

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), George Sotiriadis (GS) & Marion Walbridge (MW) attended by Zoom.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public** – None

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. Cllrs Langham & Haynes sent their apologies.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **FINANCE:**

The Chairman confirmed that the impact of the precept request would, following revision of the tax base, mean a reduction of Band D Council Tax of around £0.13 pence. It was unanimously agreed to set a precept of £ 5,700 for 2023/2024.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman provided these updates:

**5.1 Ash Die back** – it was that, following contact by the Clerk, a landowner had agreed to address the issue of some problem trees.

CJ noted that it was a matter of public safety that other trees in the parish, notably those on the road between Hilton and Ansty, should be dealt with properly; owners should be reminded that Ash Die back pose a real risk to the public where collapsing trees overhang highways and other publicly accessible places and that any trees that showing signs of deterioration should be dealt with professionally. CJ will draft a suitable message for the Village News.

**5.2 Signs at the Knapp** – SJ reported that a lorry had recently collided with a resident's wall, and there was some local disquiet in relation to the slow response of Dorset Council in providing signage that had been requested last year. It was felt by some councillors that cost of signage is significant, it can serve to clutter the countryside and is likely to be ignored. The Chairman noted though that the PC did have the funding to meet the quoted cost and it was agreed to clarify with Dorset Highways whether it would accelerate the installation process if the PC was prepared to fund the cost.

### **6. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:**

JH had submitted a written report which was taken as read.

### **7. PUBLIC SESSION**

There were no questions.

### **8. LOCAL BUS SERVICE**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Jones for his considerable efforts in canvassing local support for the re-introduction of a bus service and for his excellent and thorough report.

CJ reported that 70 expressions of interest were received by email and subsequently 30 completed questionnaires were returned by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022. CJ had driven the proposed route twice in his own vehicle and provided accurate timings. It was clear that there is an urgent need for a service to be provided; the main finding is that the 'free no bus' policy must end and the market should be allowed to determine the viability of a scheme. The nationally publicised 'Uber' scheme involving partnerships with other agencies is an interesting idea and enquiries should be made with Dorset Council as to whether this is (or will be) under consideration.

it was agreed that CJ's report with map would be incorporated into a single document to be communicated Dorset Council, two local M.P's, the other PC's involved and the local Facebook & What's App Groups. The PC will evaluate the responses received in due course.

## **9. '20 is Plenty Speed Campaign'**

It was noted that there had been some local discussion of this initiative. The Clerk pointed out that the criteria are very restrictive and involve a complex matrix calculation with takes into account local collision data and requires traffic surveys. It was also noted that PC had already undertaken traffic surveys when the Speed Indicator Device (SID) proposal was being discussed - none of the locations assessed met the criteria for a SID.

CJ noted that there had been very few local collisions in recent years and that in fact exceeding 20 mph is not possible in most places.

It was agreed that the proposal was unsuitable for any location in the Parish and would not be considered further at this juncture.

## **10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES**

### **10.1 Hawkes Field**

The Chairman noted that the Inspector had allowed the appeal for a new house to be constructed. It was the view of the inspector that the application was not unduly materially harmful to the character or appearance of the AONB.

### **10.2 New Applications:**

#### **P/HOU/2022/07754 Field End, Pleck Lane, Higher Ansty Dorchester DT2 7PT**

Conversion of an existing integral double garage into living accommodation. Rearrangement of the internal living space and alterations. Provision for a small porch to be added to the front elevation of the existing bungalow. Erection of a new triple garage/workshop with room above on the existing driveway.

CJ had spoken to 4 neighbours and there were no objections to the proposal. The PC agreed to support the application.

## **11. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

### **11.1 Finance report:**

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 31<sup>st</sup> December standing at £ £ 9,170.01 and the general reserve at £ £ 6998.68 Jubilee expenses in the year had been met from reserves.

## 11.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
28/10/2022	£ 240.10	David Green	Oct 2022 pay
28/10/2022	£ 204.00	C Hunter (Wel Medical)	Defib battery
02/11/2022	£ 50.00	Daniel Stevens	Grass cutting
02/11/2022	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses
02/11/2022	£ 50.00	Hilton & Ansty Church	Church clock grant
02/11/2022	£ 42.00	VISION ICT Ltd	Domain renewal
28/11/2022	£ 400.00	David Green	Nov 2022 pay & arrears
08/12/2022	£ 143.88	Zoom	Zoom renew
28/12/2022	£ 260.00	David Green	Dec 2022 pay

The Clerk confirmed that the VISION ICT expense relates to the domain renewal for the website and not the website itself.

## 12. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

RN reported that he had installed a pipe at the bridge to keep this free from flooding, although there are two gully pots that need cleaning. These will be reported to Dorset Highways when further information has been gathered.

SJ mentioned a flooding issue between Hilton & Milton Abbas, due to a blocked gully, this will be reported to Dorset Highways.

## 13. CORRESPONDENCE:

Date	From	Subject
03/11/2022	DAPTC	ROI update reminder
03/11/2022	DAPTC	Clerks pay award 2022-2023
05/11/2022	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support	October meeting notes re Chris Loder message re Bus services
16/11/2022	Carol Eastment	
19/11/2022	Dorset Deserves Better	Open Letter to Spencer Flower
21/11/2022	Dorset Council - Spencer Flower	reply to DDBA letter
21/11/2022	Andrew Taylor - Cheselbourne PC	20 mph speed limit enquiry
28/11/2022	Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments	Change of external auditor - BDO
30/11/2022	Dorset Council - Alison Turnock	Tree felling Notifications policy
01/12/2022	Dorset Council - James Potten	Workshops re end of direct payments to farmers
06/12/2022	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support M	November meeting notes
09/12/2022	Dorset Council - Sarah Thomas	Tax Base calculation 2023-2024
22/12/2022	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support	December meeting notes

## 14. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Signage at the Knapp
- Ash-Die back
- Coronation planning
- Defibrillator funding

## 15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Fox's Den room at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:45

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

**Report to the Parish Council November/December 2022**

**Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council**

Dear Clerks and parish councillors

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all and your families a happy Christmas. I am going to be visiting my family and grandchildren for Christmas in Australia and really looking forward to seeing them after so long away due to the pandemic. I will therefore give my apologies for any meetings in January. I picked the time so that I would be at Dorset Council for the budget setting process, like the parishes this is normally done in November and December. However, with all the uncertainty in central government and the fact that Dorset Council will not know what settlement we will receive until the 21<sup>st</sup> December, the meetings are now being held in January while I am away. I will be looking at my emails from time to time just to ensure there are not thousands on my return so please bear with me if my response is a bit delayed. I will give an update on the budget in my next report.

**Local Government Reorganisation Savings**

Some nearly 4 years ago we embarked upon the exercise to abolish the 5 District Councils and to create two larger authorities to reduce duplication and improve efficiency. I have been asked how this is progressing and I reproduce below a statement I received from the Chief Financial Officer.

During its first 3½ years old Dorset Council has maximised the efficiencies of becoming a unitary council which has enabled it to re-invest in front line services. Since it was formed the Council has made savings of £77M:

	<b>Annual Efficiency and transformational saving £'000</b>
2019/20	17,200
2020/21	14,400
2021/22	27,786
2022/23	17,259
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,645</b>

These savings have been reinvested predominantly in Social Care to meet to the growing demand for services, in particular from Dorset's aging population who increasingly need Adult Social Care support. In addition, our rural nature means that some of our costs are unavoidably high e.g., travel to school, and the provision of home care. Despite this, Dorset Council receives very little government grant funding compared to other Councils across the Country. The Council is therefore working hard to persuade government to adjust the funding formula to make it fairer. Meanwhile, with the increase in costs and likely public sector spending cuts, our budget is more challenging to manage than ever. While we are faced with these unprecedented financial pressures, we need to continue to protect and maintain our frontline services for residents as much as possible.

## **CHRISTMAS PARKING**

There will be free parking on selected days in late November and December at some car parks in the Dorset Council area. To encourage residents to support local businesses by shopping locally and attending events, free parking will be available on Small Business Saturday which takes place on 3 December this year. We are offering free parking on the first Saturday in December at: Beaminster, Blandford, Bridport, Dorchester, Gillingham, Lyme Regis, Shaftesbury, Sherborne, Sturminster Newton, Wareham, Weymouth, and Wimborne.

Free parking will also be available in car parks managed by Dorset Council on various other dates in the run-up to Christmas. Details of the car parks and dates can be seen on the council's Christmas parking webpages.

## **CHRISTMAS Bin collection**

The revised dates for bin collection vary across the county. To find out what is yours go to the Dorset website check your bin, put in your postcode and you should get an answer! However, in general, the usual collection services will be delayed by a day from December 26 until December 30. For example, rubbish collection on Monday, December 26 will now be taken on Tuesday, December 27 etc. This will remain in place throughout the week until normal service resumes on Monday, January 2. You can keep track of what bin needs to be put out when by visiting [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/check-your-bin-day](http://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/check-your-bin-day).

## **Community grants – Round 4 of funding**

Dorset Council project funding can help you to make a difference to people living in our communities. The fund is a small project grant, funding up to 80% of total project costs. We are open to all applications that meet our criteria. We offer grants from £1,000 to £5,000 to support the council to meet its core priorities. In round 4 Cultural applicants can apply for projects that meet the council's cultural outcomes and priorities. Cultural applicants can be considered for a cost-of-living project grant but can only submit one application in this round.

