

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2015 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall Litton Cheney

Present: S. Kourik (Chairman), Mrs S. Dyke (Deputy Chairman), D. Bowen, I. Homer, W. Orchard and Clerk J. Firrell. Also attending Cllr R. Coatsworth, P. Stanfield (Wessex Water) and 4 local residents.

1. **Apologies:** Dr H. Lantos and Mrs A. Spurrier.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
3. **Democratic Time:** Mr F. Spicer asked if there was cause to recommence village litter picks as the village currently seemed to be festooned with litter. The Chairman agreed with Mr Spicer but stated that it would be far easier if it was organised, as in the past, by the Social Committee. If it was organised by the PC a whole host of rules would have to be applied including hi-vis jackets and signs. However, the village lengthsman, who was in attendance at this meeting, would undertake to break the back of the task now that the better weather appeared to be with us.
4. **Wessex Water:** The Chairman welcomed Paul Stanfield of Wessex Water who had kindly come along to explain present Wessex Water strategy relating to Litton Cheney and answer questions from the council and those attending. Mr Stanfield gave a brief historical background to Litton Cheney's connection with Wessex Water which began around 1960. Extraction amounts are strictly controlled under the licence, and dependent on the water capacity available. An annual licence is also in place. There have been several water quality issues from the west end of the village, the cause of which had yet to be fully identified. Litton Cheney source was currently a stand alone system but would at some point be linked up to the new water grid system. Various slides were shown and would be made available to the Parish Council showing how the grid was connected. Considerable problems with water quality and nitrate levels at Winterborne Abbas had resulted in the "source" being mothballed, and additional water brought in from a reservoir near Dorchester. The Litton source was often under pressure and the maximum level of extraction was often reached. The majority of Litton's water goes to Bridport and the villages in between.

Wessex Water are keen to work with communities and to this end a community grant scheme was available for environmental projects. Litton Cheney would look at this. Sir Chris Coville who had had extensive dealings with Wessex Water which continued to this day thanked Mr Stanfield for his comprehensive presentation of the current situation, however, he remained concerned that the level of water supply was not going to be sufficient in the near future and enquired what contingency plans were in place to deal with it. Mr Stanfield stated that Wessex Water were confident water supplies would hold up in the long term, but it was generally felt by those present that demands by an ever growing Bridport would put an additional strain on Litton's ability to supply. The Chairman said the village's winterbornes were already drying up whereas in the past they had been full of water. Wessex Water was able to give some assurances but accepted that concerns still existed. The Chairman thanked Mr Stanfield for attending the meeting and responding to the council and villagers concerns. Mr Stanfield promised to take back the village's concerns and would update the council in due course. At this point Mr Stanfield left the meeting together with three local residents.

5. **DCC/WDCC Overview:** The Chairman invited Cllr Ron Coatsworth to update the Parish Council regarding events at local authority level. a) A petition had been commenced by persons outside of the local authority which could result in a referendum being held on the competency of the district council and how “we” are governed. It could be a costly exercise and he stated that if people used their councillors more effectively, more could be achieved. b) There were problems with the DWP (Dorset Waste Partnership) and the CEO had been suspended whilst an investigation was carried out. c) The Council Tax relating to the District Council would rise by 1.9%. d) The village should consider implementing a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Coatsworth was informed that the PC had met earlier in the evening to discuss this very subject and would be investigating the matter further. e) He stated that there was still money available in his local community fund, and this would continue into the next fiscal year. The Chairman thanked Cllr Ron for his attendance and conveying current thinking. At this point Cllr Coatsworth left the meeting.

6. **Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2015:** It was proposed by D. Bowen, seconded by S. Kourik and carried unanimously that the Minutes accurately reflected the January Meeting.

7. **Matters arising from the previous meeting:** Hines Mead Lane – The situation regarding the gully would be monitored both locally and by WDDC. Cllr S. Dyke mentioned that large quantities of slurry are likely to be transported from Litton Cheney and this may add to the transport problems within the village. Ashley Chase Estates Travel Plan – Ashley Chase Estates had received conditional approval for their new storage extension. It was conditional on a Travel Plan being agreed by the surrounding villages and Ashley Chase Estates. Litton Cheney PC had suggested that it meets with Long Bredy PC in an attempt to agree a way forward and we awaited LC's response. It was stated that whilst Litton Cheney might be prepared to accept certain levels of transport in terms of size, the road widths, building density, longer journey and twists and turns, plus consideration for school transport and movement of children, did not give it much room to compromise. It was suggested the PC seek a meeting with Ian Madgwick, Highways Officer at DCC. Afternote – Meeting requested with Ian Madgwick. Magna Green – A draft lease appertaining to a 25 year lease period was awaited from Magna.

