

## LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Litton Cheney Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 12 March 2019 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

Present: Bill Orchard (Chairman); Kathryn Brooks; John Firrell: Andy King; Steve Kourik; Maggie Walsh (Clerk). Also in attendance: Cllr John Russell; Cllr Mark Roberts; Cllr Geoffrey Fry (Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council) and 5 local residents.

1. **Apologies:** Tessa Mulhall; Bella Spurrier;
2. **Declarations of interest:** none
3. **Democratic time** the following issues were raised:
  - Q. Cllr Fry asked a number of questions in order to compare the allotments of Puncknowle and Swyre and Litton Cheney. The rents differed and Litton Cheney plots were smaller.
  - A. In Litton Cheney, allotment holders maintain the public areas. Rent per plot is £20 - £10 to PC and £10 subs, most of which is spent on Public Liability Insurance. Water is supplied at no extra cost by landholder. There are currently 3 vacant plots.
4. **Approval of Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 8 January 2019** - it was proposed by Cllr Kourik, seconded by Cllr King and carried unanimously that the minutes be approved.
5. **Matters arising from previous meeting not covered at this meeting:** None
6. **DCC/WDDC overview** – Cllr Mark Roberts reported that the new Unitary was nearly upon us and would operate with all the existing Councillors until the May elections. Bringing together 5 different teams and finance systems had been challenging. They had approved a balanced budget but this involved drawing on reserves in the short term to fund redundancy packages and to achieve long term savings. For example, adult social care accounted for 74% of DCC's budget and children's services was the fastest rising budget: £1m would go into children's services to attract local foster carers to reduce dependence on agencies and reduce costs in future. Dorset Waste Partnership would come back within the control of the new Unitary authority. Charges such as Building Control and Council Tax currently differed between councils and regularising these had also been challenging. There were losers and gainers and West Dorset council tax would increase. He confirmed that he was the approved candidate for one of the parties for the Chesil Ward.

Cllr John Russell confirmed he would not be standing for re-election and that this would be his last meeting. Cllr Bill Orchard thanked Cllr Russell for his regular attendance at, and contribution to, PC meetings.
7. **Finance report** (Maggie Walsh, Clerk and RFO) – MW drew attention to the amended finance report which, as this was the last meeting before the financial year end, she had updated since that circulated with the agenda. Parish funds currently stood at £10,614.20. Approved spend since January's meeting was £1,246.79 comprising £1,131.98 clerk's salary (paid January & March); £74.81 expenses and £40 DAPTC precept course). Income since January's meeting was £85 from the allotments and 0.12p interest.

A year end surplus of approximately £1,300 income over expenditure was anticipated. This was due to unexpected income of £420 gratefully received from the Litton Cheney Trust for works that had been commissioned and paid for by the PC in the previous financial year and because lengthsman costs were around £900 less than anticipated. The lengthsman scheme had taken longer than expected to get up and running and the PC had been cautious when assigning work, anticipating expenditure for repair of the stream bank. The surplus would go into reserves and could be used to cover surplus expenditure in the following financial year if required.

There were a total of £1,185.50 invoices and expenses for approval: £60 for website (this would be refunded to the PC by the social committee); £1,080 for Bridport Town Council lengthsman scheme; £45.50 for John Firrell for purchase of paint for noticeboards. It was proposed by Cllr King, seconded by Cllr Kourik and carried unanimously that these be approved.

MW also reported that, as per the contract of employment, the Clerk's salary would increase by 2.6% or £88.37 per annum from 1 April in accordance with the NALC amended salary scales. The new salary scales were available at the time of setting the precept and the additional cost was included in the budget for 2019-2020.

## 8. Councillors' portfolios:

Highways/Transport (Bill Orchard): having taken advice from a builder, the intention was to reinforce the collapsed stream opposite the Old Tithe Barn access using heavy flat stones. Costings were awaited from the lengthsman. The stream regularly became blocked at other points where culverted under access points.

Ashley Chase Estates had set up a working party to investigate the feasibility\* of a private access road to the cheese farm (\*potential route/land ownership/ soil condition/cost etc). The PC had pressed DCC to pressure jet gulleys down Whiteway.

Playground/Playing Field/Allotments (Andy King): new playing field signage had been erected regarding dogs and vehicles. The full-sized goal posts had been removed as they were hazardous. The PC's insurer had advised that it would not provide public liability insurance for individual allotment plots, the PC was therefore unable to assist the Allotment Association but had passed on some information that might be of use. Flooding of the allotments had improved but had since worsened. Following the bovine invasion, the outside edge of the allotments would be rolled when ground conditions permitted.

Various playground maintenance issues needed addressing before the Easter holidays either by volunteers or the lengthsman.

AK/JF

Quotes were needed for grass cutting during the forthcoming season.

