

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2016 and held at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall Litton Cheney

Present: W. Orchard (Chairman), S. Kourik (Deputy Chairman), Mrs D. Cheater, I. Homer, Dr H. Lantos, Mrs A. Spurrier and Parish Clerk J. Firrell. Also in attendance Cllr J. Russell (District Councillor) and six local residents.

1. **Apologies:** C. Franklin.

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None.

3. **Democratic Time:** The Chairman invited those present to bring any matter that concerned them to the attention of the Parish Council, but to restrict comments to three minutes in duration. Mrs S. Dyke raised the subject of **HGV's** transiting the village. The Chairman explained that HGV movement were being monitored locally and regular meetings were now being held with Ashley Chase Estates, Long Bredy PC and DCC. It was hoped that as a result HGV movements would be mitigated both now and the future. The next meeting would be held next week. Mr A King asked if a **speed limit** had been considered as a means of controlling traffic speed in the village. S. Kourik explained that Litton Cheney had opted many years ago not to bring in a speed limit within the village as it would require a considerable amount of extra street furniture (signs) or the installation of street lights. Roadside parking helped control the speed of traffic down Main Street but if the problem persisted there may be the need to consider the matter again at some point. Mr J. Williams said he would be prepared to pass on information regarding local footpaths if required. He also mentioned the **poor state** of Chalk Pit Lane, the drainage in Hines Mead Lane and the constant water problem in School Lane. The Clerk stated that both the state of Chalk Pit Lane and water problem in School Lane had been reported to the local authority on several occasions and would be again. It is likely that the water problem in School Lane is the responsibility of Wessex Water and this would be followed.

4. **Review of Trees Works Policy:** As indicated at the previous meeting by the Chairman, it was an appropriate time to review this "policy" to ensure that it adequately dealt with the matter of tree work applications which the Parish Council is asked to consider from time to time. The Chairman had distributed a paper to councillors which set out the rationale both for and against the current procedure. It was a comprehensive appraisal of the situation and councillors were asked to express a preference – continue as before requesting the Tree Officer to apply his professional expertise on behalf of the PC or change the emphasis to consider matters such as parish resident's amenity value and to take account of biodiversity.

All councillors put forward a view. Dr H. Lantos did not feel there was need to change the current practice, and a number of councillors indicated their agreement. An email had been received from WDDC Tree Officer Ron Martin, in response to the PC's question, confirming that all required aspects were taken into consideration. Cllr John Russell was asked how other parish councils dealt with this issue and he indicated that they too left it to the Tree Officer. It was agreed by all that the effective management of trees was essential

in order to maintain healthy woodland stock. After further discussion it was proposed by W. Orchard, seconded by Dr H. Lantos and carried unanimously that the Parish Council continue with their current procedure of requesting the Tree Officer to apply his knowledge and expertise on behalf of the Parish Council. On receipt of tree works applications, councillors will have the chance to make any comment when the details are circulated. In the event that considerable concern was expressed a meeting may be necessary.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th November 2015: Proposed by S. Kourik, seconded by Mrs A. Spurrier and carried unanimously that the minutes be approved and that they represented a true reflection of the meeting.

6. Matters Arising from the previous meeting and not covered at this meeting:
Magna Green – This continued to rumble on but the Clerk indicated he thought the lease would be forthcoming shortly as he had received a positive message from our legal advisor Katharine Jones just before Christmas. Defibrillator – Both the defibrillator and cabinet had now been purchased and were ready to be installed once a location had been confirmed. Travel Plan (Ashley Chase Estates) – As previously mentioned, a meeting would be held next week. One of the matters under discussion would be the 10-day closure of the road through Long Bredy for superfast broadband work to be carried out which would mean additional HGV's coming through Litton Cheney. Ashley Chase Estates had stated that they would try to keep traffic movements to a minimum during this period.

7. WDDC Overview: The Chairman invited Councillor John Russell to bring the Parish Council up to date on District Council matters. Cllr. Russell highlighted a local movement that was demanding to hold a referendum on whether the District Council should become a Unitary Authority. The Council were resisting the move and it was stated that the referendum would cost in the region of £91K that would have to be paid out of local funds.

8. Finance Report: Current funds stood at £5750.39 as of 9th January 2016. The sum of £931 previously held for the village defibrillator had now been expended, The costs so far for the defibrillator was £1084 incl. £114 Vat which is re-imbursable. Income since November had been £0.17pm (Interest) and expenditure was £2126.60 including Churchyard maintenance £500.00, Humphries Kirk £369.60 (Magna Green), British Heart Foundation £400 (Defibrillator), Cabinet for Defibrillator £684 and Clerk's Salary £173. Invoices requiring approval – R. Randall (Grass Cutting) £390.00, J. Firrell (Purchase of poo signs) £27.90, J. Williams (Triangle) £37.50 and Vision ICT (Village website) £60.00. Proposed by S. Kourik, seconded Mrs A. Spurrier and carried unanimously that they be approved for payment. Village Precept 2015/16 – This item was carried over from November. WDDC have requested that all precept bids be submitted before the end of January. After a discussion whereby councillors were brought up to date with the current state of play it was proposed by I. Homer, seconded by Mrs D. Cheater and carried unanimously that the village precept remain at £3600 for 2016/17. There is a small support grant of £49. After note – WDDC informed on 17th January. Cllr R. Coatsworth's divisional fund stands at £440 and the accumulated S106 Fund for Litton Cheney is £4400. Allotment Rents – Expected shortly. An invoice for basketball equipment for £90 is still outstanding from the Chairman. It was agreed to purchase a new bin for the bus shelter at a cost in the region of £75-£100. Reclaimable VAT stood at £215.65. Parish Clerk's Absence – The Parish Clerk would not be at the July Parish Council Meeting and tendered his apologies. He would seek out someone who could record the minutes of that meeting.

