

# CHIDEOCK PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Chideock Village Hall on Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 10am.

**Present:** Cllr George Dunn (Vice Chair), Cllr Anna Dunn, Cllr Mick Downes, Cllr Peter Hunt.

**In attendance:** The Clerk, Cllr Simon Christopher and 2 members of the public.

Cllr George Dunn took the Chair in the absence of Cllr McAra.

**2876 Cllr Simon Christopher, Dorset Ward Councillor, had asked to speak first as he had another engagement.**

- Chris Loder's road group (originally called the A35 Task Force, then the A-Road Task Force) has been renamed the Road Safety Task Force.
- Unfortunately, Ben Hampson of National Highways was unable to attend the last meeting.
- Chris Loder may be unaware that construction of the Miles Cross roundabout is a condition of the planning consent for Vearse Farm.
- Chris Loder is in favour of north / south road connectivity improvements i.e., the A37.
- However, Dorset councillors to the east of Dorset may prefer improvements from Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole.
- He suggested that Chideock Parish Council should seek meetings with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Ben Hampson.

Cllr George Dunn said that it is disappointing that Chris Loder is ignoring the A35 through Chideock.

Cllr Coates said that following a meeting last year with Russell Goff (Dorset Council Senior Countryside Ranger) it appeared that it was all systems go for the proposed route from Chideock to at least Quarr Cross if Chideock Manor put in a planning application. However, there are questions about who would be responsible for making the path, including surfacing and fencing, and for ongoing maintenance. There has been no response made by Russell Goff to any e-mails sent asking this. She asked if this is acceptable. Cllr Christopher said that it is reasonable to expect at least an acknowledgement and asked Cllr Coates to e-mail him with her concerns which he will then take up with Cllr Spencer Flower (Dorset Council leader) and Cllr Ray Bryan (Dorset Council Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment).

The Clerk suggested that Cllr Coates contacts Vanesa Penny (Dorset Definitive Map Team Manager).

Cllr Christopher said that the next meeting of the Dorset Local Access Forum is on 6 April at 10am at County Hall and that it might be helpful to attend.

Cllr George Dunn said that he hopes that the profile of the A35 is being raised in the Road Investment Strategy 3 document, which should be available for public comment shortly.

**The Parish Council meeting commenced at 10.13.**

**2877 Apologies.**

Cllr Vanessa McAra (Chair) sent her apologies which were accepted.

**2878 Grants of Dispensations.**

None received).

**2879 Declarations of Defined Pecuniary Interests.**

Cllr Coates declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 a) P/LBC/2023/01354 Chideock Manor Access to Chideock Manor – Repair and repoint garden walls.

DC

- 2880 **Minutes.**  
**RESOLVED** to accept and sign, as a true record,  
a) the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 7 March 2023.  
Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

- 2881 **Dorset Ward Councillor and Police Reports.**  
a) **PSCO Bishop.**  
No report.  
b) **Cllr Simon Christopher** had reported at the start of the meeting.

*Standing Orders were suspended for the following item.*

- 2882 **Democratic Period.**  
Mr Richard Benjamin, Village Hall Committee Chair, spoke as follows: -  
1. Wessex Water try to pull the wool over the ears of the public. Any storm outflows will contain matter which has only been through the sedimentation process and will contain e-coli bacteria.  
2. Polio was eliminated in the UK in 2002. However traces of the polio virus have been found in London and vaccination is being ramped up there.  
3. The Environment Agency calls the Winniford a river, Dorset Council and Wessex Water call it a watercourse.  
4. The Dorset Council pollution warning sign at Seatown is totally inadequate.  
Cllr Anna Dunn referenced the response she had received from Chris Loder MP and suggested that concerns be raised with him, as he suggested.

Another Chideock resident said: -

- The signage is totally inadequate and there should be other signage put up.
- Someone should be responsible for ensuring that the water is not polluted.

The Clerk said that the Parish Council could put up warning signs and that this will be considered at the relevant point in the agenda.

*Standing Orders were resumed.*

- 2883 **Reports / Updates by the Clerk and Councillors.**  
Items 2 and 2A on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

- 2884 **A35 Matters.**  
Items 3 to 13 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.  
**Items 5 – A35 Communities.** Cllr George Dunn said that he has not had any reply – he **GD** will make a further attempt to establish contact to arrange the next meeting.  
**Item 10A – A35 Resurfacing Works.** Cllr Downes said that the advance warning signs on the A35 did not have a phone number. The Clerk said that she will be challenging National Highways claim that parishes are informed prior to A35 closures – she did not receive a **CC** letter.  
**Item 11 – Bristol University.** A Zoom meeting took place on 24 March, attended by Cllr Anna Dunn, Cllr George Dunn, and Cllr McAra. Bristol University said that they need to revisit the analysis on the testing samples.