AK

Footpaths/Rights of Way/Mobile Phone Mast (Steve Kourik): his efforts to apply pressure to DCC Rights of Way team to resolve the blocked Chalkpit – Litton Lane bridleway might finally be getting somewhere. A footpath from the A35 to The Old Rectory had been left "dangling" on definitive maps. This was not an issue whilst the current landowner owned the land but it needed resolving before the land changed ownership and in any event before 2026. The PC agreed to review this at the May's meeting and, if necessary, ask the Clerk to write to the Rights of Way team on behalf of the PC.

MW

SK had received four responses to an item in the BVN about the future of the phone kiosk. One preferred it left in its current location; two would like it re-sited by the bus shelter; one would like it removed. Planning permission would be required to move it. There was consensus that it should be used as a book exchange although the Regeneration Working Group were also considering possibilities.

Agricultural Liaison (Bella Spurrier): no report provided.

Planning (Kathryn Brooks):

The following applications had been decided:

- Land adjacent to Four Meads Farm (WD/D/18/002711) retention of the agricultural barn (alternative scheme to planning approval WD/D/16/001006). APPROVED.
- Parks Farm Cheese Dairy – effluent lake (WD/D/17/002317). APPROVED following receipt of additional documents.
- Charity Farm – erection of 6 dwellings (WD/D/17/00758). APPROVED
- Land west of Tithe Barn House – erect new dwelling and garage (WD/D/18/001959). REFUSED the applicant has a right of appeal

Applications still outstanding:

- The Mill House, Main Street - erection of extension and alterations and construction of a new bridge and vehicular access. (WD/D/18/002298 (Full) and WD/D/18/002299 (Listed Building)): the applicant had been asked to move the access to protect a tree
- Charity Farm – erection of agricultural building – prior approval (WD/D/18/001183): a full planning application was required but had not yet been submitted. No application yet received.

Applications received since last meeting:

- 6 Coombes Close DT2 9EX – 2 storey side extension and single storey flat roof extension/terrace (WD/D/18/002996). The PC had considered this by exchange of email and raised no objection. However, KB understood that the case officer considered the proposed extension too large and out of context.

Cllr Firrell reported that there had been a number of complaints from other Town and Parish Councils about the new online planning applications system.

Risk Assessment/Transparency Code/Annual Report (Tessa Mulhall): the Risk Assessment, Model Publication Scheme and Transparency Checklist had been updated following an annual review. There were no significant changes and amended versions had been circulated to Parish Councillors for comment prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Firrell, seconded by Cllr Brooks and carried unanimously that these documents be approved and updated on the website.

**MW**

Village Fabric/Maintenance/Devolved Services (John Firrell): the PC felt that the village should participate in the Keep Britain Tidy 2019 Spring Clean. Each Parish Councillor would lead a group of volunteers in an assigned location. The Spring Clean would take place in the run up to Easter and would be publicised via the BVN, website and leaflets. JF hoped to involve the school and scouts. MW would see what services/equipment DCC/DWP could provide and procure the necessary equipment.

**MW**

The Premier Crew continued to do excellent work and were volunteers, unlike the lengthsman whose services needed to be paid for. The recent Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP) meeting had discussed S106 funds. The PC had understood funds towards museums, waste and highways were held by DCC on its behalf but it appeared these funds had been absorbed into DCC coffers, causing concerns about the lack of transparency. Some PCs had expressed concerns about the effectiveness of the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) and several were considering not renewing their subscription.

A working party was considering how the area around the bus shelter could be smartened up, this might include an interpretation board, new kerbing, and relocating other items. It was hoped the school would be involved in researching the information for the interpretation/installation board. It had been suggested the defibrillator could be moved to the telephone kiosk but there were issues with space, land ownership and power supply. JF stressed that it was not for the Working Party to make any decisions but circulated an artist's impression of what it *might* look like: there would be a proposal at the Village Assembly in May. Any decisions needed to be made by the PC would be made after the Village Assembly.

9. **May Parish Council elections-** the forthcoming elections had been widely publicised within the village. This would most likely be Cllr Steve Kourik's last PC meeting. The Chairman presented Cllr Kourik with a gift and thanked him on behalf of the Parish Council and villagers for his commitment and for his considerable contribution to village life over a long period. Cllr Kourik thanked the PC, saying he had thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Council.
10. **Correspondence not dealt with as part of the agenda** – MW reported that a villager had written to the PC, complimenting a number of villagers and Parish Councillors on their efforts to clear the mess, which had been created by a large vehicle, in School Lane. The PC appreciated that the local resident taking the time and effort to write.
11. **New planning applications for consideration at the meeting** none
12. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 14 May Village Assembly and Annual Meeting – apologies Councillors Kathryn Brooks and Andy King
13. **Meeting closed**

Maggie Walsh - Parish Clerk