9. Councillors Portfolios: Highways/Footpaths/RoW – S. Kourik whose brief this was

indicated a need to report potholes that were appearing as a result of excessive rainfall. He agreed with an earlier comment that several roads in the village were in a poor state and this would be brought to the attention of Dorset Highways. He was delighted to announce that Mrs Madelaine Hickling, ably assisted by husband Graham, had offered to take on the duties of Parish Footpaths and Rights of Way Officer. The Parish Council heartily endorsed their appointment. S. Kourik would brief them on their duties/responsibilities. Footpaths – documentation had been requested to allow for a footpath within the curtilage of The Old Rectory to be re-routed to in fact follow the route that has been in use by local villagers for in excess of twenty years. The Rocks – In discussion with Dorset County Council they had suggested the possibility of using a new rubberised material to “cover” the slippery surface of The Rocks. It was expensive and a quote was expected in due course when it would be considered. S. Kourik told the meeting DCC had funding that could go towards exchanging some footpath stiles with self-closing pedestrian gates and that he would ask the RoW Liaison Officers to let him know which stiles should be replaced so that landowners could be asked if they would accept this.

Playing Field/Allotments – Mrs D. Cheater led on this subject. A further scheme and location had been received from another playground company and this was being evaluated. In discussion it was agreed that the scheme should be approached on a three option basis, economy, middle of the road and dream ticket and should be based on an enclosed area for the playground. It was agreed the scheme should be progressed and presented at the May Village Assembly. Neighbourhood Plan – The Chairman informed the meeting that the Parish Council had met informally with Jo Wittenden who used to work for the Planning Dept of WDDC. Because of her insider knowledge and experience of dealing with neighbourhood plans it was felt she would be able to guide us through what could turn out to be a minefield. The process would cost in the region of £8K and facilitated by a grant although other costs may have to be taken into account. The Neighbourhood Plan would be placed on the PC's March agenda when various aspects of the task would be discussed with the possibility of presenting this to the Village Assembly in May. Superfast Broadband – Dr H. Lantos had been informed that the service is likely to be available in Litton Cheney from February.

10. **Review of Standing Orders:** The Chairman proposed that a review of the Parish Council's Standing Orders be undertaken by himself and the Parish Clerk with a view to presenting them to the Parish Council at the March meeting. The review would take account of recent legislation. Proposed by S. Kourik, seconded by Mrs D. Cheater and carried unanimously.

11. **Dog Poo – Call to Arms:** It had been agreed that this should be an agenda item at the last meeting, the main reason being to bring this matter to the attention of local residents. Signs had been purchased and would be displayed in suitable locations, and a further missive placed in February's BVN and on the village website. It is beholding for all local residents whether they are dog owners or not to play their part in policing this problem which also creates problems for the majority of residential UK and surrounding areas. The Parish Council can in certain circumstances fine offending owners under local council by-laws. The message is clear – Clean up after your dog, and if you see a dog owner not doing so remind them of their civic responsibility, and, sad to say, if they do not clean up, report them to the Parish or West Dorset Council.

12. **Planning Matters: Mobile Phone Mast** – The meeting was informed of the present state of the mobile phone mast situation. The PC has had two meetings with Oliver Letwin and have been in contact with Arqiva the company originally contracted to provide this

facility. Government funding for areas where mobile phone reception is poor or non-existent terminates in March 2016 so it will be necessary to seek another source of funding and Oliver Letwin is assisting in that regard. The PC will attempt to bring the situation to the point where a planning application can be made so that various milestones are in place ready for the project to move forward. Other developments in the communication field such as the new system for the police and emergency services may well have an impact. A further meeting has been arranged with Oliver Letwin in April prior to the Village Assembly in May when it is hoped matters will have moved considerably further forward. Land adjacent to Barges Close – This application has now been withdrawn. The Old Rectory – The two tree works applications have yet to be determined but it is possible that the matter will be referred to the WDDC planning committee.

13. **Correspondence not dealt with as part of the agenda:** None.

14. **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 8th March 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

15. Prior to the meeting being closed, S. Kourik on behalf of the Parish Council offered commiserations to wife Barbara and the family of Frank Whillock who had recently died aged 93. He would be fondly remembered by all who knew him. The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.15 p.m.

J. Firrell
Parish Clerk