Voluntary and Community sector (VCS) groups can apply in this round. However, applicants should note that round 4 will prioritise applications from the VCS that support the cost-of-living challenges that affect local communities. You can find out more about Dorset communities from the Dorset Insight Page. Dorset council is committed to projects benefitting marginalised people. As we expect demand for funding to be very high, we may award applicants less than they apply for.

Applications from Voluntary and Community sector organisations who are seeking a grant to support local community projects can still apply but we will prioritise grants to those projects that address and support the cost-of-living challenges for vulnerable communities and those most in need in the Dorset council area. Details of the types of cost-of-living projects that can be considered will focus on:

- community warm rooms/spaces especially those in rural areas
- community food projects including lunch clubs, dinner clubs and community meals
- foodbanks including community fridges
- low level Mental Health projects

## **Helping vulnerable women**

A project which will help vulnerable women in Dorset has come one step closer to realisation. Dorset Council has appointed BCHA, a charitable housing association based in the south west, to lead the Pause Programme. Pause is a nationally evaluated programme which works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in their children needing

to be removed from their care. The programme aims to give women the opportunity to pause and take control of their lives, breaking a destructive cycle that causes both them and their children deep trauma. It supports them to develop new skills and responses that can help them create a more positive future.

## **Rough Sleepers**

Dorset Council has successfully secured more than £1.5 million to help continue excellent work supporting rough sleepers. As well as continuing to support existing projects, such as the Bus Shelter and our advice and support services, the additional funding will help establish a new rapid assessment unit for vulnerable people providing accommodation and bespoke assistance to prevent returning to the streets. Spread over three years the money will also be used to support charities in the community which are set up to help rough sleepers. The funds over such a significant period, will give security to the organisations and their workforces.

## **Library Consultation**

Now in the second phase of consultation, communities are being asked for their views on the draft strategy, to help prioritise and explore what the library service could look like in their community. In addition to the main survey, there is a dedicated children's survey for ages 5-15 years, this can be completed on behalf of children who you care for. To find all our surveys head to: [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/lets-talk-libraries](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/lets-talk-libraries). Support is also available via customer services where an officer can help to fill in the survey over the phone. Call 01305 221 000. Those who need paper copies of the survey can access these by visiting their local library. The survey will close on 22 December 2022.

## **Land Charges**

Dorset Council has announced the time taken to complete land charge search requests is back down to 10 working days. After a massive rise in property sales during the pandemic a year ago the average time to return these searches had risen to 62 days which was holding up the sale of properties. Despite sales still being high things are now back on track.

## **Gritting schedule**

Gritting crews are on standby 24/7 across Dorset from now until the end of March ready for action. Up to 22 main gritting routes are treated by Dorset Council's Highways Service when road surface temperatures are predicted to drop below one degree Celsius. The roads form the majority of roads used by the majority of the motorists - covering 684 miles of the council's network. In preparation for the chilly temperatures, the local authority has stockpiled 12,700 tonnes of rock salt in the council's depots.

The precautionary gritting network includes all A, B and well-used C class roads as well as:

- links to hospitals,
- large industrial estates, transport interchanges, emergency services stations (including manned Coastguard and RNLI) and identified critical infrastructure
- routes to all urban schools with more than 500 pupils and rural schools with more than 350 pupils
- primary bus routes with a substantial frequency
- main routes through towns and villages with populations of more than 750

## **Schools Admissions**

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- Dorset are running the annual consultation on the School Admission Arrangements 2024/2025 with effect from Monday 7th November 2022 to Sunday 18th December 2022.

Details of the consultation will be available to view at 2024 to 2025 school admission policies - Dorset Council.

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- Responses must be submitted either in writing to School Admissions Team, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ or by email to [schoolorganisation@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) by Sunday 18th December 2022. Upon the conclusion of the consultation period all responses will be considered carefully, and a report will be presented to Dorset Council's Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 28th February 2023.
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- The timetable for the consultation is set out below:
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Dorset LA consultation begins	7th November 2022
Dorset LA consultation ends	18th December 2022
Own Admission Authorities (including Dorset LA) determine Admission Arrangements	28th February 2023
Own Admission Authorities (including Dorset LA) publish Admission Arrangements	15th March 2023
Deadline for Objections to Office of the School's Adjudicator	15th May 2023

### Homes for Ukraine - Dorset update

Since March 2022: 309 Dorset Sponsors have welcomed 787 Ukrainian Guests to Dorset

As of 23 October 2022: 280 Dorset Sponsors are hosting 720 Ukrainian Guests and 40 Sponsors are waiting to welcome a further 75 Ukrainian Guests

School data as of 10 October 2022:

- We have received 278 applications for school places
- 13 children are in private schools
- 10 children have moved area or returned to the Ukraine
- 242 children are registered on the roll of a Dorset School

Dorset's Homes for Ukraine response is now established as a council service, made up of and integrated with many front-line services, operating the following complex workstreams:

- Main Operational Service
- Re-Matching Support
- Post Six-Month Long-Term Housing and Support
- Unaccompanied Children

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Catherine Langham (Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ). Rodney Northover (RN). George Sotiriadis (GS) & Marion Walbridge (MW). Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH) by Zoom

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public** – None

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr McGuinness sent apologies.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

The Chairman confirmed that gully clearing at the bridge in Ansty had taken place.

### **5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Haynes noted:

Dorset Council is reviewing its 'business intelligence' procedures and the use of data to be 'proactive' rather than 'reactive' to issues – for example in its response to the cost of living crisis and in dealing issues relating to children's needs and the voluntary sector.

Bids for digital funding in relation to several areas are in the process of being made including a single customer account and access to services including back office functions. The idea is that software systems should be more integrated & linked.

CL asked JH re Dorset Councils response to fly tipping, having reported incidents which had not been dealt with. JH agreed to follow up this enquiry.

CJ asked JH about Dorset Council's response to the rural busing issue. JH advised that this is a priority concern headed by Cllr Ray Bryan, the focus being on how to provide hourly services to rural communities. This requires something of a culture change to get people out of their cars and using public transport. CJ noted that any service must be reliable.

### **6. LOCAL BUSING REPORT**

CJ noted that he had not received any response to the report from either of the local M.P's, Chris Loder or Simon Hoare. It was apparent that the bus companies were not interested in providing a service that would not make money.

CJ had received a supporting email from Carol Eastment of Melcombe Horsey PC concerning discussions she has had with Dorset Community Transport (DCT) for a possible service to replace the Damory 311 bus. This would be a weekly service alternating between Blandford and Dorchester and would operate between 10 am and 1pm. Carol has invited DCT to hold a meeting and CJ has offered to join this when it is arranged.

CJ had also received an email from Nigel Hodder, Chairman of Milton Abbas PC, referring to the local Neighbourcar scheme, which provides medical appointment support and also to



DCT who operate green minibuses and who provide school transport and some other services. SJ noted that DCT whilst mainly operating school services can also provide services to registered groups. It was noted that 'Plus Bus' does not operate in this area.

The busing report has been added to the PC website and is downloadable via this link:

<https://www.hiltondorsetpc.org.uk/post/local-bus-services-report-cllr-clive-jones>

SJ noted the suggestion by a local resident that the Parish Council sets up a local 'What's App' car sharing group. It was noted that some informal arrangements already exist and it was agreed that this should not be an activity taken on by the Parish Council.

## 7. THE KNAPPS HILTON – HGV SIGNAGE

The Chairman noted that one resident had objected to signage on their property and that therefore the remaining choices were between:

- Requesting Dorset Council to fund & install one official sign
- Self-funding the installation of one official sign
- Installing an unofficial sign
- Taking no action

The Clerk had received a quote of £433 plus VAT for an official sign from Dorset Council. It was agreed that an unofficial sign would provide the most cost effective and rapid means of addressing the issue. CL would ask the local sign supplier to suggest something suitable. This would be attached to the signpost at the entrance to The Knapps.

## 8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

There were no new applications and only one outstanding application yet to be decided by Dorset Council.

## 9. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 11.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 28th February 2023 standing at £ £ 8,423.61 and the general reserve at £ £ 6,252.28, there being little expenditure in the last few months.

### 11.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
04/01/2023	£9.00	David Green	Expenses
11/01/2023	£217.40	HMRC	PAYE
30/01/2023	£260.00	David Green	January 2023 pay
28/02/2023	£260.00	David Green	February 2023 pay

Clerks expenses of £ 9.00 were authorised.

## 10. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

i) **Litter Pick 2023** - CL advised that the annual litter pick would take place on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The Parish Council agreed to donate £ 75 towards the cost of lunches and snacks.

ii) **'20 is Plenty'** – the comments of a resident in connection with the meeting summary in the Village News were discussed, the key issue being the statement that the Parish Council had agreed that it was very difficult to exceed 20 mph in the villages.

It should be noted that Dorset Councils criteria for a 20 mph limit states that this cannot be on roads where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function and any application must be supported by survey evidence, evidence of 12 months Speedwatch activity and be supported by the police

The PC had commissioned speed surveys that had not indicated a general speeding problem in the villages and it is clear there are no roads in the Parish that meet Dorset Councils criteria for introducing a 20 mph limit.

It was agreed that the comments made in the minutes and meeting summary should stand being an accurate record.

iii) **Hilton Culvert** – the PC had received a report of a missing guard ail to a culvert in Hilton which had been uncovered following some clearance work. This will be referred to the Community Highways Officer for action.

iv) **Fly Tipping** - CJ reported that a fly tipping incident involving a large pile of tyres, car parts and building materials near Delcombe Manor had been cleared very quickly after being reported on line to Dorset Council..

