had been removed.

A car was stuck in the soft ground of the playground but was due to be removed.

Cllr. King planned to gather opinions on the current playground and how to improve the apparatus.

Mole repair and gully clearance working groups were planned for after Easter.

Village Fabric/Maintenance/BLAP/DAPTC/ Administration & Probity (John Firrell)

Cllr Firrell gave a verbal report and advised that:

High water tables had manifested in Baglake. The Flood warden was taking this up with the Flood Risk Manager for Dorset who had advised that when the water level dropped they would meet with the Flood Warden and offer what advice they can to mitigate flood risk.

The litter pick was confirmed for later in the month. Cllr. Firrell thanked those offering their time for that task and confirmed that DC had agreed to collect the spoils from behind the Jubilee Hut once the pick was completed.

June 6th would mark the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. A 'Lamp Light of Peace' had been purchased to be lit each year for all periods of Remembrance. The Union flag would also be flown.

Full Fibre: Openreach had previously indicated that full fibre would be installed in Long Bredy and Litton Cheney in the next few months but were now reporting delays. The need for replacement poles may form part of the delay and Cllr. Firrell urged councillors to speak with landowners who may be resistant to pole changes to enable this important project to move forward.

Cllr. Firrell had attended DAPTC and BLAP meetings and shared notes prior to the meeting.

Climate Emergency and Environment (Vacant) Nothing to report.

9. New planning application for consideration at the meeting:

None received.

10 Correspondence not dealt with as part of the agenda: None received.

11. Date of next meeting: The Annual Parish Assembly would precede the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and be held at 7:15pm on Tuesday 14 May 2024.

Meeting closed 20:59

Lucy Beasley
Parish Clerk