

## LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Litton Cheney Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 14 January 2020 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

Present: Bill Orchard (Chairman); Kathryn Brooks; John Firrell; Andy King; Andrew Price, Maggie Walsh (Clerk); Mark Roberts (Dorset Council); and 1 local resident.

- 1. Apologies:** Bella Spurrier
- 2. Declarations of interest:** None
- 3. Democratic time:** No matters arising
- 4. Approval of Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 November 2019** - it was proposed by Cllr Firrell seconded by Cllr Brooks and carried unanimously that these minutes be approved.
- 5. Dorset Council (DC) overview** – Cllr Mark Roberts reported that DC was preparing the budget for 2020-21. This was difficult as central government now allocated funding for just 1 year ahead (formerly 4 years). DC's objective was to maintain all services at current levels, except for Adult and Children's services budgets which would increase to meet growing demand. These 2 services were by far DC's biggest expenditure and were hard to predict as they were demand led. Brexit may impact on budgets as adult services relied heavily on foreign workers. DC had inherited a number of boarding houses in Weymouth from the Borough Council and must decide what to do with these assets. Buses were not part of current financial agenda but Councillors' regarded them as important. MR had received assurances that the school bus route through the Bride Valley would be gritted. Any money saved from gritting budgets as a result of the mild weather would be needed for potholes. Works to bury mains power cables in and around Winterborne Abbas and Askerswell would take 3 years and involve lengthy road closures. There was a new Head of Planning. The land supply would not be amalgamated across the county until 2024: currently West Dorset's land supply was "robust enough" to defend against greenfield development proposals and the Local Plan was considered in date. Cllr Brooks would resend details of outstanding planning applications to MR for him to follow up. **KB/MR**

MR also undertook to follow up with Highways re proposals for the collapsed stream bank and also the PC's outstanding request to clear drains on Whiteway. **MR**

- 6. Matters arising not part of the agenda:** None.
- 7. Annual Finance Report** (Maggie Walsh, Clerk and RFO) At the time of publishing the agenda (6 January) Parish funds stood at £14,852.62. Spend since September's meeting was £2,049.25 comprising £968.53 for grass cutting, £580.72 clerk's salary and £500.00 donation to the churchyard. Income since November's meeting was £ 300.10 comprising £250 donation from Litton Cheney Trust towards the repair of the finger post, £50 contribution from LATCH towards the annual village website fee and 0.10p interest.

Invoices for approval There were 2 invoices for approval: £250 contribution to Dorset Council towards repair of the finger post; £60.00 to Vision ICT for annual website fee. It was proposed by Cllr Firrell, seconded by Cllr Price and carried unanimously that these be approved.

2020-2021 Precept Parish Councillors had read the Clerks report (appended) and there were no questions. Cllr Firrell proposed that the Precept remain at £10,600, as recommended by the Parish Clerk. This was seconded by Cllr Orchard and carried unanimously. The budget for the following year would therefore be as set out in the appended report. **MW**

- 8. Councillors' portfolios:**
  - Footpaths/Rights of Way (Bill Orchard, Chairman) Cllr Orchard was in the process of delivering paperwork to the 37 villagers who could provide a witness statement attesting that they had used Watery Lane for a number of years. A farmer had come forward to say he had deeds that established his ownership of Watery Lane and that he had no objection to it being registered as a public footpath.
  - Highways/Transport (Andrew Price) Cllr Price had asked DC to clear the drains on Whiteway and had followed this up several times but received no response: there was concern that water running

down the road was eroding the banks. DC had sent a street cleaning vehicle which had done a great job throughout the village. A stone wall had collapsed on Redway and it had been difficult to establish responsibility. Recently, mud on roads had been an issue: complaints had been registered with DC but the PC did not know what, if any, action had been taken with regard to offending farmer(s). Cllr Price had removed multiple large bags filled with large amounts of rubbish that had been dumped along the length of Whiteway. Parish Councillors thanked him for their efforts and noted that a number of public-spirited villagers picked up litter. It was sad that individuals dumped rubbish in this way rather than disposing of it properly but prevention or prosecution was difficult and the only option seemed to be to arrange more frequent litter picks.