## 11. CORRESPONDENCE:

The following items of correspondence had been circulated to the PC:

Date	From	Subject
04/01/2023	Dorset Council	Planning update - nutrient neutrality (Poole Harbour)
18/01/2023	Simon Hoare MP	Annual North Dorset Parish Council meeting
31/01/2023	DAPTC	not getting a response to an issue raised with Dorset Council?
06/02/2023	Simon Hoare (MP)	Missing dog
07/02/2023	DAPTC	Kingston Maurward 9 March 2023
07/02/2023	Charles Hunter	Comment on the PC's 20 mph comments in the VN
13/02/2023	DAPTC	NPPF Consultation - NALC's Draft Response Lines
16/02/2023	DAPTC	DAPTC Northern Area Committee Councils -
18/02/2023	Tessa Tory	RE: Ochill events - Shooting
21/02/2023	DAPTC	Councillor Networking Event
22/03/2023	DAPTC	WORKING TOGETHER WEBINAR
07/03/2023	Community Highways	Knapps signage price update
07/03/2023	Dr Dave Preskett	Missing culvert bridge rail - The Knapp DT11 0DE

### Notes:

- The Chairman has agreed to attend Simon Hoare's meeting and the Councillor Networking Event on behalf of the PC
- DAPTC Northern Area committee – the PC will not be appointing a representative
- Ochill shooting – proposals withdrawn
- Simon Hoare's dog was sadly found deceased

## 12. CORONATION PLANNING

The Parish Council is planning a Big Lunch event on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May in celebration of the Coronation of Charles III. The venue being at Moonfleet Farm courtesy of Clive & Linda Jones, details to follow.

Hilton PCC is planning a Tea in Hilton followed by a choral evensong and BBQ. There may be events at the Brewery Hall in Ansty yet to be finalised.

### **13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:**

Noticeboard refurbishment.

### **14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 2nd May 2023 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty to include the Annual Parish Meeting, the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and a Parish Council meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:45

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

### **Reports to the Parish Council January & February 2023**

#### **Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council**

### **Report to the parish council January 23**

#### **Dorset Council Tax**

The council proposes to increase council tax next year by just under 2% and to levy the adult social care precept of 2%. This is less than the maximum 5% increase outlined in the Government's Spending Review in December 2022. The increase would be equivalent to £1.41 extra per week for a Band D property.

The council's total net budget for 2023-24 will be £348 million. Dorset Council provides around 450 different services to just under 380,000 residents and is one of the largest unitary councils in the country. The proposals are in contrast with many other councils nationally, which face the prospect of cuts to services, such as library closures and reduction of road maintenance, to balance their budgets. The council is required by law to set a balanced budget which means its expenditure must be balanced by income without unsustainable use of one-off, or short-term sources of finance. This year's budget setting exercise once more takes 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.

Since becoming a unitary council in 2019, we have made efficiency savings of £76 million, and 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.

The budget setting process will complete at Full Council 6.30pm, 14 February for final approval.

## **Rubbish and Recycling Collections**

There have been some difficulties across the County in collections. The refuse vehicles are (obviously) large and not particularly manoeuvrable. If entering a dead end - the vehicle will normally reverse in. Residents can help by ensuring that vehicles are not parked on the corner any of these entrances, or in parking spaces that restrict access or prevent free movement. Thank you.

## **Grants to DC**

Central government has confirmed that Dorset Council is to receive around £4.5m over the next two years to continue several key programmes, as well as launch some new initiatives. They have approved local spending plans for the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund \(UKSPF\)](#), which matches and succeeds EU funding, while giving local leaders greater say in how the money is spent.

A new Investment Plan for Dorset, led by Dorset Council with input from a wide range of contributors, has been approved by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and will see the county benefit from £4.5m of [UKSPF](#) money. The flexible approach to the Investment Plan also means Dorset Council will have the opportunity to adapt its plan to reflect new economic priorities over the period to 2025.

The £4.5m will be focused on building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth, and increasing life chances across the county. All of these are key objectives for Dorset Council over the coming years, especially as we tackle post-pandemic financial challenges and offer help to our residents. The council aims to launch the first elements of the Investment Plan shortly and will be providing more details on how businesses and individuals can access this support.

## **SSEN £2.2M investment in Dorset**

MORE THAN two million pounds is to be invested in low-carbon technologies across Dorset. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Distribution has announced £2.2million of funding to replace nearly 3km of cable. That will create an extra 7.2megawatts of capacity for low carbon technologies which, they say, could be harnessed for electric vehicle charging points. No details yet as to where this will happen in the county

## **Nutrient neutrality implications for Planning**

Natural England has informed us that their position on phosphorus in Poole Harbour has significantly changed. We are, therefore, no longer in a position to agree planning consents using a pre-commencement condition. This is a change of approach from our communications about nutrient neutrality implications for planning we issued on 12 December. This has come about as a result of the implications of the detail of amendment NC77 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The amendment means that more work may be required to make improvements to reduce phosphorus leeching into Poole Harbour. We are considering the impact of these changes alongside Natural England and continuing discussions nationally with the aim of finding a positive way forward to enable consents to be granted whilst meeting the statutory requirements surrounding nutrient neutrality for Poole Harbour. This could make granting planning applications more difficult

## **Wildlife Haven**

Dorset Council has completed a land purchase to create new habitat and wildlife corridors to support the survival of one of the rarest bats in Europe, the Greater horseshoe bat. The project will see hedgerows restored, a wildflower meadow established, and more trees planted. This purchase has been made possible through our Habitat Compensation Fund, using money secured through developer contributions. With extra funding for the project coming from Defra's [Farming in Protected Landscapes programme](#) (administered by Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), Blandford Forum Town Council and Dorset Council.

The new nature reserve will provide crucial habitat for adults and juvenile bats from the nearby Bryanston Site of Special Scientific Interest roost, whilst also supporting other bat species and a host of other wildlife.

## **Illegal Parking**

Dorset Council, Dorset's Police and Crime Commissioner and BCP Councils have asked central government for higher fixed penalty fines for those who ignore parking restrictions – especially in areas close to beaches.

It comes after several summers where motorists abandoned their cars on double yellow lines, roundabouts, verges and even blocked residential drives – some taking the view that a penalty, shared between a carload, was as cheap as paying for parking and saved the bother of trying to find a vacant car park space. We await government's response

## **Disposal of furniture**

[New guidance recently introduced by the Environment Agency](#) means Dorset Council must treat [upholstered furniture](#) differently when it is being disposed of from now on. [Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating](#) – mainly furniture with cushions and/or fabric – is often treated with fire-retardant chemicals known as [Persistent Organic Pollutants \(POPs\)](#). These chemicals have not been used since 2019 but can remain intact in the environment for a long time if not dealt with properly and need to be incinerated safely. This means that all [Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating](#) will be separated from other waste types at our [household recycling centres \(HRCs\)](#) from now on, with a separate skip for these items. Residents using our [HRCs](#) may see the following being set aside, sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, kitchen and dining room chairs, stools and foot stools, home office chairs, futons, bean bags, floor and sofa cushions.

All these items can still be dropped off at [any of our 10 sites](#) free of charge. Visitors to our [HRCs](#) can help by following on-site guidance on where to place their waste and speaking to on-site staff if you have any questions. [The new rules](#) only apply to furniture when it is being disposed of, and we strongly encourage everyone to [consider whether their old items can be sold or donated for reuse instead of being thrown away](#).

If your furniture cannot be reused and you're looking to pay someone for its removal and disposal, [please ensure you are handing your items to a licensed waste carrier](#). Always ask how your rubbish will be disposed of and get an invoice or receipt for the waste they're taking, including their contact details. If someone unlicensed were to fly-tip your furniture, [you could end up paying a fine or being taken to court](#).

## **Report to the parish council February 2023**

### **Budget**

The budget as described in my last repost was agreed at the rather lengthy full council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February. This will be a rise of just under 4% in Council Tax.

## **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. More details next month.

## **RUOK – Mental Health campaign to connect with you people – Mental Health Week**

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:

[Shareable graphic](#) – can be found on the PHD website: [Shareable graphic - RUOK - Public Health Dorset - Dorset Council](#). [Flyers, posters and digital screens](#) – can be printed and displayed or contact Public Health Dorset if you require professionally printed copies. Social media – please share content from Public Health Dorset's social media pages (Facebook – [Public Health Dorset](#); Twitter – [@HealthyDorset](#); Instagram – [@healthydorsetuk](#)). Please do let PHD know if you need any additional information about this campaign and content by emailing [PHDComms@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:PHDComms@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).

## **DC wins £19.5 Levelling up bid.**

Government has announced on the 19th January, that Dorset Council has been successful in securing £19.5 million of Levelling Up funding, intended for investment in Weymouth. Dorset Council submitted an ambitious bid to the second round of the government's Levelling Up Fund last summer, with the aim of regenerating Weymouth's waterfront economy. The council will support the government's investment by making a contribution of £3.5m to project costs, making a total of £23m.

## **Second home report to be given extra opportunities for consideration.**

The Dorset Council Cabinet has taken the decision to defer their "Council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties" report to allow more councillors to be involved through the overview committee 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. If agreed this is not something that would happen straight away but only after the law is passed and a year's notice is given. This will be determined in time for the May report.

