

CHIDEOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Chideock Village Hall on Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 10am.

The Parish Council meeting commenced at **10am**.

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

In attendance: The Clerk, Cllr Simon Christopher and 1 member of the public.

2858 Apologies.

Cllr Coates sent her apologies which were accepted.

PCSO Bishop sent his apologies.

2859 Grants of Dispensations.

None received).

2860 Declarations of Defined Pecuniary Interests.

None declared.

2851 Minutes.

RESOLVED to accept and sign, as a true record,

a) the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 31 January 2023 after the following insertion after the first paragraph of minute 2846:

“A member of the public stated that the Chideock Bridge railings need painting. Clerk to query.”-

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr George Dunn, carried unanimously.

2862 Dorset Ward Councillor and Police Reports.

a) **PSCO Bishop had e-mailed as follows:** -

“Fortunately, there is nothing specific to report for Chideock over the last month.”

b) **Cllr Simon Christopher** reported as follows: -

- A recent article in the Bridport News –Dorset Council is considering bonus payments of up to £15,000 to retain specific officers. Alternatively, should the money be used to give increase pay for lower paid staff?

- Another article from the Bridport News – there is to be a meeting at the Bull Hotel with Chris Loder MP, a planning specialist, an accountant, and an estate agent. To discuss the principle of building in back gardens rather than large developments e.g., north of Dorchester. Chris Loder believes that houses can be built on garden land and, in his opinion, villages should be encouraged to have this kind of development. However, there are planning constrains which would come in to play – for example Conservation Areas, AONB, Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans, street scene issues.

- The next A Road Task Force meeting is on 24 March.

Cllr Anna Dunn said that no-one knows what comes out of those meetings as there are no minutes. Cllr Hunt said that if there are no actions points there can be no action.

It was noted that, at the Zoom meeting with Chris Loder in February 2021, he said that Chideock Parish Council should not get involved in strategic matters regarding the A35. In addition he said at the Village Meeting in November 2022 that he sees no problem with this stretch of the A35.

- River water pollution – this is a hugely topical area which is getting a lot of national coverage. Chris Loder is having meetings with Wessex Water. Cllr Christopher suggested contacting Dorset Councillor Laura Beddow, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Communities and Customer Services.

CC

- Grants to farmers – in connection with water pollution, government grants are being offered for covering slurry pits.

Standing Orders were suspended for the following item.

2863 Democratic Period.

Mr Richard Benjamin, Village Hall Committee Chair, spoke as follows: -

- He objected to the phrase “A member of the public” in minute 2846 of the last meeting. Why isn’t the person named or at least referred to as “A Chideock resident”.
- He spoke on behalf of the “member of the public” in question and said that the remarks made during the 30 January Democratic Period were not accurately minuted.
- The sign at the lagoon at Seatown is still the same as it was last month. He has seen a sign in Suffolk erected by a Parish Council which is much clearer and more direct. Why isn’t the Seatown sign like that?
- He stated that someone must be responsible for water quality at Seatown but that neither Dorset Council nor the Environment Agency will accept that responsibility. He also stated that Dorset Council does have applicable powers.
- He met a man inspecting Chideock bridge who said that there is no evidence of vibration.
- He spoke about the Winniford River Action Group and suggested that West Dorset Leisure Holidays be approached for funding.

Cllr McAra spoke in reply.

- Minutes are not a verbatim record of everything said at a parish council meeting.
- The Parish Council accepts that there is pollution in the River Winniford and the lagoon at Seatown but that it is necessary to determine what the pollution is, where it is located and what is the probable cause before anything can be taken forward by the relevant agency. Any “complaint” must be evidence based.
- It is important that there is no contention between the Parish Council and the Winniford River Action Group.
- She will continue to attend meetings of the group and feed back to the parish council.
- She asked the Clerk to put all information obtained from Dorset Council, Wessex Water, and the Environment Agency on the website.

CC

Standing Orders were resumed.

2864 Reports / Updates by the Clerk and Councillors.

Items 1 to 6 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

2865 A35 Matters.

Items 7 to 22 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Items 9, 19 and 11 – A35 Communities. Cllr George Dunn will write again as no response has been received. Councillors consider that it is important for the community representatives to meet, and that National Highways attendance is not required.

GD

Cllr G Dunn said he is attempting to obtain copies of the WSP Safety and Severance reports for all locations on the A35. The Clerk said that she has the report for Morcombelake and will e-mail it to him.

