

# CHIDEOCK PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Chideock Village Hall on Tuesday 25 October 2022 at 10am.

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

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

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

Cllr George Dunn took the Chair in Cllr McAra's absence.

**2809 Apologies.**

Cllr McAra had sent her apologies, which were accepted.  
*PCSO Bishop sent his apologies after the meeting.*

**2810 Grants of Dispensations.**

None.

**2811 Declarations of Defined Pecuniary Interests.**

None declared.

**2812 Minutes.**

**RESOLVED** to accept and sign, as a true record,

a) the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 27 September 2022.

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

**2813 Dorset Ward Councillor and Police Reports.**

a) **Cllr Christopher** reported as follows: -

- He has again spoken with Chris Loder about the bridge repair
- He will be attending the meeting this coming Thursday re the A35, to be held at Wilmington. The Clerk said that she and Cllrs Anna and George Dunn will be there.
- He spoke about the current economic situation. Local Authorities are concerned regarding government funding and increased pressure on their budgets.
- He has forwarded Cllr Coates' e-mail (regarding who should now be contacted about the All-Weather Trailway now that Tara Hansford has left Dorset Council) to Cllr Spencer Flower, Leader of Dorset Council.

*Standing Orders were suspended for the following item.*

**2814 Democratic Period.**

Professor Brunsdon thanks the Parish Council for their investigations regarding sewage discharges at Seatown.

A discussion about the lagoon followed – why is it there; can it be prevented from forming; impact of the pollution in it.

Cllr Christopher said that, when considering the impact of the new rules re phosphates and nitrates on larger rivers, Dorset Council focus must not be lost for small waterways such as the Winniford.

There was discussion regarding the Chideock sewage pumping station and associated sewage treatment works.

Cllr Anna Dunn suggested that Wessex Water be invited to attend a meeting to explain how this system works to enable the Parish Council to be better informed about the impact on River Winniford and to clarify the varying views on sewage pollution issues.

Professor Brunsdon said that Chideock W.I. members have been told that river water

**CC**

quality testing had been conducted. The Clerk clarified that this has been done by Dorset Council. The Clerk is investigating how water quality test kits can be obtained and how much they cost.

5 people have come forward for the community group but more are needed for it to be viable..

*Standing Orders were resumed.*

**2815 Reports / Updates by the Clerk and Councillors.**

Items 1 to 18 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Councillors considered the 11 motions being put to the virtual DAPTC AGM on 19 November and agreed how the Parish Council will vote on each. The Clerk will attend and vote for the council.

**2816 A35 Matters.**

Items 19 to 24 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

**Item 22 – Noisy Crate Cover** – Connect has no power to control when a utility company responds to an issue such as this. The crate belongs to Wessex Water and it was suggested that it might speed up the process if residents contacted them directly. Agreed to add Wessex Water's phone number to the list of contacts in the monthly Parish Council news article in the Chideock News and placed on the Parish Council noticeboard. **CC**

Overnight closure of A35 from Crown Roundabout Bridport to Axminster – 31/10 to 4/11. **CC**  
Clerk to ask for a copy of the letter being sent to residents.

**2817 Motions Received with Notice.** None.

**2818 Planning Matters.**

Item 33A on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED**.

a) **Applications.** None.

b) **Determinations.** None.

c) **Appeals.**

P/HOU/2022/00749 - Turnpike Cottage.

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.

Items 26 and 26A on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

**2819 Finances.**

a) **Payments**

i.	Clerk's Salary and Expenses for September	£296.68
ii.	Village Hall Hire – 25 October	£20.00
iii.	Clerk - Reimbursement for Remembrance Wreath	£25.00
iv.	Ken Hussey – Q3 Clapp's Mead Inspection	£47.50

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

b) **Accounts and Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2022.**

**NOTED.**

c) **First Draft of Budget for 2023 – 2024.**

No amendments made. This will be presented again at the November meeting and will be formally approved at the January meeting.

d) **Foss Orchard Car Park.**

**NOTED** that Mr Rob Murrey continues to work on the garden area. He has requested that some top soil is purchased to level up the lawned area. Cllr George Dunn will take

this forward.

Items 27 and 27A on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

**2820 Clapps Mead Playing Field.**

**a) Playing Field Update.**

Item 28 on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED**.

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

Cllr Anna Dunn passed £56.40 to the Clerk, raised by stall holders at the Fete held in August – for the Community Fund.