## **Apprenticeships**

We have been working hard at our staff recruitment and retention. I did mention this last year that we had over 200 vacancies. This is reducing and in particular we are trying to “grow our own” through a series of apprenticeship schemes. At the beginning of the new year we had 244 apprentices doing a wide range of levels and jobs. Young people straight from school and others changing career are joining us, as well as existing staff taking additional qualifications as part of their professional development. At the following levels is just a taste of the different roles.

Level 2 Business Administration, Green space & countryside, Customer service

Level 4 Project management

Level 6 Social workers, Construction, Building Control

Level 7 Solicitors, Accountants, ICT security

Going forward we will be looking to do additional work in schools to promote this kind of career path. We are also taking for consideration a number of young people who are taking the new T levels.

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG), Catherine Langham (CL), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), George Sotiriadis (GS) & Marion Walbridge (MW). Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public** – None

- 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Justine McGuinness offered to continue as PC Chairman for 2023/2024. This was seconded by Cllr Langham and unanimously supported by all Cllrs. Cllr McGuinness signed the Chairman's Acceptance of Office
- 2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Langham offered to continue as PC Vice Chairman for 2023/2024. This was agreed & supported by all Cllrs.
- 3. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO VARIOUS POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

These were agreed as follows –

- 1. Trees** – Cllr Jones
  - 2. Highways** – Cllr Northover
  - 3. Footpaths** – Cllr Northover
  - 4. Planning applications** – Cllrs Jaques & Sotiriadis
  - 5. Defibrillator** - Cllr Sotiriadis
  - 6. Flooding** – non-councillor Adrian Simmonds was appointed as Floods Officer.
- 4. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT, CERTIFICATE of EXEMPTION, ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT and STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS –**

These were approved and duly signed by the Chairman. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council was an Exempt authority for accounting purposes and met the requirements of the Transparency Code.

### **5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

It was confirmed that there was no conflict of interest with external auditors BDO LLP.

## **MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting of Hilton Parish held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**

### **1. CHAIRMANS REPORT:**

The Chairman noted that in addition to its regular activities, including holding the Annual Litter-pick and the maintenance of defibrillators, there had been continued progress in dealing with incidences of ash die-back and highways issues. The campaign for the reinstatement of local bus services had generated considerable interest in the restoration of a service and would be taken forward.



The Queens Platinum Jubilee Year had been celebrated with a number of very successful and noteworthy events and by the installation of two remarkable benches in Hilton and Melcombe Bingham.

## **2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

The Chairman noted that there would be elections in 2024; Hilton usually experienced contested elections and it was important that Councillors should encourage people to stand next year.

The Chairman noted that the Coronation week-end would no doubt be a highlight and thanked all involved with preparations for this.

The Chairman felt that the Parish Council was in a good position and thanked all Councillors and the Clerk for their hard work.

### **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice Chairman) Shulla Jaques (SJ) Marion Walbridge (MW); Clive Jones (CJ) George Sotiriadis (GS) Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Northover.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman provided an update regarding these items:

#### **Coronation Marking**

There would be the HPC event at Moonfleet Farm on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May under a large marquee and this would include welly throwing, Tug of War, BBQ and other activities. The Parish Council thanked Clive and Lynda Jones and George Sotiriadis for all their work in organising this event. It was agreed to make donations of £ 150 to Cllr Jones to cover costs, including insurance, relating to the provision of the marquee and £ 75 to Cllr McGuinness towards the Tug of War rope.

Hilton PCC were holding a tea at 4 pm followed by a service and a BBQ. It was agreed that £ 100 would be donated towards flower expenses and a disco was also being held at the Brewery Hall.

## **5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Haynes had provided a written report and took questions.

CJ noted the proposal to increase parking fines and was concerned that this may be off-putting to visitors. JH explained that this was really an issue for congested tourist spots, such as Lulworth Cove, where some people do not consider that a £25 fine is a deterrent to illegal parking or for over staying in car parks. This problem had grown in recent years to the point where there were access problems for emergency services. The other major issue arising

from higher visitor numbers was the huge increase of litter being generated, which included the general dumping of major items such as tents and chairs.

CJ queried why there had been a delay to the imposition of double Council Tax on second homes. JH explained that this was because complex the Levelling up legislation had not been passed in Parliament. JH noted that the £10 million that this additional Council Tax would raise would be very helpful to Dorset Council finances. When passed the legislation will still require one years notice to be given to those affected by the measure and so the additional tax would not be payable until April 2025 at the earliest.

SJ raised a question concerning refuse lorries and other large vehicles making 3-point turns in Church Row, Hilton, causing damage to verges. JH said it would be very difficult for these vehicles to reverse down this lane (and this may not even be legal). CL noted the issue could possibly be resolved if the PCC could permit a turning space to be made available on Glebe land, although this could not be considered until later in the year.

## **6. LOCAL BUSING REPORT**

CJ confirmed that the proposed '+Bus' service involves Hilton, Cheselbourne and Melcombe Horsey parishes at present, with possibly Milton Abbas and Winterbourne Stickland joining at a later date. A meeting had been held with Carol Eastment, Melcombe Horsey PC and Carol Byrom, Cheselbourne PC and CJ, MW and SJ of Hilton PC, to consider how best to take the proposal forward.

CJ noted that the service is not very flexible and whilst it will pick-up from the door, it is timed with the school bus service and this only allows only for a 2 hour stay in Dorchester, which is of little use to someone who works. In addition it will not allow on route dropping off.

A bank account would be required to make a grant application and it was not certain who could hold this. JH thought that one Parish Council could potentially hold the funds on behalf of the other PC's but would make enquires with Dorset Council to confirm the position.

The return fare would be £7.00 though it would be free for the over 60's and 50% discounted for students. The scheme would operate for a trial period of one year but it was not clear what would happen if it proved to be loss making and on whom the financial burden would fall.

It was noted that other Parishes would be discussing the proposal at their meetings in May.

It was formally agreed that a working group of CJ, MW and SJ would represent Hilton PC. A further meeting would be held on 21<sup>st</sup> May and CJ asked councillors to submit a list of further questions in advance of that meeting.

## **7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES**

There were no new applications.

## **8. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

### **8.1 Finance report:**

The Clerk had presented a finance report to the Council; the VAT Repayment and precept had been received.

### **8.2. The following retrospective payments were approved:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>
08/03/2023	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses
13/03/2023	£ 75.00	C E Langham	Litter pick contribution

15/03/2023	£	75.00	DAPTC (J McGuinness)	Consultancy event
20/03/2023	£	60.00	4D Signs	The Knapp signs
28/03/2023	£	260.00	David Green	March 2023 pay
03/04/2023	£	187.54	DAPTC	Subscription
11/04/2023	£	241.00	Zurich	Insurance renewal
11/04/2023	£	187.60	HMRC	PAYE
25/04/2023	£	70.00	JP Consultants	Internal audit
28/04/2023	£	210.00	David Green	April 2023 pay

**8.3 Clerks expenses – £ 9.00** was approved

#### **8.4. Reduction to Clerks hours**

A reduction to the Clerks hours was agreed with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

### **9. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS**

SJ noted that the new signage in the Knapp, Hilton looked very good and may be deterring large lorries.

CL & CJ had noted and reported some fly tipping incidents. The verges in Stoke Wake had been trimmed in advance of re-surfacing work scheduled for July.

### **10. CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following items of correspondence had been circulated to the PC:

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Subject</u>
10/03/2023	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support Meeting	Reminder for Monday 13 March 12.30pm and presentation from Cllr Ray Bryan
24/03/2023	Dorset Highways	PROPOSED TEMPORARY CLOSURE BRAMBLECOMBE DAIRY
28/03/2023	DAPTC	DAPTC Training E-News - April 2023
29/03/2023	DAPTC	Working Together Webinar - Low Carbon Dorset
29/03/2023	Dorset Council	NEWS: Car parking increases aim to limit impact on residents
13/04/2023	Dorset Highways	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Parish of Stoke Wake , Hiton and Milton Abbas
14/04/2023	DAPTC	Leisure Strategy Consultation - Closes 14 May 2023
16/04/2023	Dilys Gartside	20mph for Dorset's people?
20/04/2023	Dorset Council	Consultation: Planning for climate change guidance documents
28/04/2023	DAPTC	Infrastructure Funding Statements 2021/22 (CIL & S106)

The Clerk noted the continuing campaign headed by Dilys Gartside for a 20 mph speed limit throughout Dorset villages and that only 9 parishes had actually requested taking the matter forward. A reason for this low take up may be the complex criteria that need to be met including the requirement for 12 months of Speedwatch checks.

The PC reiterated its view that, on the basis of its recent consideration of traffic speed reduction measures, it would be unlikely that the Parish would meet the criteria required by Dorset Council Highways for an application to reduce the speed limit to succeed.

## 11. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

Bus service progress

## 12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty. There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:58

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

### Reports to the Parish Council April 2023 Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council

#### **Report to the parish council April 2023** **Cllr Jill Haynes Chalk Valleys Ward**

#### **Dear Clerks and Councillors please find my report for April**

It is increasingly obvious that in order to progress with anything outside the “business as usual” we will need to be agile in bidding for Government funding coming available for specific areas. Listed below are a number of recent successes and how they are being spent. Hope you have had a great May Day Bank Holiday and that you all have time to party with friends and family on the coronation weekend.

Best wishes Jill

#### **Potholes**

Dorset Council was given a £2,914,000 slice of the £200 million budget set aside by Chancellor Jeremy Hunt during his Spring Budget, Dorset Council monitors approximately 2,400 miles of road.