CC

Items 7 and 8 – A-Roads Task Force. Cllr McAra stated that Chris Loder MP has not contacted her to discuss in full detail the progress and next steps with the Parish Chair. She will contact him about this.

VM

AGREED to write to Ben Hampson, National Highways, asking for updates on: -

CC

- the Charmouth to Yellowham Hill study
- the Average Speed Cameras for Chideock Hill
- resumption of remedial works on the northern side of Chideock Hill to rectify land slippage.

2866 River Winniford and Water Pollution Issues.

Items 23 to 28 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

Cllr G Dunn drew councillors' attention to the following e-mail exchange with Harry Walker, Wessex Water Area Scientist who attended the Chideock Treatment Centre site visit in January: -

Cllr G Dunn asked him to confirm or correct the assertion made at the November Parish Council meeting that "Sewage works do NOT discharge raw / untreated sewage - It will always be partially treated".

Harry Walker replied: -

"Yes, that is correct. Sewage will always have at least preliminary screening and settlement within the storm tanks as a minimum before being discharged to the environment and this is generally extremely dilute as this occurs during periods of rainfall as highlighted by the sample of the storm effluent."

RESOLVED that Chideock Parish Council is willing to act the referee organisation for grant applications from the Winniford River Action Group and to hold funds on the group's behalf until such time as it has its own bank account, with the proviso that such money must not cause the Parish Council's income and / or expenditure to exceed £25,000, as this would lead to an External Audit being required at a cost to the council.

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr George Dunn, carried unanimously.

2867 Motions Received with Notice.

Cllr A Dunn's motion with notice was accepted.

RESOLVED that: -

- Chideock Parish Council recognises the importance of the activities conducted by the individuals known as the Winniford River Action Group.
- Chideock Parish Council is prepared to support these individuals with financial aid in the form of a grant, to hold and manage such funds as may be passed to the council, without conferring any other liability on the council.
- Chideock Parish Council understands the Winniford River Action Group is a voluntary unincorporated association, a group of people who have decided to work together to accomplish a common agreed non-commercial purpose.

Proposed by Cllr A Dunn, seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

2868 Planning Matters.

a) Applications.

P/HOU/2022/06704 Lushays Brighthay Lane North - Demolition of garage & erection of extension & lean to link; Alterations to outbuilding.

Chideock Parish Council supports the application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.

P/LBC/2022/06705 Lushays Brighthay Lane North - Demolition of garage & erection of extension & lean to link; Alterations to outbuilding.

Chideock Parish Council supports the application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.

P/HOU/2023/00822 Larks Hey Duck Street - Erect First floor extension and insert new dormer windows in East elevation.

Chideock Parish Council supports the application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.

P/HOU/2022/07352 Stoke Cottage North Road - Retain shed with alterations and implement landscaping. Amended Plans.

Chideock Parish Council supports the application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.

P/TRT/2023/01079 Holme Cottage Pettycrate Lane - T1 Eucalyptus - Prune back crown by approx. 1m to leave a natural form. T2 & T3 Cupressus Macrocarpa - Cut back lower branches over garden by approx. 2m & remove dead wood.

Chideock Parish Council supports this application.

The response to the following application (dealt with via e-mail) was endorsed: -

P/HOU/2023/00543 The Orangery North Road - Convert existing garage on north side

to living accommodation. Alterations to windows and doors.

Chideock Parish Council supports this application subject to the Conservation Officer's report.

b) Determinations.

P/FUL/2023/00074 Anchor Inn Sea Hill Lane Seatown - Retain extract flue in kiosk roof. **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 28A on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED.**

2869 Finances.

Items 29 to 35 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED.**

a) Payments.

i. Clerk's Salary and Expenses for February	£311.12
ii. Bridport Town Council – Foss Orchard Hedge Cutting	£144.00
iii. Bridport Town Council – Clapps Mead Mowing (2 invoices)	£1620.00

Proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

b) Budget Monitoring Prediction to 31 March 2023. NOTED.

c) Grants to be paid at Financial Year End.

After discussion it was **AGREED** in principle to make the following grants for 2022 – 2023, to be paid at the meeting on 28 March after formal resolution.

• Chideock News	£700.00
• Chideock Village Hall	£700.00
• Winniford River Community Group	£1,000.00
• Bridport Citizens Advice Bureau	£200.00.

This totals £2,600.00 which exceeds the budgeted amount of £1850.00 by £750.00.

