

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Litton Cheney Parish Council
held on Tuesday 13 March 2018 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

Present: Bill Orchard (Chairman); Kathryn Brooks, Steve Kourik; Maggie Walsh (Clerk). Also in attendance: Cllr John Russell, Cllr Mark Roberts and 6 local residents

1. **Apologies:** John Firrell; Andy King; Bella Spurrier,

2. **Declarations of interest:** none

3. **Democratic time**

The Rocks – several residents had contacted Dorset County Council about the planned resurfacing of The Rocks. They asked if the PC could provide an update as work had not begun. It was again suggested that the proposed works might make the situation worse and should be cancelled. The turnstiles were an important feature and DCC had indicated they could be retained in some way providing sufficient gap were left to meet accessibility requirements. What did the PC propose to do about the water currently flooding down the path?

Concern at proposed increase in the Clerk's hours and that this would place a strain on the PC's budget.

The PC did many good things but did not always promote this work. Examples given included the phone mast, improving the playing field and the village bus service. However, the PC should have been more transparent over the Rocks. The minutes had not properly reflected what happened at the meetings and more information should have been provided with the agenda in advance of the meeting. The Rocks should be on the agenda as an ongoing item until the works were completed.

4. **Approval of minutes:** Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 9 January and Minutes of Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 5 February - it was proposed by Cllr Kourik, seconded by Cllr Brooks and carried unanimously that both sets of minutes be approved.

5. **Matters arising from previous meeting not covered at this meeting:** none

6. **DCC/WDDC overview** – Cllrs Keith Day/Mark Roberts & Cllr John Russell

- Cllr Mark Roberts introduced himself. He reported that there would be two unitary authorities in Dorset. West Dorset would come under the newly named Dorset Council comprising the five existing District Councils and the County Council for those areas. The change was scheduled to happen in April 2019 and after the May elections the number of councillors would reduce from 176 to 82. Because of the tight timescale and the length of time it had taken the Secretary of State to reach a decision, a shadow board had been working behind the scenes for some time on a number of issues including
 - Harmonisation of council tax between the five District Councils
- Disposal of assets
- Devolution of services – however some services, such as Planning could not be devolved

The structure was not decided. There would probably not be area committees like those which existed in the past but it was unlikely that all services will be centralised. Cllr Kourik said the PC was working with BLAP and that services already identified as those that might be devolved to PC and TC level did not apply to Litton Cheney. However, no information had been provided with regard to which services might no longer be provided. Cllr John Russell responded that research was still underway and that no decisions had been made.

7. **Finance report – RFO** Maggie Walsh reported that parish funds currently stood at £20,082.19 (£7,850.45 general fund and £12,231.74 ringfenced for the playground). Approved spend since January's meeting was £816.70 comprising £766.70 clerk's salary (two bi-monthly payments) and £60 website fee. Income since January's meeting was £150.10 made up of 0.10p interest and £150 from the wine auction towards the playground fund – all moneys from the auction had now been received.

There was one invoice of £39.11 for Clerk's expenses (£31.66 mileage and £7.25 postage). It was proposed by Cllr Brooks, seconded by Cllr Kourik and carried unanimously that this be approved.

There would be an estimated year end balance of £7,400 in the general fund after deducting known commitments and income. MW had anticipated there would be a year end overspend but this would not now be the case as some costs, such as the bus shelter roof and lengthsman's scheme would not occur until the next financial year. The VAT refund was in hand. MW planned to circulate the financial report at the same time as the agenda – starting in May if possible but definitely by July.

Bill Orchard reported that the Clerk's contract of employment had been based on an estimated 20 hours per month but that Maggie Walsh had monitored the hours actually worked and provided evidence in late 2017 that she worked an average of 28+ hours per month. The additional cost of these hours was £940 per annum and this had been allowed for when calculating the precept – sufficient funds were therefore in the budget. Cllr Kourik proposed that the Clerk's contract of employment be varied to increase the contracted hours from 20 to 28 and that this change be backdated to 1 January. This was seconded by Cllr Orchard and carried unanimously.

8. **Councillors' portfolios: Highways/Transport** (Bill Orchard): several Parish Cllrs recently met with Wessex Water to discuss proposed replacement of a significant stretch of water main within the village. Works were due to start on 14 May and could take up to 10 weeks. The PC had visited the site and proposed some mitigation measures to reduce the impact on residents. These had been accepted and Wessex Water had undertaken to provide a traffic management plan. A Wessex Water representative would attend the Village Assembly on 8 May to outline the scheme to residents. The PC had not been notified about a closure to Chalkpit Lane the previous day and a school bus had had to reverse down the lane. Cllr Roberts undertook to raise this with highways.

MR

Playground/playing field/allotments (Andy King): the Chairman gave a written report from AK. Wet weather had delayed the playground, but work should be completed by the end of the week. Large vehicles (possibly belonging to DCC) using the field entrance had caused the embankment to start to collapse: threatening the stability of driveways to properties. Expert advice was being sought and there may need to be a future weight limit on vehicles using the entrance. There had also been reports of quad bikes using the field late at night and also that someone had used the field to give their child a "driving lesson". A lockable security post had been suggested although the PC understood that the field must remain accessible for emergency vehicles. The PC would write to DCC.