#### **Roads Maintenance**

As part of our maintenance programme, a number of roads in the area are being given an ‘early life intervention’ to keep them in good condition. We do this through road preservation, a preventative treatment which stops water ingress and surface deterioration. This prevents more damage that ultimately leads to potholes. Road closures with diversions will be in place during the overnight work, along with parking restrictions where applicable, so please be patient.

#### **Levelling up funding for Weymouth**

Dorset Council has been awarded £19M In the bidding round for Levelling Up, the bid requires Dorset to add a further £3M to the fund. The £22M will be used to prepare three sites in Weymouth for development. The sites are owned by the council and for example, in the case of the peninsula carpark, will need repairs to the sea walls and piles to strengthen the structure prior to sale. It is anticipated the funding will bring considerable inward investment into Weymouth and will help rejuvenate the town centre.

#### **Parking Fines**

The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Leader of Dorset Council recently wrote to the Transport Minister asking them to consider increasing parking fines particularly in rural and seaside areas. Currently they are low in comparison to London and other big city charges - such that

holiday makers sometimes abandon their cars and view the 25 fine as worth it. In areas such as Lulworth this has caused severe disruption and has prevented emergency vehicles from getting through.

### **Second Homes Council Tax**

Dorset Councillors have been discussing proposals for council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties, in anticipation of the new flexibilities for councils in the forthcoming Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. At that time, it was hoped that the Bill would receive Royal Assent by 1 April 2023. Councillors were due to vote on proposals at a rescheduled Full Council meeting on 30 March in order for the change to be introduced from April 2024, as the council was required to make the decision a year in advance.

However, we now understand from government that there is no likelihood of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill becoming law in the near future and therefore a decision on this matter could not be taken by Full Council on 30 March as planned. The proposal to introduce council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties continues to be something Dorset Council are keen to explore, following constructive discussions at Overview committee and Cabinet. We will watch the progress of the government's new Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill closely and bring this to Full Council once the legislation has passed.

### **Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) scheme**

Dorset Council, BCP Council and Public Health Dorset have been awarded £4,343,000 by central government to upgrade homes and off-grid households with energy efficiency measures as part of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) scheme.

The HUG scheme will provide energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating via local authority funding, to households in England that are low income, off the gas grid or have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) between D and G. You can find more information about the funding on the gov.uk website.

### **Electric Vehicle charging points**

We aim to provide access to charging points within a 10 minute drive for most residents within 10 years. That's the target we have set ourselves which has led to 'ambitious plans' to expand the charge points into villages and rural locations across the local authority network. The announcement comes as part of the council's 'Charging Ahead' policy which switches the focus from the county's 'main towns' to supporting households in areas that aren't able to charge electric vehicles at their homes. The plans, which will play a key part in preparing the county for the government's 2050 net-zero target, will see as many as 200 electric vehicle charge points installed in communities across the Dorset Council area over the next three years.

Funding for the new charge points will mostly come from the government's local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) scheme and Mer, a European EV charging company, with additional contributions from the council. If your community could benefit from a ChargePoint, you can suggest possible locations by submitting an online form on our website.

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice-Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Rodney Northover (RN), George Sotiriadis (GS) & Marion Walbridge (MW).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public** – None

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Jones sent his apologies.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council considers what objectives could be worked towards before the term ends in May 2024.

CL noted that village signs were in generally poor condition and consideration could be given to having these renovated or replaced. It was also noted that many 30-mph repeater signs were very faded. It was agreed that photographic evidence of the condition of this signage should be gathered before being submitted to the Community Highways Officer for action. CL also suggested that perhaps new signage making reference to the AONB could be considered.

It was proposed that the phone box in Melcombe Bingham would benefit from having some flower pots placed outside.

CL enquired as to whether the Parish Council would support a representation to speak before the Planning Committee concerning the application for the solar farm at Mappowder; apparently only three speakers are permitted at the hearing. CL suggested that a modified scheme could be supported if reduced in scale to be made less obtrusive. It was noted that the PC was not a statutory consultee and although the application had been discussed at an earlier meeting, the PC had agreed, at the time, to remain neutral. It was agreed that CL would make a request to the Planning Officer for the PC to be made a consultee in view of the fact that the proposed development could be seen from parts of the Parish.

The Chairman noted that 2024 was an Election year and residents should be encouraged to stand to ensure that there is a contested election.

### **5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Written reports had been received from Cllr Haynes and were taken as read (and are attached).

### **6. LOCAL BUSING REPORT**

MW and SJ had attended a meeting headed by Carol Eastment with Plus Bus; an application for a grant to fund the service for a year is in the process of being completed. It was noted that if the service is not continued after a year the grant does not have to be repaid. However if the service is to continue after the trial period, and unless the service is

self-funding, then a financial contribution by those councils that have subscribed to the scheme may be necessary. It has not been decided on which basis any funding would be provided by the Parishes, although it could be based on usage. At present Hilton, Cheselbourne and Milton Abbas are willing to participate and possibly Dewlish and Winterbourne Stickland at a later stage. The Parish Council agreed that MW could sign any necessary documentation on behalf of the PC.

SJ had attended the online 'Bus Back Better' meeting organised by Dorset Council. It was apparent that policy will be centred around providing 10 minute services within towns and hourly services in rural areas. However, funding is limited and the focus of the meeting seemed to be on providing services between the large towns - Yeovil, Dorchester and Bridport. SJ noted that it would be highly unlikely that a rural parish like Hilton will receive any funded service.

## 7. PARISH EVENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE SETUP

The Chairman noted that whilst most of the major events have taken place this year there will be future events such as the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-DAY in 2024, which will require some thought.

The Chairman suggested that perhaps a local What's App or Instagram group could be initiated to plan for major occasions, and the 'Next Door' network may also be worth considering.

GS suggested following the success of the Coronation week-end that there could be an Annual Picnic in May.

It was agreed that planning for next year should begin in September and GS will put some ideas together.

## 8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

There was one new planning application:

### **P/HOU/2023/03208 Crown Farm Duck Street Hilton DT11 0DQ:**

*Construct bridge, create parking area and associated landscaping works.*

It was agreed that this would have limited impact on neighbouring properties and should be supported.

## 9. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 9.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 30th June 2023 standing at £ 9,597.06 and the general reserve at £ 7,425.73, there being little expenditure in the last few months.

### 11.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
03/05/2023	£ 100.00	Hilary Cox	Coronation flowers
03/05/2023	£ 9.00	David Green	May 2023 expenses
09/05/2023	£ 165.00	C J Moonfleet	Coronation event contribution
28/05/2023	£ 210.00	David Green	May 2023 pay
28/06/2023	£ 210.00	David Green	June 2023 pay

Clerks expenses of £ 28.48 were authorised.

## 10. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

- i) CL noted that local road closures would soon take place to enable re-surfacing work in Hilton, Ansty and Stoke Wake along Cuckoo Lane. GS had added these notifications to Facebook.
- ii) The Parish Council thanked Ian Northover and Dick Rowe for clearing the footpath in Hilton
- iii) The Chairman noted that a number of drains had recently been cleared.
- iv) RN noted that further gully clearance may be required but this will not be evident until it rains heavily.

## 11. CORRESPONDENCE:

The following items of correspondence had been circulated to the PC:

Date	From	Subject
12/05/2023	Climate and Ecological	Notes from April C&EE Support meeting
26/05/2023	DAPTC	Important Dates for Diaries - Dorset Council Updates and Engagement
05/06/2023	Climate and Ecological	Notes from May C&EE Support Group
06/06/2023	DAPTC	Working Together Webinars - June
13/06/2023	WO2 (CSM) Alex Miller	Bugle Breakfast - Thursday 27 July 2023
14/06/2023	DAPTC	FW: TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS & D-DAY 80 - 6TH JUNE 2024
16/06/2023	Dorset Highways	TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF VARIOUS ROADS IN HILTON, MILTON ABBAS, STOKE WAKE & WOOLLAND
22/06/2023	DAPTC	DAPTC Advice Note - Practical guidance to help deal with an unauthorised encampment.

### Notes:

- The Chairman, having attended last year's event, noted that the Bugle Breakfasts were a useful way of introducing young people to the activities of the Armed Forces.
- The Clerk referred to the guidance issued in order to deal with unauthorised encampments

## 12. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

Noticeboard refurbishment.  
Planning for D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## 13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:37

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

**Reports to the Parish Council May & June 2023 and cabinet update**



## **Report for May 2023**

### **Transformation update**

Dorset Council is currently delivering a five-year transformation plan which was approved by Cabinet in November 2020. Despite the significant disruption experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic and the more recent cost of living crisis, the council has maintained a focus on improving services for customers and achieving long-term financial stability.

Dorset Council is 4 years old, and during that time it has initiated large scale change on a number of fronts that have reflected the need for convergence and adaptation of the way that we operate to reflect the change environment around us. To date, the council has saved £96m as a direct result of the convergence of systems and processes following local government reorganisation. This exceeds the planned outcome of £70M by the end of year five more than £20M in the first four years with more to come. Without the decision to go a Unitary council we would undoubtedly be in a very serious financial situation today and services would have had to have been reduced or cut.