It was further **AGREED in principle** to vire £750.00 from the Devolution of Services Reserve which was set up in the budget for 2018 – 2019 and added to in the budget for 2019-2020 which stands at £5,000. It was set up in anticipation of the formation of the new Dorset Council in April 2019 but has not been needed. This will be put forward for formal resolution at the meeting on 28 March, prior to formally approving grant payments.

d) Clerk Vacancy.

AGREED that Cllr McAra will draft a letter asking for more information from the candidate. If necessary, the Clerk will readvertise the post, with an end date of 30 April. The Clerk stated that she will remain in post until a new Clerk is appointed.

VM

e) Foss Orchard Car Park.

Nothing to report.

2870 Clapps Mead Playing Field.

a) Playing Field Update.

Cllr George Dunn reported that he and Mr Kelson will be fixing down the picnic bench in the play area and replacing the latch on the pedestrian gate into the field.

Cllr Anna Dunn said she will research play area equipment to possibly replace the older wooden items and report back to the council. Councillors **AGREED** in principle that the Friends of Clapp's Mead should apply for a Lottery grant for new equipment.

RESOLVED to purchase a set of moveable goals posts from Huck Nets at an approximate cost of £900 including VAT and delivery. (The Clapp's Mead Reserve stands at £2,031.07, with £1,000 in the 2022 - 23 Budget).

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr George Dunn, carried unanimously.

CC

b) Friends of Clapp's Mead.

AGREED to grant permission to the Friends of Clapp's Mead to hold a classic car event in May and a Fete in August, subject to the usual conditions: -

a) A strict understanding that no vehicles are allowed on the Playing Field except to deliver and remove equipment for the Fête.

- b) No parking at all on the field.
- c) Any damage to the surface of the playing field to be made good by the organisers.
- d) Any electrical equipment and supplies to be correctly set up and made safe for the public.
- e) Main gate to be kept closed once the event starts.

2871 Dorset Rights of Way, Dorset Highways and Flood Management.

a) Rights of Way.

Items 35 to 38 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Items 37 and 38 – Mill Lane / Bridleway 18. Cllr McAra will write to Cllr Christopher asking him to request that the Rights of Way team deals with submitting the case to the Planning Inspectorate as soon as possible as this has been promised since July 2019.

VM

CC

Cllr McAra said that the Rights of Way issues she had reported in North Chideock have been dealt with but that a fingerpost has been uprooted – she will report this to Dorset Council.

b) Dorset Highways.

Items 39 and 40 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

The Clerk said she will follow up on the e-mails received after the Duck Street / upper Sea Hill Lane site visit with Dorset Highways last year.

CC

The Clerk will ask PCSO Bishop what assistance the police will give towards setting up a Community Speed Watch for Duck Street / Upper Sea Hill Lane.

CC

The Clerk will ask Dorset Highways what action they intend to take about the subsidence on Carter's Lane – this lane is the only way to North Chideock when North Road is closed.

CC

c) Flood Management.

No updates.

2872 Current Consultations.

None.

2873 Correspondence.

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

2874 Annual Village Meeting.

AGREED to hold the Annual Village Meeting on Wednesday 26 April starting at 7pm. Wessex Water is the preferred speaker.

2875 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting of Chideock Parish Council meeting.

The next scheduled meeting is at 10am on Tuesday 28 March 2023.

The meeting closed at **12.15pm**.

Cllr Christopher's E-mailed Report.

It is good to see so many community events in Chideock, I look forward to meeting with you on Tuesday.

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, and 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 lasting legacy through investment in energy efficiency of homes and support for children with early year education and starting school.”

Public Health Dorset (PHD) launched a new children and young people's mental health campaign 'RUOK?' to coincide with Children's Mental Health Week. Recent research by Dorset Youth has shown that only 60% of Dorset young people know where to turn for mental health advice, so the campaign will address this by highlighting the wide range of mental health support available to children and young people in Dorset. This includes 24/7 crisis support from local and national helplines, NHS services in Dorset and support provided by local and national charities.

The campaign, produced on behalf of Dorset's Suicide Prevention Group, involves a wide range of partners including both councils, NHS Dorset, local NHS mental health services and the voluntary sector and has three areas of focus: A multi-channel communications campaign including news stories, social media and other content using real stories to highlight local and national support. A shareable graphic signposting to support that is easily accessible for young people which we're encouraging everyone to save on their phones and share with friends and loved ones and a targeted social media advertising campaign on Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube. If you would like to support the campaign or share with others in your community, you can use the following resources:

Draft Dorset Local Plan.