**2821 Dorset Rights of Way, Dorset Highways and Flood Management.**

**a) Rights of Way.**

Items 29 to 30 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

Cllr Coates reported that Chideock Manor Estates has received a letter and map from Dorset Council saying that overgrowth by the paths needs to be cut back. The map was very inaccurate with paths marked where there aren't any and the actual paths not marked. A meeting was requested with a Rights of Way officer to sort out where these paths should be. No response has been received.

**b) Dorset Highways.**

Items 31 to 37C on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

Clerk to pass relevant information about Duck Street and Sea Hill Lane on to the member of the public who raised the issue of pedestrian safety. **CC**

**c) Flood Management.**

Items 38 to 43 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

**2822 Current Consultations.**

**Dorset Council - Let's Talk Libraries.**

2nd consultation on Dorset Council run libraries. For individual and corporate response.

By 22/12 2022

Clerk to send all councillors a soft copy of the "Employee, business and partner survey" version of the survey, to be completed and returned to the Clerk who will then submit a corporate response.

The Clerk encouraged councillors to complete the "Public survey" version online.

**2823 Correspondence.**

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

**2824 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting of Chideock Parish Council meeting.**

The next scheduled meeting is at 10am on Tuesday 29 November 2022.

The meeting closed at **11.50am**.

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

I look forward to meeting with you on the morning of 25 October.

In this report I offer both my own reflections on matters and also provide the latest Leaders Report from Spencer Flower.

Clearly while the meeting time has changed for Chideock Parish Council, there continues to be a degree of political turmoil and not just for the Liberal Democrats losing another Councillor as a result of another defection .....

Despite the failure of some politicians to concentrate on core issues so fostering stability , indeed certainty and a settled environment for growth there is still some good news around.

This includes the creation of the Rural England Prosperity Fund. The so-called REPF is worth £110 million. Despite what you may read on local social media the scheme covers two years, which does not start until April 2023 and will run until March 2025.

I must stress it is an important development but you may question whether this is sufficient funding to cover all the rural counties of England .It would however involve the creation of a fund dedicated to rural businesses and communities.

In conclusion this is a positive outcome after the publication of the All-Party Parliamentary Group report "Levelling Up the rural economy," and subsequent rural proofing report called "Delivering For Rural England."

Perhaps few people would disagree with the objectives mentioned in the above documents.

The 17 - 18 per cent gap between rural productivity and the higher urban productivity

Many of you will recall the work around the EU Structural Fund and LEADER and the Growth Development Fund commencing some 20 years ago. The Growth Development Fund targeted the underpinning of rural development. In Dorset Post foot and mouth in 2021 there was an active Chalk and Cheese , as it was called, Development group covering the deliverability of grants.

Now clearly there has been a post 2020 concern that as the Rural Development Programme for England Finished there was a situation where rural businesses were left with a lack of access to capital grants for the purpose of funding growth projects.

All in all, this is perhaps good news when coupled with policies to finally remove the divide between digital availability in rural and urban areas and establishing fit and proper rural transport infrastructure for those who both live and work in rural communities.

Turning now to social care, many of you will have noticed that the LGA i.e. The Local Government Association has called for some parts of the Governments adults social care reforms to be delayed to April 2024 The idea of delaying the implementation of the care cost cap etc is to allow authorities across the Country to learn from a pilot scheme. Clearly there are issues about the impact of who funds the reforms at a time of what is commonly called a social care workforce crisis. The chief proponent of the delay is Councillor David Feathergill of Somerset in his role as chair of the Community Wellbeing Board.

I set out the Leaders bulletin below and look forward to commenting on the statement of the Chancellor in post on 23 September

Leader's bulletin

Welcome to the Leader's bulletin, following the Full Council meeting on Thursday 20 October 2022.

I wanted to bring you a few updates on:

- what support we're offering to help with the cost of living
- the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme

- our expressions of interest for Investment Zones
- our budget challenges

### Cost of Living Crisis

The council has brought together a network of officers and representatives from the community and voluntary sector to coordinate our response to the cost-of-living crisis. The network has been focusing on:

- Direct financial aid to households in greatest need
  - Better access to housing services
  - Urging people to act early
  - Signposting to support on money (debts, benefits, budgeting), food, housing, and mental health
- We have taken a data-led approach, using a cost-of-living dashboard, so we can target support for those people who are particularly at risk, such as older people on fixed state benefits, disabled people, and families with young children.