The changes and progress that Dorset Council has both experienced and delivered during this time have been significant, multifaceted and have involved service specific and council-wide changes that can be categorised along the following lines:

- Staff integration
- Service improvement through change and performance management
- Improvements driven by capital investments
- Enhanced partnership working and governance
- Transformation

### **Household Support Fund**

The Household Support Fund (HSF) will reopen for applications at 6 June 2023 for low-income households in the Dorset Council area. The support will be in the form of supermarket vouchers. Citizens Advice will be allocating this fund on behalf of Dorset Council and vouchers will be issued to residents who meet the eligibility criteria within 6 – 8 weeks. Dorset Council households will be able to apply if they have an annual household net income of less than £30,000 and savings of less than £16,000 and **not applied** for a previous HSF payment within the last 6 months. Calculations for the annual net income. should not include Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance or Child Benefit. Applications are limited to one per household. Funds are limited for each window and the form will close when they have been allocated. The April window opened and closed on the same day, so please get in touch as soon as possible once the form opens. If applicants need help completing the form, they can telephone Customer Services on 01305 221000.

### **Community Grants**

Grants of up to £5,000 are available for projects that bring communities across Dorset together. If you are looking to kickstart a new project that will make a difference for people in your community, round 5 of the Community and Culture Project Fund has now reopened. The grants, which are managed by Dorset Council, welcome applications for projects and events for community, arts, accredited museums, heritage, sport, youth, play and physical activity.

Last year the grants supported a wide range of local projects including arts and crafts, physical activities, sports clubs, warm spaces, foodbanks, lunch clubs and cost of living support for childcare places. Not for profit groups who meet our funding criteria are welcome to apply for the grant, which can fund up to £5,000 towards a project that will have a social impact and support local communities and hard to reach groups.

A total of £54,420 was awarded to heritage, museums, and arts organisations across Dorset last year. In addition, 27 grants worth a total of £64,970 were awarded to voluntary and community organisations that work with disadvantaged, under served and marginalized communities in the Dorset council area.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 7 July and decision letters will be sent to all applicants at the end of July. Application details are on the Dorset Council website.

### **Car Parking Machines upgrade**

All our car park and on-street pay and display machines are to be replaced. Replacement of the machines is expected to complete by mid-July, with the new machines offering improved reliability and a consistent user experience.

The machines will provide customers with a range of payment options, including cash, card, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and an online app. Wi-Fi will also be improved in car parks with weak phone signals, ensuring smoother transactions. The payment facilities and display screens will at a height suitable for wheelchair users.

### **Nitrates.**

We have had many questions as to how the nitrates policy affects development. Below is a summary article explaining this.

There are five catchment areas for internationally protected wetland habitats within, or overlapping with, Dorset Council's administrative area where phosphorus and/or nitrogen levels have the potential to adversely affect water quality. Dorset Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that any development it permits will not adversely affect the integrity of any internationally protected site. Therefore, in all affected catchments, new residential development cannot be granted planning permission if it is unable to demonstrate that it is capable of achieving nutrient neutrality.

The catchment areas within Dorset are:

- Poole Harbour – Nitrogen and Phosphorus nutrient deposition
- Somerset Levels and Moors - Phosphorus nutrient deposition
- River Avon – Phosphorus nutrient deposition
- Chesil and The Fleet – Nitrogen and Phosphorus nutrient deposition
- River Axe – Phosphorus nutrient deposition

The largest and most significant catchment area affecting Dorset in terms of geographical area and housing applications is Poole Harbour, and Dorset Council has in place an adopted strategy to mitigate the impacts of nitrogen from new residential development. However, the advice from Natural England in September 2022 confirmed that phosphorus is also an issue for Poole Harbour.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is proposing measures which will require improvements to wastewater treatment works which, if enacted, will go a significant way to mitigating phosphorus impacts. However, as drafted, there is a risk that smaller treatment works would not be in scope and so the Leader of Dorset Council has written to the Secretary of State to request that all necessary wastewater treatment works in the Poole Harbour catchment are within scope of the intended improvements, and officers have held subsequent meetings with government departments, Natural England and Wessex Water to look at this further. Government is giving careful consideration to Dorset Council's position and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is anticipated to receive Royal Assent during the Summer, at which point we hope to have greater certainty to offer applicants and developers. In the meantime, officers at Dorset Council are continuing to work proactively to look at finding solutions, including:

Working with Registered Providers to deliver mitigation to existing housing stock to provide additional capacity for affordable housing units;

Engaging with DLUHC to seek additional funding to bring forward mitigation;

Investigating mitigation options outside of the Poole Harbour catchment, in partnership with neighbouring authorities.

Our website contains information on the latest position on nutrient neutrality and we will continue to provide updates and guidance as the situation evolves.

## Report to the parish Council June 2023

### **South West Contact Centre Forum – Contact Centre Awards 2023 – Winners!** <https://swccf.co.uk/awards-launch/2023-winners/>

I'm delighted to inform you that following our entry for three categories at this year's contact centre awards we reached the **final for all three** categories, and we **won two**:

- **Best Customer Engagement:** this submission featured our Ukraine Response
- **Contact Centre of the Year – In House:** this submission celebrated all the achievements of customer services team including our central access team, adult access team, out of hours team and rapid response.

The competition at SWCCF is a mix of public and private sector. The private sector membership being much more heavily subscribed to the forum than public sector, so we were up against companies like EE, Ageas, UCAS, RAC, Stannah Lifts and many more

The [Customer Services](#) team offer support over the telephone, webchat, email, social media channels, SignVideo and at face-to-face Customer Access points. They are the 'front door' for Dorset Council, providing support for residents on behalf of over 60 departments across the council.

They also support a huge range of other services, from offering pre-eligibility checks for social care, processing Blue Badge applications, and providing emergency out-of-hours cover, to managing the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, involving the coordination of Welfare Checks, Housing Standard reviews, DBS checks and Host payments

### **AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR**

I am very pleased to let you know that Theresa Leavy, director for children's services, has been named as the Municipal Journal's (MJ) Achievement Awards Corporate Director of the Year. The announcement was made at the MJ Achievement Awards ceremony in London on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June.

She was praised in the award entry for the huge amount of work she has done for Dorset children where her vision is that Dorset should be the best place to be a child, where communities thrive and families are supported to be the best they can be.

The entry stated that 'Theresa has transformed the look, feel and importantly the performance of children's services by improving outcomes for children, young people and families in or communities.'

Theresa has led Dorset through a period of immense system challenge and change. She has created a strengths-based support and culture where staff are encouraged to champion the interests of children and young people being their advocates in everything we do. Staff and elected members, feel privileged to work with such an inspiring leader, who puts the experience of every child, young person and family at the centre of everything we do.

Thank you, Theresa you are such an inspiration

### **SEND & DISABILITY – CHILDRENS'SURVEY**

PLEASE NOTE – this survey has been extended to the 10<sup>th</sup> July so still time to get involved!

Parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (aged between 0 and 25 years old) are being asked to complete a survey to find out their experiences of education, health and care services and support over the last 12 months. The results of the survey will help to decide what changes we need to make to the services we provide.

The Parent Carer Forum said: ‘Through our partnership with Dorset Council and NHS Dorset we strive for Dorset’s children and young people to realise their full potential and be the best they can be.

‘The voice of parents and carers is essential, and Dorset Parent Carer Council encourages families to complete this survey. Hearing your individual experience of education, health and care over the last 12 months is vital to the development of Dorset Council and NHS Dorset future plans to improve services and support for our children and young people who are disabled or have additional needs. You have our assurance that your responses will be read and taken into account.’

‘I really hope that parents and carers reading this will take ten minutes or so to fill in the survey that will help us understand what those improvements are.’

The survey has been designed to be as easy as possible to complete so most questions are written as statements you agree or disagree with.

The [survey is available to complete on line](#), but families can also ask for a paper version by calling 01305 221066 or emailing [familyinfo@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

## **RECORD NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOMES BUILT IN DORSET**

Record numbers of affordable homes have been built for Dorset residents in the last financial year as we respond to the huge need for affordable housing.

Working with Registered Provider Housing Associations, a total of 664 new affordable homes, including a range of tenures, such as rented and shared ownership, including houses for local, key workers, were built by Housing Associations, or acquired by the council in the year to March 2023.

This is the highest figure since the unitary authority was created in 2019 and represents a risen of 135 additional houses and flats compared with the 529 created in the year to March 2022. In the year to March 2021, just 301 new affordable homes were built.

## **SAVE MONEY ON PARKING**

With recent rises in some public car parks in busy tourist areas, Dorset Council is urging people to check the cost benefits of its permits.

The cost of its permits has been frozen this year, with the Short Stay and Flexi car park permits offering savings for residents and workers:

### **SHORT STAY**

Two hours parking every day in most of the council’s car parks.

Cost: £78 a year

### **How the savings add up:**

If used for 2 hours a week = £1.50 a time.

If used for 2 hours daily = just over 21p a time.

[Apply online for the short stay permit](#)

### **FLEXI**

For residents, businesses and workers. Unlimited parking (or up to two hours in car parks where there is a maximum stay) in the majority of the council's car parks 7 days a week.

Cost: £25 if purchased for a month, or £260 for 12 months, the equivalent of £5 a week for all-day, year-round parking.

[Apply online for the flexi car park permit](#)

While the council has introduced seasonal increases at car parks in busy resort and seafront areas, prices for tickets in other nearby car parks have not increased.

For example, in Weymouth, Governors Lane, Nothe car park and the former council offices car park at North Quay park charges remain unchanged.

[Find all Dorset Council's car parks](#)

### **COMMUNITY FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

It's not too late to apply for grants of up to £5000 for a project that brings communities across Dorset together. If you're looking for funding to extend or add value to an existing project or event, or want to kickstart a new initiative that will make a difference for people in your community, time is running out to apply.