A summary of comments from the consultation of the draft Dorset Council Local Plan is now published. All the comments received from the 6,000 respondents have already been searchable on the council's website, but they have now been categorised against the draft policies and relevant areas of Dorset. The consultation, which took place in early 2021, resulted in over 50,000 comments on the separate policies, more than all of the most recent former district and borough local plan consultations combined.

Cllr David Walsh, Dorset Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, said:

“Officers have given time to every comment that was received during the consultation. We have been given specific details that will help us formulate the plan.

“We are grateful for everyone who has commented, there are many genuine issues which will be considered going forward.”

The summary can be viewed on the Dorset Council website.

Although the timescale for the development of the Dorset Council Local Plan has been extended, evidence gathering has continued. This supporting evidence is also published on the council website.

The Dorset Council Local Plan will outline the strategy for

- Providing the growth Dorset needs
- Locating development in suitable places
- Providing community services including schools, retail, leisure, and community facilities
- Ensuring the appropriate character and quality of development
- Protecting the environment, and
- Acting on and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Once adopted, the plan will guide decisions on planning applications in Dorset for the next sixteen years.

Second home report to be given extra opportunities for consideration.

The Dorset Council has taken the decision to defer their “Council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties” report to allow more councillors to be involved before a decision is made.

The report recommends that the Council should take advantage of flexibilities contained in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which, if it becomes law, will enable the introduction of a 100% council tax premium on second homes.

Defra has announced plans for a new round of productivity grants, the government has also revealed new competitions for research and innovation, the opening of the Annual Health and Welfare Review, and plans for support for small abattoirs.

These follow the announcements made in January, which set out details for new Sustainable Farming Incentive standards and payment rates, plans for developing Countryside Stewardship, a new round of the Landscape Recovery scheme and additional funding for the Farming in Protected Landscape scheme.

The most recent announcement on productivity and slurry grants provides some short-term clarity on plans for 2023, and the first steps for the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway. The recent publication of new guidance

for land managers on Biodiversity Net Gain will also provide welcome clarity on how to deliver biodiversity units for the private sector market.

The new grant announcements are welcome news for the industry, particularly those who have plans for new equipment. There is a total of £168m across a range of grants and competitions for research and innovation. In summary:

Round two of the Farm Equipment and Technology Fund (FETF) is open now for applications for productivity and slurry, with animal health and welfare grants opening in March.

- The Annual Health and Welfare Review is now open for cattle, sheep, and pigs.
- New Water Management theme under the Farming Transformation Fund is opening in the spring and plans for future rounds on robotics and automation, and housing for calves.
- Plans for new Farming Innovation Programme competitions for research and innovation.

There is a lot of information on these schemes, but the key points for CLA members to focus on are: Currently open:

- Farm Equipment and Technology Fund 2023 - Productivity and Slurry Annual Health and Welfare Review
 - Closing date for applications: 4 April 2023.
 - It is competitive.
 - Grants of £1,000-£25,000.
 - There is a list of eligible items.
 - It is open to farmers, forestry owners and contractors in England.
- Annual Health and Welfare Review
 - Funded annual vet-led visits for tailored advice and tests.
 - You need to register interest at gov.uk to be invited to apply.
 - Open to farmers with more than 11 beef or dairy cattle, 21 sheep or 51 pigs registered in England.
- Opening in March
- Farming Equipment and Technology fund 2023 – Animal Health and Welfare
 - The closing date is to be confirmed.
 - It is competitive - £20m available.
 - There are grants of £1,000 - £25,000.
 - The aim of this fund is to improve the health and welfare of livestock, such as handling, biosecurity, automated monitoring, etc.
 - Opening later in 2023
- New rounds of Farming Transformation Fund
 - Expected themes:
 - Water Management - grants for reservoirs and improving irrigation.
 - Automation and robotics - grants for investment in technology
 - Livestock - grants for upgrades or new housing for calves
 - Grants vary but typically £25,000-£500,000 depending on the theme.
 - It is competitive.
- Support for small abattoirs
 - Funding to help abattoirs invest in new technology, improve productivity, and enhance animal health and welfare.
 - Details are still being developed.

In addition, applications for Countryside Stewardship schemes to start in January 2024 are open now, and we expect applications for SFI 2023 standards to open in the summer. The England Woodland Creation Offer is also available for applications.

Best regards

Simon

Councillor Simon Christopher
The Dorset Councillor for the Marshwood Vale Ward
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