AK/BO

Three of the six advertised vacant allotment plots had been taken. Richard Cousins had not accepted responsibility for sheep damage to the allotments but had proposed carrying out works to the fencing on his side. The PC would obtain quotes for replacement fencing on the remaining sides.

AK

Grass cutting will resume when the ground dries out sufficiently or when the school/LATCH have their grass cut.

Footpaths/rights of way/mobile phone (Steve Kourik) The PC had not heard from BCC about resurfacing of The Rocks and had expected works to have started, but the weather had been very wet. Water had flooded down The Rocks because the concrete drainage pipe was blocked and rodding had been unsuccessful. SK believed a lined channel would be effective and more easily kept clear. He would contact Russell Goff at DCC to enquire about the proposed start date and feasibility/cost of completing a lined channel at the same time.

SK

It had been agreed at the previous meeting that there was no objection to keeping the turnstiles, providing a legal minimum gap could be maintained and SK confirmed the path was wide enough for this.

The mobile phone mast was in place, equipment was being installed, with a further road closure scheduled in April. SK did not yet know when it would go live.

Risk assessment/transparency code/annual report (Kathryn Brooks): the Model Publications Scheme, Risk Assessment and Transparency Code had been updated. It was proposed by Cllr Brooks, seconded by Cllr Orchard and carried unanimously that the amended documents be approved. KB would ask David Hearn to publish the updated documents on the website; some other items on the website needed updating and she would work with DH to address these. **KB** KB awaited information from WDDC in response to her enquiry regarding the breakdown of council tax within Litton Cheney. KB requested that an action column be added to the minutes. MW undertook to do this. MW also reported that the Asset Register would be updated to reflect any changes, including new playground equipment, in time for renewal of the insurance. **MW**

Village fabric/maintenance/devolved services (John Firrell): the Chairman gave a written report from JF. Various tasks had been undertaken by volunteers. Bridport Town Council's lengthsman's scheme should commence in April. The Wednesday bus service continued and it was hoped the Saturday service would remain. The fare had increased from £3 to £5 return. JF had recently attended an Integrated Transport Review event at which DCC had undertaken to look again at concessionary bus passes as it was felt not accepting these amounted to a withdrawal of welfare benefit for older people. The issue of free school transport for 16 to 18 year old students had also

been raised – currently parents can purchase places on school buses, if space allows for around £700 per year, or must make their own arrangements.

9. Proposal to replace the roof of the bus shelter: two quotes had been received to replace the thatched ridge on the bus shelter: one for £420 + VAT and one for £640 (no VAT). It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Kourik and carried unanimously that the cheaper of the quotes be accepted. The Chairman undertook to contact the approved contractor, he would, however, seek his opinion as to whether the netting on the main roof should be replaced at the same time. **BO**

10. Planning matters pending & outcomes MW reported that there were no new planning applications for consideration. Since the last meeting, the PC had been consulted on one application for the erection of a freestanding greenhouse at The Old Rectory, Church Path (ref WD/D/18/00077). This had been dealt with via exchange of emails and the PC had registered no objection to the application. MW had that day been notified of amended documents in relation to this application but details were not yet available to view online (following the meeting, the PC reviewed the amendments and again decided to raise no objection).

The planning application considered at a previous PC meeting to amend the design and location of warehouse in relation to an existing permission at Donkey Plot had been approved. The following two applications were still outstanding:

Ourganics, Litton Lane – application to modify S106 legal agreement that restricted occupation of dwelling to existing occupant (WD/D/18/00124).

Parks Farm (outside parish boundary) – construction of effluent lagoon (WD/D/17/002317)

The Parish Council had not undertaken the recent Housing Needs Assessment, although it had been consulted. The survey had been carried out by the applicant for the proposed Charity Farm development as one of the conditions of granting permission. DCC's Rural Housing Enabling Team were analysing the completed survey forms and the PC would, if permitted, publish the results. **MW**

11. Correspondence not dealt with as part of the agenda

- a) Litton Cheney Trust: Brian Prentice had sadly passed away and Lyn Lacey's 4 year term was coming to an end. It was proposed by Cllr Kourik, seconded by Cllr Brooks and carried unanimously that Richard Jones be nominated as trustee to replace Brian Prentice and that Lyn Lacey be re-appointed for a further four years.
- b) Dorset Youth Association had written to the PC requesting a donation. The PC discussed this request. Although it was felt to be a good cause, no allowance had been made in the budget precept for donations other than those traditionally made. It was proposed by Cllr Brooks, seconded by Cllr Kourik and carried unanimously that the request be respectfully declined. However as there had been a similar request at the previous meeting and it was anticipated that public spending cuts would lead to more such requests, the PC wished to consider adopting a policy on donations. Cllr Brooks would undertake some research and report back to the Village Assembly in May. **KB**
- c) Subject to there being more than one nomination, there would be a Parish Council election on 12 April.

12. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 8 May 2018 at 7.30 to follow the Village Assembly. Apologies Cllr Kourik

13. Meeting closed

Maggie Walsh
Parish Clerk