Cllr Hunt said that he reported a streetlight on the A35 which is not working. National Highways cannot repair it as they do not have and replacement units

- AGREED** that the Clerk will again contact Ben Hampson, National Highways, regarding: - **CC**  
a) the Traffic Regulation Order for Chideock Hill and the installation of Average Speed Cameras  
b) the status of the remedial works to the slip on the northern side of Chideock Hill.

- 2885 River Winniford and Water Pollution Issues.**
- a) **Dorset Council.**  
Items 14 to 18 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.  
**AGREED** that the Parish Council will provide additional signage which is clearer than that provided by Dorset Council. Text and locations to be agreed by e-mail. Permission will be needed from the beach owner if signs are to be placed on his land. **ALL & CC**
- b) **Wessex Water.**  
Andy Mears, Wessex Water, has agreed to speak at the Annual Village meeting on 26 April.
- c) **Winniford River Action Group.**  
Items 19 to 22 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.
- 2886 Motions Received with Notice.** None.
- 2887 Planning Matters.**
- a) **Applications.**  
**P/LBC/2023/01354** Chideock Manor Access to Chideock Manor - Repair and repoint garden walls.  
*Chideock Parish Council supports the application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.*
- b) **Determinations.**  
**P/HOU/2022/07352** Stoke Cottage North Road - Retain shed with alterations and implement landscaping. Amended Plans. **GRANTED**.
- c) **Appeals.** None.
- d) **Other Planning Matters.**
- i. AONB, Lighting / Dark Skies, Dorset National Park, Conservation Areas.  
Nothing to report.
- ii. Enforcement, Retrospective Planning Applications.  
Nothing to report.
- iii. Other.  
Item 23 on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED**.
- 2888 Finances.**
- a) **Payments.**
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| i. Clerk's Salary and Expenses for March                   | £377.78 |
| ii. HMRC – PAYE Jan, Feb, Mar                              | £205.60 |
| iii. Village Hall Hire – 7 and 28 March                    | £40.00  |
| iv. Mr Ken Hussey –RoSPA Inspection x 2                    | £95.00  |
| v. DAPTC - Councillors' Networking Event on 9th March 2023 | £150.00 |
- Proposed by Cllr Anna Hunt, seconded by Cllr Coates, carried unanimously.
- b) **Budget Monitoring Prediction to 31 March 2023. NOTED.**
- c) **Vire Funds to Cover Increased Grants to External Bodies.**  
**RESOLVED** to vire the redundant "Devolution of Services Reserve" to a new "General Contingency Reserve."  
Proposed by Cllr Coates, seconded by Cllr Downes, carried unanimously.  
**RESOLVED** to vire £765.00 from this reserve to the Precept account for payment of grants to external bodies which amount exceeds the budgeted amount of £1835.00 by £765.00.  
Proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Downes, carried unanimously.
- d) **Grants to be paid at Financial Year End.**  
**RESOLVED** to make the following grants to external bodies: -
- |                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| i. Chideock News                     | £700.00   |
| ii. Chideock Village Hall            | £700.00   |
| iii. Winniford River Community Group | £1,000.00 |
| iv. Bridport Citizens Advice Bureau  | £200.00.  |
- Proposed by Cllr Downes, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.  
The grant to the Winniford River Community Group will be held by the Parish Council until such time as the group has its own bank account.  
The Village Hall grant was made on condition that the money is not used for day to day

running costs.

**e) Clerk Vacancy.**

Items 24 to 26 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

The Clerk reported that the vacancy has been re-advertised.

She stated that she will remain in post until a new Clerk is appointed.

**f) Foss Orchard Car Park.**

Item 27 on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED**.

**2889 Clapps Mead Playing Field.**

**a) Playing Field Update.**

The latest Inspection Report from Ken Hussey quotes a cost of £459 to replace the spring on the sprinter toy.

Councillors agreed that the ground level trampoline is their favoured new item of equipment but before a grant can be applied for it is necessary to determine: -

- i. The total cost including installation.
- ii. Whether there is sufficient space for this.

**AGREED** that the Clerk will ask for a site visit by Huck Play.

**CC**

The Clerk reported that she is waiting for a formal quote for the new goal posts and nets, to make sure that the promised 25% discount obtained by Ken Hussey has been applied. Once this is received the equipment will be ordered.

**CC**

**b) Friends of Clapp's Mead.**

a) The Cream Tea fundraiser at Chideock House is on 12 April.

**2890 Dorset Rights of Way, Dorset Highways and Flood Management.**

**a) Rights of Way.**

Cllr Coates said that Sir Philip Colfox has been approached regarding a path at the side of Quarr Lane which would be on his land. This would link to Shutes Lane and, if a Right of Way is made from Park Farm to Quarr cross, on land owned by Chideock Manor, the link from Chideock to Symondsburry and beyond would be achieved.

