

## LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Litton Cheney Parish Council held after the conclusion of the Annual Parish Meeting/Village Assembly on Tuesday, 12th May 2026 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

#### Councillors Present:

Cllr John Firrell (Chair)

Cllr Rob Matthews

Cllr Andrew King

Cllr Bill Orchard (Vice-Chair)

Ms Debbie Hollings (Clerk)

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Quentin Blacke

#### 2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interests received.

#### 3. Election of Chairman

Cllr Orchard requested nominations for the Chairman. Cllr Orchard nominated Cllr John Firrell and Cllr King seconded this, all other councillors backed this nomination unanimously. The Chairman took over the running of the meeting from the Vice Chairman.

#### 4. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Firrell nominated Cllr Bill Orchard for the role of Vice-Chairman, seconded by Cllr Matthews. All agreed unanimously.

#### 5. Democratic time

No members of the public present.

#### 6. Approval of Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr King proposed that the Minutes were an accurate record. Cllr Matthews seconded, and all other councillors unanimously agreed.

#### 7. Matters arising since the previous meeting not part of this Agenda

No matters arising.

#### 8. Dorset Council overview - Ward Councillor for Chesil Bank, Cllr Sally Holland

Cllr Holland had provided a report for May 2026. The full report has been made available to councillors and is on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Holland's report included details on proposed safety improvements to the B3157 Coast Road, planned overnight maintenance closures on the A35 between Honiton and Bere Regis from June to August, and a new year-round gully-cleaning programme aimed at reducing flooding and road damage.

#### 9. Finance

##### 9.1 Receive Clerks/RFO Report, including current financial position.

The Clerk presented her report and confirmed that the 2025/2026 AGAR documentation and year-end financial figures had been completed. The Clerk presented councillors with the budget and year-end financial commitment spreadsheet up to today's date and also the current bank reconciliation report. Councillors were also presented with information on the current Reserves.

Cllr Orchard highlighted the significant level of reserves and asked the Clerk to explore investment options to maximise interest earnings on the funds.

### **9.1.1 Note that the Asset Register has been updated.**

The Clerk presented an up-to-date Asset Register, and councillors were reminded to advise the Clerk of any changes or additions that are required during the year.

## **9.2 Consider and approve the following:**

### **9.2.1 Invoices for payment (appended to minutes)**

Proposed and seconded by Cllr Firrell and Cllr King. All agreed unanimously.

### **9.2.2 Regular Scheduled Payments (appended to minutes)**

Proposed and seconded by Cllr Orchard and Cllr Matthews. All agreed unanimously.

## **9.3 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

### **9.3.1 Receive and agree the Annual Internal Auditor's Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

Cllr Firrell proposed that the Council formally express its gratitude to John Halliday for conducting the audit expeditiously and without charge. This proposal was supported by Cllr King, seconded by Cllr Matthews, and unanimously agreed by the Council.

### **9.3.2 Note the AGAR has been prepared, and that the exemption form is due for signing by the Chair.**

All councillors noted the AGAR reports and Cllr Firrell signed and dated the Exemption Form.

### **9.3.3 Receive and agree AGAR Section 1. Annual Governance Statement, due for signing by the Clerk and Chair.**

All councillors received and reviewed AGAR Section 1 – the Annual Governance Statement. All councillors unanimously agreed with the declarations contained within the document. The Chairman and Clerk duly signed and dated the statement. The proposal was made by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Orchard.

### **9.3.4 Receive and agree AGAR Section 2. Annual Accounting Statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, due for signing by the RFO and Chair.**

The proposal was made by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Orchard. The RFO and Chairman then signed the document accordingly.

## **10. To consider and agree on a new Parish Council Insurance agreement.**

Due to time constraints, the Clerk had been unable to obtain enough insurance quotes for the council to review and approve before the renewal deadline of 1 June 2026. The Clerk therefore requested delegated authority to renew the Parish Council's insurance policy in time for the renewal date. Details of the renewal will be presented to councillors at the July 2026 council meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Firrell and seconded by Cllr Matthews and carried unanimously.