Round 5 of the [Community and Culture Project Fund](#) will close on Sunday 7 July. You can find out more about eligibility, and how to apply on the [Dorset Council website](#).

### **DORSET INNOVATION PARK**

Astral Systems is the newest business to land on the Dorset Innovation Park. Astral has invented a new reactor which has the potential to make a huge difference to cancer diagnosis and treatment.

[Dorset company set to make waves in the world of nuclear medicine and cancer treatment - Dorset Council news](#)

### **FREE STUFF FOR KIDS DURING SUMMER HOLS!**

Please find [a link to an article](#) regarding the launch of the 2023 children's Summer Reading Challenge by our Libraries Service.

### **Cabinet report 20.6.23**

Council plan annual report.

I would like to start by thanking DR David Bonner and his team for the immense amount of work they put in to provide us with the accurate business intelligence for this report. This allows us to not only monitor progress, but also provides us vital data for future decision making.

I make no apologies that this is a lengthy report it is a reflection of the detailed work of this council.

The Dorset Council plan describes the priorities of the council. It reflects resident priorities, a commitment to deliver high quality services and to deliver strong outcomes for Dorset. The Council is a complex organisation, delivering a multitude of services that are important to our residents. Ensuring that its priorities are clearly articulated, and that progress is reported, is an important element of our performance framework. The Dorset Council Plan was refreshed in 2022 to ensure it reflected the highest priorities for residents, especially following the covid-19 pandemic. The council plan was reviewed and amended last October and for the first time the delivery plan was made a public document. This report provides a progress update on the council's performance and delivery of that plan. At the time I said that the delivery plan was a work in progress, and it would inevitably change and flex as our circumstances do. The report provides a summary of these amendments to the delivery plan at appendix A.

We have five council priorities which form the basis of our plan I will try to bring out a flavour of the positives and challenges in each area.

**The protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology priority** outlines our ambitions to support Dorset's environment in a sustainable way which protects it for future generations. This commits us to taking direct action across our operations to become a carbon-neutral council by 2040,

The proportion of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting remained very high in Dorset throughout last year. This level of performance has seen Dorset ranked highly against other councils in England. In addition, less than 5% of household waste was sent to landfill, meeting the council's target. For this commitment to recycling we must thank our residents

The £19m Salix programme which is aimed at accelerating the decarbonisation of council buildings is nearing completion; with over 200 buildings receiving measures, including 5MW of solar PV, heat pumps and a range of other measures that have reduced the carbon emissions of council buildings by 20%.

Significant external funds have been sourced, including over £4m for the Homes Upgrade Grants, around £1m from the two prosperity funds and over £5.5m for electric vehicle infrastructure.

Projects completed within the Low Carbon Dorset programme delivered a total saving of 9,626 tonnes of CO2 in 2022. We are expecting this to have risen again by at least 500 tonnes by the end of last year and is above the anticipated savings target.

**Creating stronger, healthier communities' priority** sets out our ambition to enable our residents, working with partners, to develop strong networks of support and maintain strong communities. We have to focus on the most vulnerable in our communities to improve wellbeing and reduce inequality through collaboration between public services, residents, and voluntary groups.

Improving the outcomes for children and young people such has long-lasting impact for health, wellbeing and economic growth of the county it is an essential in this area.

We have performed well in supporting our younger adults with a learning disability to live independently or at home with their families, therefore ensuring they achieve the best possible outcomes in their day to day lives.

The newly formed Care Dorset is showing positive impacts on our reablement provision, maintaining people's independence.

The number of working age adults with a learning disability in paid employment continues to be a challenge; however, we have seen increasing numbers of individuals with mental health conditions in paid employment. A different focus on improving outcomes for people should see an improvement in this area from April 2023.

Ongoing demand in respect of hospital discharge is placing continued pressures on adult social care and our permanent placements into residential and nursing care homes have exceeded

target. However, our focus on Home First and reablement should see this position improve throughout the next year.

We have seen a positive increase in the number of children supported within early help over the last year (1,387 at the end March '23), indicating that we are supporting more families at an earlier stage.

A good gauge of success of social care intervention is a low percentage of people coming back into the system within 12 months of previous referral to social care. We have performed consistently strongly with this indicator over the last 12 months and have been within target at under 20%

We continue to support a high number (and rate) of Children in Need in Dorset. Increases in complex referrals have led to an increase in children assessed as requiring statutory support.

The Harbour Service has been launched and is delivering outreach and residential provision to young people. This continues to provide an effective approach for supporting young people to remain in the care of their families through the delivery of outreach.

We have secured funding for children's services through some successful national bids to help us to do more locally including Family Hubs, supporting young people in residential care to 'Stay Close' to their residential care provision and support for workforce development and our strategy for reducing parental conflict.

The library strategy has been developed over 2 phases of consultation. Over 12,500 survey responses were received, and 21 engagement workshops were undertaken, the strategy and action plan have been refined as a result. This will be presented for sign off at Cabinet in July 23.

**The Creating sustainable development and housing** priority outlines our ambitions to work with government, registered housing providers, community land trusts and local housing partners to deliver affordable, suitable and decent housing.

The number of households in B&B continues to be higher than desired at 129 in March 23, compared with 100 for the same period last year. Demands on the service in respect of homeless cases are increasing as are the complexity of cases. The cost-of-living crisis and ongoing interest rate increases are a significant factor. There has been progress in the prevention of homelessness which has led to the number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation not rising, despite a significant rise (31%) in number of people presenting as about to be homeless.

- We are projecting the delivery of 611 affordable homes in the Dorset area in the year and have also seen an increase in the completion of shared ownership properties. More funding is being made available to support low-cost home ownership.
- There has been significant progress towards our target for sustainable homes to be built per year. Forecasts show that 450 affordable homes will have been built by end of March 2023, exceeding the original target of 400.

**The driving economic prosperity** priority outlines our ambitions to support sustainable economic growth across the county, enabling high-quality jobs through improvements to productivity, sustainability, and accessibility, creating great places to live, work and visit. During the first year of the refreshed council plan the national landscape was shifting and regional policy is being amended by the **levelling up agenda**.

Our unemployment rate is 1.7%. A fall from 4.4% for the same period last year, following the pattern seen across the country.

Despite this the following two indicators show why the cost of living crisis has hit so hard here in Dorset.

Our average weekly earnings for full time jobs in Dorset in 2022 was £579, up from £549 in 2021. But this compares to £646 in England.

Our house prices to residence-based earnings ratio are at 11X. This was the highest ratio on record. This compares to 9x in the South West and 8x in England.

There has been good progress across the work defined in the priority including 4 fully completed activities:

- Levelling Up Funding of £19.5m secured
- Completion of the 5G RuralDorset programme
- Superfast connectivity expanded working with BDUK
- Ultrafast connectivity maximised across Dorset utilising grant funding

A commercial development 'Quadrant 2' at Dorset Innovation Park is in progress with contractors approved to start in 2023. This will provide additional facilities for sector investment and lead to new job opportunities in the county.

The shared prosperity fund is providing Dorset with £6m over 3 years for skills development. An investment plan has been developed and from September 2022 and work to provide additional numeracy skills and support to adults is underway.

**Becoming a more responsive, customer focussed council** covers a wide breadth of our organisation, with a focus on how we work as one council to deliver effective value for money services for our customers and our organisation. The scope includes how our customers contact us, customer engagement, our way of operating, digital, technology, accessibility, data intelligence and records, building in our communities, our employee organisational development strategy and our financial model. Quite a list! The launch of the 'Our Future Council Programme' working with Local Partnerships is a positive step towards bringing the direction needed for future ways of working for the organisation. However, as an organisation we're not waiting for the accelerating customer transformation work to commence, and 'in-progress' activity continues

The customer satisfaction surveys across many of our services have maintained excellent levels of satisfaction

We have published a Data and Business Intelligence strategy, as approved by Cabinet in February 2023.

We are working to enhance our commissioning activity through effective market shaping so that we can meet need in the most cost-effective way. This commercial approach is set out in the Commercial Strategy approved by cabinet.

A new approach, working with the Dorset ICS will support activity to better engage with customers. This is focused on in depth qualitative engagement.

The Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy and refreshed action plan is being implemented. This work includes a network which is providing opportunities for customer collaboration and problem-solving ways to remove barriers to accessibility.

We are working on a new asset management strategy, rationalising our property, co-locating services and developing our commercial approach to property. This is due to be complete by the end of 2023

So that was just a snapshot of the many things that are happening in the council, much of it is very positive indeed and shows the breath of our complex organisation. There are still considerable challenges taking into account our financial situation. We need to be more flexible and to be more fleet of foot when dealing with change but none the less this is an achievement to be proud of.



None of it would be possible without the commitment and drive of our hardworking staff who I would like to personally thank for their hard work.

The recommendation is to note the progress against the details of the refreshed plan

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice-Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), and Marion Walbridge (MW).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public – 14**

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Sotiriadis & Unitary Councillor Haynes sent apologies.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

Discussion deferred until the November 2023 meeting.

- 5. CAMPAIGN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POWER SUPPLIES TO HILTON/OPEN FORUM**

Joseph Cherrett (JC), Customer Liaison Manager SSE and an SSE engineer attended the meeting and received questions from the residents of Hilton concerning the issue of disrupted power supplies to the village.