Playground/Playing Field/Allotments (Andy King) Cllr King had been made Chairman of the Allotment Society. One plot was vacant. He awaited a quote from DC for a reduced number of grass cuts on the playing field but with the addition of the allotment edge for the current year. The playground inspection was in hand. Cllr King would address any outstanding playground maintenance issues in the Spring. There had been some flooding at the top of the playing field and the ground was still too wet for hedge cutting vehicles to gain access.

Village Fabric/Maintenance/Devolved Services (John Firrell) Water had been cascading down The Rocks and the footpath was hazardous. The day before the PC meeting, Russell Goff of DC had proposed rerouting the water where it currently diverts under Redway: piping it under the path into an open gully beside the footpath connecting to the stream at the bottom. Work would cost £2,400 and DC had requested a contribution of £1,000 from Litton Cheney PC, if this were acceptable, work would start on Tuesday 21 January. Given this was a matter of urgency, he proposed the Parish Council contribute £1,000 to DC towards these works. A third party had agreed to contribute £300, reducing the net contribution to £700. This proposal was seconded by Cllr King and unanimously carried.

Dorset Council had some money left in the budget and had undertaken to produce costings for 2 options with regard to the collapsed stream bank:

- (a) Install bollards adjacent to stream bank and mark white lines opposite to discourage parking
- (b) Piping the stream at this point. This was the PC's preferred approach. The EA had opposed this option as pipes can block but it was hoped to persuade them otherwise as unblocking a pipe would be easier and less costly than constantly repairing the stream bank.

Cllr Firrell would bring forward a proposal regarding the Triangle/bus shelter area once he had received quotes from DC to install new kerbing.

DC believed that the roots of a tree in The Old Rectory may be causing tarmac to lift at the bottom of the Rocks. DC and the owner of The Old Rectory had agreed that the tarmac should be lifted to assess the problem and determine a possible solution.

Planning/Climate Emergency (Kathryn Brooks): DC had asked for ideas on how to reduce its environmental impact by end of February. KB would involve the school in drafting some proposals to bring back before the PC.

There had been one new planning application since the last meeting

- WD/D/19/002804 2 CHURCH PATH DT2 9AQ. Removal of front boundary hedge and erection of wall. Parish Councillors had considered this via email and registered no objection, requesting that the wall be constructed using stone sympathetic to neighbouring structures.

The following planning matters were outstanding: -

- WD/D/19/001897 LAND EAST OF, 7-8 GARDEN CLOSE - Demolition of double garage and erection of 1no. dwelling, garage block, access and parking. There had been several objections. No update from case officer.
- WD/D/19/001427 & WD/D/19/1428 2 CHARITY FARM COTTAGES, MAIN STREET DT2 9AP - Erect single storey extensions. No update from the case officer.
- WD/D/19/001463 CHARITY FARM, MAIN STREET DT2 9AP - Erection of 6no. dwellings & conversion of a redundant agricultural building to a dwelling (with variation of conditions 4, 5 & 6 of planning permission WD/D/17/000758 to amend approved plans). The Section 106 was being redrafted to reflect the changes to the application and the variation of the conditions. A new landscaping plan was submitted in November.

The following application had been approved since the last meeting:

- WD/D/19/001613 MEADOWBANK, SCHOOL HOUSE LANE, DT2 9AU - Erect Front & Rear Extensions.

There was no update regarding the outstanding enforcement complaint at Litton Lake but KB had reviewed aerial photographs and could find no evidence of the breaches in 2017. (Postdate – the PC understands that the landowner has now appointed a planning agent to submit an application.)

**9. New planning applications for consideration at the meeting**

A35 Dorchester Road, DT2 9AA – erection of 12m monopole mast (WD/D/19/003166) whilst understanding and supporting the need for the mast, Parish Councillors were concerned about the proposed location. It was proposed by Cllr Price, seconded by Cllr Firrell and carried unanimously that the PC OBJECT to the application for the following reason:

“Litton Cheney Parish Council, whilst accepting and supporting the need for the mast, objects to the proposed location which could not be more prominent and exposed. This is a spectacular viewpoint within the AONB. The development is quite large, dwarfing similar roadside emergency facilities. The next best location (around 100m down Whiteway) would offer a less intrusive position with the advantages of existing screening and being below the skyline. The Parish Council therefore requests that careful consideration be given to resiting the mast. The Parish Council also requests that, wherever sited, careful consideration be given to the colour of the mast to minimise its visibility. The Parish Council notes the consultation response submitted by the AONB Landscape Planning Officer.”