## **11. Review and adopt Statutory Documents**

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct

Proposed by Cllr Orchard and seconded by Cllr Firrell, and carried unanimously, that all three Statutory Documents will be adopted with immediate effect.

## **12. To consider providing donations to organisations and the amounts to be given.**

### **12.1 Citizens Advice Bureau, Bridport.**

### **12.2 Air Ambulance**

### **12.3 Bride Valley News**

Following a short discussion, it was proposed and seconded by Cllr Firrell and Cllr King and agreed unanimously by the other councillors, that the sum of £150 be the parish council's annual donation to all three organisations listed above for the year 2026/2027.

## **13. To consider a grant towards the repair and maintenance of the flagpole at St Mary's Church. Costs are currently projected at around £3,500.**

Cllr Firrell reported that the church flagpole and frame on St Mary's church tower are severely corroded and require specialist refurbishment by steeplejacks from Derbyshire, making the repair costly. The flagpole flies the flags denoting special days of national significance. As the Parish Council and local residents

helped fund the original installation in 2014, he considered the flagpole a community asset and suggested that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds be used towards the refurbishment, with St Mary's Church also seeking support from the Litton Trust.

Proposed by Cllr Firrell and seconded by Cllr Matthews, and carried unanimously, that £1,000 be contributed for the restoration of St Mary's Church flagpole.

#### **14. Councillors' Portfolios – up to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026:**

##### **14.1 Planning: Cllr Orchard**

**14.1.1 Planning application P/HOU/2026/02196** Proposal: Partially rebuild & increase the height of the south east chimney stack. Take down & rebuild the northwest chimney stack.

Location: Myrtle Cottage, Hines Mead Lane, Litton Cheney, Dorchester DT2 9AD  
(Comments to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2026)

Litton Cheney Parish Council have no objections to this application and is supportive of the change. All councillors unanimously support the application.

##### **14.2 Highways/Transport: Cllr Matthews**

Cllr Matthews advised that the A35 will be subject to overnight closures from early June until September to facilitate a programme of rolling repairs along various sections of the route, from Honiton through Axminster, Bridport, Dorchester, Dorchester Bypass, and onwards to Stinsford and Bere Regis.

Cow Lane in Litton Cheney will be closed by Openreach on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Road surface treatment will take place between 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August on Looke Lane, Litton Cheney. Wessex Water are going to be working multiple sites around the village from mid-June through the early August. The sites include Chalk Pit Lane, Main Street by the Green, Cheese House and White Cross. Also, on Hines Mead Lane to the entrance of Baglake. Details of these closures will be published on the Parish Council website and on local social media.

Cllr Orchard reported that Wessex Water are continuing to look at better ways and routes of disposing of water flowing down onto the village roads from Baglake. One option being looked at is to divert water to Watery Lane. Wessex Water will continue to work with Dorset Council to resolve the issues.

##### **14.3 Playground/ Playing Field/Allotments: Cllr King**

###### **14.3.1 Consider and agree on the annual costs for Allotment plots for the coming year.**

Cllr King indicated that as reported in the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at the Allotments Annual General Meeting (AGM) it was agreed that the allotment fees will not be raised for the coming year.

##### **14.4 Countryside Matters/Footpaths/Rights of Way: Cllr Blacke**

In Cllr Blacke's absence, Cllr Firrell highlighted concerns raised by residents about a group of ash trees along the footpath between Chalk Pit Lane and the vineyard. Following an inspection by Dorset Council's Arboricultural Team, the trees were found to be affected by ash dieback and have been recommended for felling to prevent potential damage during strong winds. Further investigation is required to establish ownership of the land on which the trees stand.