We are currently working on four workstreams for the autumn and winter:

1. Warm Welcome – working with Help & Kindness to map the existing community offer and identify opportunities for expanding community-led warm spaces and offer funding
2. Energy Efficiency - colleagues in Housing and Climate teams are looking at proposals to expand work to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Dorset
3. Food Security – working closely with foodbanks, social supermarkets, and other community food projects
4. Support to increase volunteering - working with the voluntary sector to promote volunteering and encourage more people to get involved in befriending and a range of activities to support vulnerable residents.

Round 4 of Dorset Council's Community and Culture Project Fund will be focused on supporting local community projects that help with the cost-of-living challenges. This fund opens for bids from voluntary and community groups on 4 November.

I'd like to thank our voluntary and community sector partners for the incredible work they are doing to support local people at this time.

Further information on support available to all is on our website: [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help)

### Homes for Ukraine scheme

We are providing an additional winter payment of up to £1,000 to all Homes for Ukraine hosts, and a further £250 per month to hosts continuing to provide refuge for their guests after the initial six-month period.

Homes for Ukraine hosts have been receiving a £350 a month 'thank you' payment from the government since guests started to arrive in Dorset six months ago. The council has agreed to provide additional funds to further support these hosts who are able to continue to offer their homes to Ukrainian refugees.

You can find out more on our website [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/refugee-programme-in-dorset](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/refugee-programme-in-dorset)

### Investment Zones

Dorset Council has submitted Expressions of Interest for three potential Investment Zones: one around Weymouth harbour, one at Portland port, and one next to the existing Innovation Park in Winfrith.

It is understood that these new Investment Zones will accelerate development of infrastructure to drive economic growth by offering tax breaks for potential investors and simplified, reduced regulation and planning processes. The aim is to attract new investment to create jobs.

We don't yet know when the government will announce decisions on Expressions of Interest for Investment Zones.

We should welcome any opportunity to attract investment, improve infrastructure, and create jobs here in Dorset. The three proposed locations offer great potential for economic development and are suitable for this kind of activity.

However, our Expressions of Interest do not represent a commitment by government or by Dorset Council. We await further detail from government so we can assess the potential pros and cons of an Investment Zone before making any formal commitment following council processes.

Any opportunities should support and enhance the ambitions set out in the Dorset Council Plan and meet the economic development aspiration leading to improved social mobility, the latter being of particular concern to members across this chamber.

#### Budget challenge 2023/24

Work has begun to set the budget for next financial year, 2023-24. Dorset Council is currently facing a £29 million budget gap next financial year. As we all know councils are required by law to set a balanced budget with expenditure balanced by income, so work will take place over the coming months to close this gap.

There are three main variables which affect the council's finances, and over which the council has little to no control:

- Dorset Council, like many households and businesses, is facing the challenge of inflation. Delivery of many services now costs more.
- Employee pay awards: the nationally agreed pay offer for next year alone is anticipated to cost this council an extra £6 million.
- Adult social care: demand continues to grow due to the aging population, with 30% of the population in Dorset who are 65+. The national average is 19%. Added to which are government reforms to adult social care coming in over the next year, costing significant sums of money to implement.

We face a high level of uncertainty over our budget position at this point in the year. It is not known what will happen with inflation over the coming months, so budget setting has to be based on forecasts. And the government's financial settlement to councils as usual will not be announced until the end of the year.

Dorset Council continues to be under-funded by government, but this is now exacerbated by inflation. We must work hard across the chamber through involvement in the scheduled Budget Cafés over the coming months to help in the setting of a balanced budget. This will almost certainly require some difficult decisions

We must all be acutely aware this comes at a time when people are increasingly struggling to make ends meet. Support for people who need it most will be prioritised and we're continuing to press our MPs and the new government for a better deal for our taxpayers.

Please note that I continue to press for what I will call a Trailway between Chideock and Bridport.

As members of the local Western Area Transport Action Group are aware, as was demonstrated at the October Dorset Cabinet meeting, I am a strong advocate for Public Transport and for the people of Chideock and look to discuss my experience of what has been achieved elsewhere. This needs to be considered in the light of an implantation date for a new Dorset Council Local Plan after May 2024.

Best regards

Simon

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