See also the discussion within Cllr Christopher's report (Minute 2876).

**b) Dorset Highways.**

Items 28 to 31 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

The Clerk will inform Dorset Highways that councillors have agreed in principle for a 7-day traffic survey to be conducted on Duck Street and upper Sea Hill Lane during the peak holiday season and ask them to recommend the count points.

**CC**

**No Footway Signs.** Councillors **AGREED** the following locations:

- i. Seatown – either of the 2 locations on Sea Hill Lane itself, not the location at the car park exit.
- ii. Duck Street junction with the A35. Location on northern corner agreed – is there any possibility of a sign on one of the existing poles on the southern side?

Clerk to inform Dorset Highways.

**Carter's Lane.** Clerk to ask that this matter be followed up – if North Road is closed for any reason this is the only route to some properties on North Road and to the whole of North Chideock.

**CC**

**CC**

**c) Flood Management.**

No updates.

**2891 Current Consultations.**

None.

**28792 Correspondence.**

There were no other items of correspondence to be brought to Councillors' notice.

**2893 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting of Chideock Parish Council meeting.**

The next scheduled meeting is at 10am on Tuesday 25 April 2023.

The meeting closed at **11.37 am**.

## **Cllr Christopher's E-mailed Report.**

I look forward to discussing A35 and other transport matters on Tuesday and reiterate points on a few areas before we meet.

This report has a focus on money and also farming and the environment.

Many of these topics are again impacted by Dorset, and indeed West Dorset, being largely rural and largely within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, you will see that this is a repeated theme in this report.

Dorset Council's budget of £348m for 2023-24 has been approved by councillors at the Full Council meeting on 14 February. This continues the council's commitment to maintain frontline services, without the need for cuts to balance the budget. Dorset Council provides around 450 different services to just under 380,000 residents. This year's budget setting exercise took place against a national background of extreme pressures for councils. These pressures include the high level of inflation which affects the cost of delivering council services, also the continued growth in need for social care services as a result of the ageing population.

Council tax will increase next year by just under 2% and the adult social care precept by 2%. This is less than the maximum 5% increase available to councils, as outlined in the Government's Spending Review in December 2022. The increase is equivalent to £1.40 extra per week for a Band D property. This is a balanced budget in a national context of significant financial challenge. Our overriding aim has been to protect the essential frontline council services on which residents and businesses rely. The proposals do include a council tax increase; however, we have kept it to the minimum possible despite the high level of inflation and we continue to provide a range of support for those residents hardest hit by the cost of living.

Since becoming a unitary council in 2019, we have made efficiency savings of £76 million. This money has been reinvested to protect frontline services, including funding the growing need for adult social care with our ageing population. Our prudent budget management has meant that Dorset has not faced the same cuts to essential services as many other areas. However, we continue to lobby Government for fairer funding for Dorset so that we can reduce the burden on local taxpayers in future.

### **Cost of Living Help**

We have set aside £2M from our reserves to help residents with the cost-of-living crisis. This is a one-off allocation, and we will use this to target financial support in the short-term and include some longer-term solutions to issues such as the challenge of energy costs for residents through property improvement schemes.

In short, Dorset Councillors voted in unanimous support of Cllr Spencer Flower's proposal for a £2m cost-of-living support fund for residents in today's Cabinet meeting. The £2m will be funded from the council's reserves. Proposals were developed by officers in response to the request from Cllr Flower, Leader of Dorset Council.

The fund will support a range of projects to provide immediate and longer-term support to those residents hardest hit by the cost of living. Projects include:

- Support for low-income households, disabled people, and vulnerable older people with measures to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- Off-grid energy discretionary vouchers for households reliant on off-grid energy sources (oil and gas)
- Additional Discretionary Housing Payment allowance to help prevent residents becoming homeless.
- Supermarket vouchers for residents in greatest need
- Further support for Dorset's network of social supermarkets, community fridges and food banks
- Additional pre-school hours for 3–4-year-olds, enabling more parents to work.
- 'Ready to thrive' locality programme to support children with their readiness to start school.

Dorset Council works closely with partners such as Citizens Advice Dorset, Age UK North, South and West Dorset, the NHS and Jobcentre Plus through the 'Dorset Together' network to provide support for residents in greatest need.

Dorset Council has provided significant support to residents with the cost of living over recent months, including:

- Paying out over £18m to over 127,000 households in energy rebates
- Helping 615 households facing homelessness
- Providing free holiday activities and food to nearly 2000 children eligible for free school meals

- Providing 10,500 supermarket vouchers to eligible households.
- Supporting over 80 'warm hubs' where people can go for company and warmth.

However, there is still a need for additional support with the cost of living. The most recent tranche of Household Support Funding in January was fully claimed by eligible residents within hours of going live, showing the high level of need.