- 10. Future use of telephone box** This had been discussed before at Parish Council meetings but was back on the agenda because there had been recent press coverage concerning the decommissioning of a large number of phone boxes. Villagers had previously suggested how the telephone box might be used once the phone was removed. Suggestions involving moving the kiosk or housing the defibrillator were problematic because of power supply, land ownership and the need for planning permission. Other suggestions had included a library and/or information point. Parish Councillors reiterated that, in principle, they would wish to adopt the kiosk and asked the Clerk in conjunction with Cllr Firrell to establish how many calls had been made and the process of adoption.

MW/JF

- 11. Proposal to support the Electricity Bill** Power for the People had asked Parish Councils to resolve to support the Local Electricity Bill. Should it become law, the bill would facilitate a number of local benefits for example retaining solar energy income locally. It was proposed by Cllr Firrell, seconded by Cllr Brooks and carried unanimously that Litton Cheney Parish Council

I) notes that the Local Electricity Bill

- aims to address the current situation, whereby the very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
- if made law, would make these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation and therefore empower councils, together with their communities, to sell locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and
- would result in councils or community organisations that set up local renewable electricity companies receiving revenues that could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities

II) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, supported by a cross-party group of 115 MPs during the 2017-19 Parliamentary session; and

III) further resolves to write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or [info@powerforpeople.org.uk](mailto:info@powerforpeople.org.uk)) expressing its support.

- 12. Correspondence not dealt with as part of the agenda – none**

- 13. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10 March 2020.** Apologies Cllr Price

**14. Meeting closed**

Maggie Walsh - Parish Clerk

## Appendix

### Litton Cheney Parish Council 2020-2021 Precept Report 14 January 2020

#### Summary and Recommendation

The Parish Council's finances are on track with no new pressures anticipated. Adequate reserves are maintained to cover any unforeseen or one-off significant payments.

The Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) therefore recommends that the **PRECEPT REMAIN AT £10,600 FOR 2020-2021 for the third consecutive year**. This represents an annual payment of £50.94 for a band D house: 0.27p less than last year due to a change in the tax base use by Dorset Council to calculate Council Tax.

#### Detailed consideration

Table 1 below sets out actual expenditure for the previous 3 financial years, estimated outturn for the current year and forecast expenditure for next year. During the current year, use of the lengthsman scheme has been curtailed in anticipation of works being needed to repair the collapsed stream bank. It is still unclear whether these works can be carried out in the current financial year, nor whether they can be undertaken by the lengthsman. The wet weather has also restricted access delaying hedge cutting. If these works are not completed by the end of March, the RFO estimates the budget could be underspent by up to £3,000, which would be carried forward for repairs/maintenance in the next financial year. However, all other budgets are on track for a negligible surplus at the year end.

Going forward, reserve balances are healthy, with appropriate annual contributions to named reserves. Some inflationary rises are anticipated in 2020-21, but these can be offset with savings made elsewhere, such as changing the providers for public liability insurance and playground inspections. VAT is excluded from projections as income cancels out expenditure (unless occurring in separate financial years).

Outturn	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Estimated	2020- 2021 Estimated
<b>Income</b>					
Precept & grant	£3,649	£7,225	£10,600	£10,600	£10,600
Allotment fees	£100	£85	£85	£85	£85
misc. income (donation from Litton Cheney Trust)			£620		
VAT	£279		£3,326	£655	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£4,028</b>	<b>£7,310</b>	<b>£14,631</b>	<b>£11,340</b>	<b>£10,685</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
Employee costs	£692	£2,151	£3,405	£3,480	£3,600
ROOM HIRE	£70	£65	£67	£69	£70
ADMIN	£726	£690	£1,002	£830	£830
maintenance	£1,147	£1,389	£3,177	£4,540	£4,000
donations/grants	£725	£700	£725	£725	£1,000
The Rocks		£420			
other	£341		£150		
VAT	£207	£328	£3,653	£122	
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£3,908</b>	<b>£5,743</b>	<b>£12,179</b>	<b>£9,766</b>	<b>£9,500</b>
<b>Balance of Income over payments</b>	<b>£120</b>	<b>£1,567</b>	<b>£2,452</b>	<b>£1,574</b>	<b>£1,185</b>
Annual contribution to ringfenced reserves			£1,200	£1,200	£1,200
Surplus of income after contribution to reserves			£1,252	£374	-£15