8. **Finance Report:** The Clerk/RFO stated that funds currently stood at £5187.04. Income since January had been £60.18p (£60 LCSC payment for village website hosting, 18p interest) and expenditure £450 (Grass cutting £390 and website hosting £60). A payment of £145 had recently been received from the Allotment Association for allotment rental. Invoices for LATCH hall hire for 2015/2016 of £48 (for payment in April) and The Play Inspection Co. of £114 were approved for payment. Proposed by I. Homer, seconded by W. Orchard and carried unanimously. Reimbursement of £97 worth of Vat was expected during March. It was proposed by W. Orchard, seconded by I. Homer and carried unanimously that donations to Bridport CAB of £75, Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance of £75 and BVN of £50 be made in April. It was confirmed by W. Orchard that the purchase of a padded support for the basketball equipment in the village playing field had been made and would be in place shortly.

9. **Councillors Portfolios:** Highways (W. Orchard) – Apart from the ongoing HGV problem which the PC were very aware of there was little more to report. Several potholes had emerged and would be reported. Playing Field/Allotments (D. Bowen) – An inspection had been carried out on the playground equipment and although some repairs were necessary all had been assessed at a low risk or very low risk level of causing injury. The Clerk would forward the report to D. Bowen and the village lengthsmen for necessary action. Sustainable Development (Mrs S. Dyke) – As previously mentioned, the PC had met earlier in the evening and discussed a neighbourhood plan. It had been decided that Mrs Dyke who was attending a NP seminar on 24th March would report back to the PC after the event, at which point a decision would be made to confirm or otherwise an

attendance by Jan Farnon of WDDC at the Village Annual Assembly in May to talk about putting together a Neighbourhood Plan. Superfast Broadband (Dr H. Lantos) – In the absence of Dr Lantos, the Chairman stated there was nothing further to report. Superfast broadband was still on schedule to be available in Litton Cheney during 2015. The radio mast planned for Coombe Farm was still a distinct possibility and a structural survey was being carried out on 11th March.

Footpaths/Lengthsman (S. Kourik) – Everything seemed OK but would welcome reports if otherwise. James Williams (Village Lengthsman) said that the footpath sign at the foot of The Rocks would soon be back in place. He reported that the sign near Court Close was leaning but he would rectify the problem. The litter problem in the village was reiterated and the need for everyone to play their part. The Clerk would put a piece in the BVN.

10. **Parish Council Elections:** Local elections including parish councils would be held on Thursday 7th May, the same day as the General Election. It was confirmed that Mrs S. Dyke would be standing down after 15 years of service to her local community. D. Bowen would also be standing down. Other councillors confirmed their willingness to stay on if re-elected. It was agreed that aside from general encouragement for people to “get involved” as a parish councillor, present councillors should approach those they thought might consider putting themselves up for election. Nomination papers had to be with WDDC by 4 pm on Thursday 9th April. A notice detailing the information about the election would be placed on village noticeboards on Monday 16th March and nominations papers would be available from the Parish Clerk. It was confirmed that the present Chairman of the Parish Council would remain in office until a successor has been elected. This would happen at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday 19th May.

11. **Planning Matters:** CG Fry & Son – The Parish Council raised no objection to their planning application to fill in the cantilevered section of their offices currently providing parking for cars. Beech House – This application had now been withdrawn. Glebe End – The Parish Council supported this application. After note – now approved. Manor Farm Close – A recent incident whereby several mature trees were cut back without permission, the area being in a conservation area, had been reported to the WDDC Tree Officer, Ron Martin, who was taking appropriate action, including possible prosecution, removal of damaged trees and replacements provided at the perpetrators' cost. The Chairman commented that it had been reported to him that there may be a problem in getting the perpetrators to “right their wrong”. After note – That situation has been reported to R. Martin.

It had been reported that some trees had been cut down in the vicinity of Whiteway House and the Tree Officer had been informed. It should be emphasised that the majority of Litton Cheney is in a conservation area and permission must be sought well in advance should work of any type be required on trees of a certain size, details of which can be found on the Dorset for You website.

12. **Correspondence:** None – all covered within this agenda.

13. **Date of Next Meeting:** Annual Meeting & Village Assembly, Tuesday 19th May, 7 pm.

14. **A.O.B.:** Wessex Water Property – Mrs S. Dyke was not sure which building Wessex Water would be selling which was referred to by Mr Stanfield, it being of no further use to WW. The White Horse – The pub was due to be vacated by present tenants, Val and Kelvan, and concerned was expressed that Palmers may leave it empty in the event they cannot find a suitable tenant. It was suggested the PC write to Palmers reiterating its wish and that of the local community that such circumstances should not result in the pub being left vacant. School Buses – James Williams updated the council on the school bus situation especially with regards to John Colfox school. The arrangements seemed to be in disarray and had resulted in an investigation taking place as to the legality of the “Damory” contract currently in place.

15. The Chairman in closing the meeting thanked everyone on the Parish Council for all their efforts under his chairmanship. He particularly thanked Mrs S. Dyke who had not only served on the Parish Council for 15 years, but for many of those years had served as Deputy Chairman. The meeting was closed at 9.55 pm.

J. Firrell
Parish Clerk