The wooden bridge on a public footpath at Rowden Farm in Long Bredy has deteriorated and is considered a safety risk. Estimated costs for a replacement are between £3,500 and £5,000 depending on whether a wooden or steel structure is chosen. Cllr Firrell is working with Long Bredy & Kingston Russell Parish Council to help secure part funding for the replacement. Litton Cheney Parish Council is considering a contribution towards the project, as the bridge is widely used by local residents, but no final decisions have yet been made.

##### **14.5 Village Fabric/ Maintenance/ DAPTC/BLAP/Administration and Probity: Cllr Firrell**

Cllr Firrell presented items from his report. The Premier Crew had to be activated to remove excess

debris at the bottom of Whiteway and also for village litter picks.

As representative of the Parish Council on DAPTC (Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils) and BLAP (Bridport Local Area Partnership), Cllr Firrell has attended a number of meetings. He also has a role on the BLAP management Team. Both organisations work hard to establish an effective relationship with Dorset Council.

Efforts will continue to form a steering committee to deal with the new Parish Plan, progress for which has been slow.

Cllr Firrell reported that he had contacted The Environment Agency regarding safety concerns about the culvert near the bus shelter and Jubilee Hut but had not received a response possibly due to email mailbox issues. Now that the email problems have been resolved, he will follow up with The Environment Agency.

#### **14.6 Telecommunications/IT: Cllr Matthews**

##### **14.6.1 Parish Council Website – agree the way forward.**

Cllr Andy King offered to take on responsibility for procuring a new Parish Council website, with the help of the Clerk. He will report back with further information at the next meeting in July 2026.

Cllr King also confirmed that the recent issue with the website, councillor, and clerk mailboxes have now been resolved. The domain has also been transferred from Vision ICT to Fasthosts.

#### **15. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had recently received additional CIL funding of £486.97 due to extension work on a property within the village.

**16. Date of next meeting:** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2026.

#### **17. Note dates for the meetings in the coming year:**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2026

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2027

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2027

#### **18. Close meeting.**

The meeting ended at 9.21 pm.

Debbie Hollings  
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer  
Litton Cheney Parish Council

## Report 12th May 2026

<b>Parish funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Balance brought forward as at 1 April	£27,464.09
Income to date	£9,007.56
Expenditure to date	£2,026.27
<b>Parish funds as at above date*</b>	<b>£34,445.38</b>

**\* Of which the following is held in reserves or CIL**

Earmarked reserves	£20,100.00
CIL	£10,228.97
Playground (ringfenced)	£100.00
Community Fund (ringfenced)	£423.00
<b>Total reserves/CIL held</b>	<b>£30,851.97</b>

**Approved spend since last reported/meeting**

Scheduled: March & April Clerk's Wage	£885.92
Scheduled: Clerk's Expenses	£52.00
Bank A/C service charges	£8.50
	<b>£946.42</b>

**Income since last reported/meeting**

Dorset Council - CIL payment	£486.97
Dorset Council - Precept Tranche 1	£8,500.00
Interest	£10.13
	<b>£8,997.10</b>

**Invoices/Payments for approval at time of publishing agenda**

Clerk's Travel Expenses - Internal Audit meetings	£23.94
LATCH - 2025/2026 Hall Hire	£91.50

**Invoices arrived after the publication of the agenda**

Dorset Council - Commercial Waste collection from bins at Cox's Lane & Snicket	£667.68
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**Schedule Payments due (as detailed on Budget and Commitments for the coming year)**

DAPTC Annual Subscription 2026/2027	£204.05
Bridport Town Council - BLAP Annual contribution 2026/2027	£49.73
Rural Services Partnership - Annual contribution 2026/2027	£66.16
Scheduled: May & June Clerk's wage	£885.92
Scheduled: Clerk's Expenses	£52.00
Bank A/C service charges	£8.50
	<b>£2,049.48</b>

	Receipts
	Expenditure
	Bank Balance
	Total Reserves

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