Cllr Spencer Flower, Leader of Dorset Council, said:

“High prices continue to put pressure on household finances, and I am acutely aware of the need to support our most vulnerable residents, including families, disabled people, and older people.

“I asked officers to develop this comprehensive package of support which will be supplement to the work we have already done to help people with the cost of living. The measures will be carefully targeted at those residents with the greatest need and will provide immediate support with food and energy costs. The measures will also leave a legacy through investment in energy efficiency of homes and support for children with early year education and starting school.”

I continue my work on road safety.

This is a major concern for the majority of Marshwood Vale residents. I will of course be having further meetings with those with considerable power e.g., Police Commissioner David Sidwick and Chris Loder for example to once more discuss my concerns .

THINK! Road Safety tweeted earlier this month “Speed kills and injured 54 young people a week The campaign by THINK road safety highlights the risks of going even a few mph too fast for the road. We are encouraging young drivers to choose the right speed for the conditions.”

To put this into context as reported in the Times newspaper earlier this month.

“Young men speeding on rural roads will be targeted in a road safety campaign intended to reduce the numbers killed each year.

Speed kills or injures 54 young people every week in the UK and safety experts have found less than half ( 43 per cent ) of young men consider exceeding the speed limit to be unacceptable .

Dorset Council replied “ We have a lot of rural roads in Dorset and too many young people are seriously harmed due to travelling too fast on these roads, so we fully support this campaign.

I now turn to planning matters and will speak about the position of Dorset Council on Thursday evening. My comments will be on the debate about building the right number of houses in the right place but for now I will provide comments on policy that while not thought of as having an impact on residential development at Parish level may have an impact on Biodiversity net gain for landowners.

Defra has announced plans for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), which will be mandatory for some applications for development in England from November 2023. The government announcement also states that BNG will offer payments for others to provide the land for developers to use.

Over 12 months ago, Defra consulted on proposals to ensure that new development delivered an increase in biodiversity. Last week, Defra produced its response,

The good news is that there is a separate scheme for small sites, an exemption for single dwellings and self-build, permitted development and the provision of a statutory credits.

From November 2023, BNG will need to be provided on larger sites, from April 2024 on smaller sites and from November 2025 for National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Developments will have to show that they will deliver a 10% uplift in biodiversity over and above what has been lost to the development. This resulting habitat will need to be maintained for at least 30 years, with a separate method needed for dealing with what is defined as irreplaceable habitat.

The land on which BNG has been secured will have to be registered with Natural England. Defra has clarified that it will be acceptable to use the same land to deliver both BNG and nutrient neutrality offsetting if the management is compatible, but not for carbon schemes.

Where BNG cannot be delivered on-site, then BNG credits can be purchased on the open market, and statutory credits will be available for purchase from Natural England. While Natural England is going to be the BNG site register operator, the government does not have the intention to establish a trading platform - it sees this as something that the market should develop.

Natural England will not have an enforcement role – it will be down to the local authority through planning conditions, conservation covenants, or by commercial contracts between the developer and the BNG provider.

Should the contract to provide BNG or the habitat be broken because it is difficult to establish or maintain, then the penalties could be substantial. This will be part of the contract enabling the delivery of the development.

There will be two schemes:

- A small scheme with its own metric to cover areas of less than 1ha or up to nine houses or 1000m<sup>2</sup>.
- A larger scheme to capture all other development.

It is not intended that temporary land uses should be caught by BNG, nor permitted development land used as permitted or land within protected landscapes that otherwise would have benefited from permitted development rights.

For those planning development caught by the changes, it is likely they will seek to organise BNG provision now, well ahead of submitting any development proposals. It could be a significant extra financial burden.

For landowners who see the provision of land as a BNG offset for land developed elsewhere, the money offered by developers might look attractive now, it will have to cover the establishment of the habitat and its maintenance for at least 30 years. The government does not expect the habitat to be lost at the end of this period, and while still no more BNG funding can be given to maintain the land, more BNG funding can be used to further enhance the habitat at the end of the term. It is also important to keep in mind that this land could be designated if an important habitat is established.

Defra has introduced the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, will run to March 2025.

Farmers and land managers can be supported to carry out projects that support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and cultural heritage, or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses. This is a programme of funding for one-off projects covering these areas of work, not an Agri-environment scheme.

The programme will fund projects that:

- Support nature recovery
- Mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage.
- Protect or improve the quality and character of the landscape or place.

I look forward to discussion of the changes being implemented in respect of farm support and indeed the budget of 15 March on Tuesday together with the ever-changing financial landscape facing Dorset Council on Tuesday.

Best regards

Simon

Councillor Simon Christopher  
The Dorset Councillor for the Marshwood Vale Ward  
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