Chris Slater from Hilton village thanked SSE for agreeing to attend the meeting, noting the considerable dialogue between himself and SSE's Perth office. He advised that Hilton was mainly supplied by overhead cables with parts of the route to the village being surrounded by trees, including many of which were in a poor condition and afflicted with ash die back. The latest power outage, in July 2023, followed the fall of a tree on the power cable, and has not been fully repaired. This latest outage followed the major disruption during Storm Eunice in February 2022, when the supply to the village was cut for 99 hours, when, in contrast Milton Abbas suffered an interruption of only 18 hours.

Chris Slater noted that the main problem is the routing of the supply via the 'The Retreat', a vulnerable area of dead or dying trees within a few metres of the supply line. The key issue is that there should be a process for dialogue between SSE and the landowner to ensure that potentially hazardous trees are removed before they can fall and sever the line. There was a problem because the owner of 'The Retreat' was not resident in the Parish. It was noted that the last full inspection of the line to Hilton was in 2018/2019 and the next full 'walking' of the lines is not scheduled until 2027/2028, this being an 8 year cycle which is far too long.

JC explained that SSE can have general permission to remove branches within 3 metres of a line, which they do so on a free of charge basis. They have now contacted the landowner who has now given permission, where they see fit, for any nearby trees that may potentially cause an issue to be dealt with. This work will hopefully take place in the next couple of weeks and the hillside will be surveyed.

CJ noted that in recent years the Parish Council had mapped instances of ash die back in the village and had contacted landowners to raise awareness of the issue and have remedial action taken. CJ noted that the programme of annual inspections and which

involved a cutting team on the ground appeared to have ceased and asked whether policies within SSE had changed to reflect the national increase in the incidence of ash die back? JC did not know whether any such policy changes had been implemented.

A resident raised issues with local supply lines in Hilton village. JC advised that SSE are not responsible for maintaining trees around low voltage lines - these are entirely the responsibility of the property owner. However there is a simple online procedure for applying for a power suspension while the work is carried out.

A resident expressed that the view that SSE appeared to have treated Hilton in a 'high handed' fashion, noting that patience was wearing thin, with the perception that smaller communities were being neglected. It was enquired as to why SSE did not have statutory powers of entry to remove problem trees where they are identified. It was also noted that complaints via Ofgem were dismissed and that SSE have provided very little advance warning of local power cuts - effectively only a few minutes. Several residents reported having been removed from the priority service register without reason or justification.

There was a general concern that Hilton had suffered disproportionately during Storm Eunice. The question was asked as to whether the supply had been diverted to Milton Abbas at the expense of Hilton during this incident? JC explained that the February 2022 outage was the consequence of a 'perfect storm' of events including failed insulators and a damaged transformer and was not exclusively attributable to fallen trees. He also noted that the regularity of outages was not particularly unusual for a community – there being 4 incidents in the last few years.

The question was as to whether there were any measures that could be taken to change the stability of shared feed between Hilton and Milton Abbas. JC agreed to look at this and will report back to the Parish Council. The engineer advised that the schematic plans did not show a sufficient level of detail to determine precisely where the issue could be.

JC advised that any complaints concerning the level of service have to be made through the SSE complaints process. Chris Slater confirmed that these would be compiled and routed via the Parish Council with the local MP copied in. JC advised that claims for compensation can only be made individually.

JMcG noted that there was a perception that small communities were forgotten about in many respects but thanked the SSE team for attending the meeting and hoped the problem could be addressed with some urgency.

## **6. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Written report received and taken as read.

## **7. LOCAL BUSING REPORT**

Deferred until the November 2023 meeting.

## **8. PARISH EVENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE SETUP**

Deferred until the November 2023 meeting

## **9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES**

### **P/HOU/2023/04216 - Praglia Ansty Hollow Higher Ansty Dorset DT2 7PR**

The PC had lodged an objection to this application following comment by neighbours and subsequent PC review. Amended plans had been submitted and briefly reviewed by the PC.

The applicant attended the meeting and explained aspects of the amended proposal including the lower ridge height, the reduction in rooflights, the removal of solar panels in a flat roof and the inclusion of windows in the gable end. He explained that the single storey building had been very neglected prior to purchase and the proposals were an attempt to make a run down property a family home.

It was noted that some neighbours had expressed objections to the amended plans. The Council could not reach a consensus view of the amended proposal and would only make a comment to the planning authority.

### **P/CLE/2023/04660 Crockers Farm Coniger Knap Higher Ansty Dorset DT11 0HF**

Certificate of Lawfulness to continue use of Crockers Farm House as a residential dwelling without compliance with agricultural occupancy condition.

It was agreed that little could be achieved by objecting to this application and no comment would be made.

## **10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

### **10.1 PC grants policy review:**

Deferred until the November 2023 meeting

### **10.2 Finance report:**

Report deferred until the November 2023 meeting

### **10.3 Retrospective payments approved:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>
05/07/2023	<b>£ 28.48</b>	David Green	Expenses May/June
11/07/2023	<b>£ 150.00</b>	HMRC (PAYE)	Q1 2023-2024 PAYE
28/07/2023	<b>£ 210.00</b>	David Green	July 2023 pay
29/08/2023	<b>£ 210.00</b>	David Green	August 2023 pay

Clerks expenses - £ 14.88 authorised.

War Memorial Mowing - £ 80 authorised

## **11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS**

A decision concerning a new noticeboard for Hilton will be deferred until the November 2023 meeting.

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Correspondence received in the period July to September 2023 had been circulated to the PC and was taken as read.

## **13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:**

- Budget proposals
- Noticeboard replacement
- Planning for D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & other events
- Local busing report update

## **14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.25

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

### **Reports to the Parish Council August 2023**

#### **Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council**

Hello Councillors and Members of the public. August is traditionally a quite month at the council as officers spend some time with their families during the school holidays. Therefore it is a short report this month.

#### **Award of grants**

One of the ways Dorset Council can make limited resources go further and reduce the need for local taxation is through active pursuit of external funding opportunities. These opportunities are often competitive processes require bidders to put forward ambitious ideas and demonstrate a commitment to delivery in accordance with the scheme criteria. Successfully bidding helps to accelerate and unlock improved outcomes for those that live, work and invest in Dorset. For the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 Dorset Council has received £101.3m of grant funding. In total we have been successful in more than 35 bids and some of the major wins are below:

- DSG Safety Valve £42m
- Levelling Up Fund (LUF) – Weymouth Regeneration £19.5m
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Main Grant £18.8m
- DfT Transforming Cities Fund £14.2m

The council is proud to have won so many bids and will continue to explore all future grant opportunities.

#### **Prevention by working in Partnership.**

The government is pushing councils and health authorities to work more closely and more efficiently to give residents the care they expect by establishing Integrated Care Systems (ICS). Dorset's ICS was one of the first when it was created in 2018 and the drive towards a common approach to digital has dominated our partnership.

Dorset has one of the biggest health and social care challenges because of its demographics, with a much higher proportion of residents aged over 65 than regional and national averages. We have benefited from national funding to trial approaches to improving efficiency. Dorset Council has been working more closely with our local health partners in three main areas: by sharing data to understand population need, having common goals including a relentless focus on prevention and a shared approach to digital skills. We are beginning to see the of the benefits of this collaboration.

The award-winning Dorset Intelligence and Insight Service (DiiS) brings together millions of data records from health and social care across Dorset and makes them widely accessible via interactive digital dashboards. This amalgamation of data is delivering better outcomes for local people in a fairer, more cost-effective and productive way. It links health and social care information, providing population health management information and enabling clinicians to design services based on what is required across the ICS.

“It’s clinically led. Clinicians tell us what they want to achieve and we get them all the data and information they need,” says Stephen Slough, chief digital information officer at NHS Dorset. 800,000 patient records are updated nightly across Dorset, with other feeds updating every 15 minutes. The focus now is on what we need to do to prevent illness, address inequalities and help communities manage their own health and wellbeing.

Making prevention the core of what we do will lead to better outcomes and quality of life, more personalised services and, vitally, will reduce the inequities across the county. Prevention is a real and long-lasting way to reduce the unsustainable load on our health and care services.

Dorset Council has been piloting digital inclusion approaches with Dorset NHS for several years and has extended its support programme to encompass health. As well as recruiting and supporting volunteer digital champions (VDC) to work in surgeries, around 100 of its nearly 940 embedded digital champions are from the NHS. These frontline workers help people in the moment, as they need to download an app onto their phone for example, or signpost them to other services for more in-depth help. The council also has device and data-giving projects to help people get online which can be extended to those who need it to access health applications.

Work continues with other councils on a possible Devolution Deal which could bring considerable bespoke funding for things like transport links and supporting rural bus routes. The consultation on the new Housing Strategy is coming to a close and then the process of writing and approving the strategy will be completed this autumn. We are looking at ways to fund the new Digital Infrastructure strategy which will be vital to insure we have appropriate coverage for both broadband and mobile phone coverage going forward. In September we will start the really challenging process of setting the budget for next year. A bit like the schools it is back to the start of a new term in September with lots of work to do.

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice-Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), and Marion Walbridge (MW).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

**Members of the Public – 5**

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Sotiriadis sent apologies.

The Chairman advised that she would be standing down and Cllr Langham would act as an interim Chairman until the next round of local elections in May 2024.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Langham re Hilton PCC
4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

### **Hilton Power supplies**

The Chairman confirmed that following the well-attended Sept 2023 meeting the Clerk had written to SSEN with details of community concerns and questions relating to measures that would be taken to improve the stability of the supply to Hilton.

SSEN had responded and had explained the power outage during Storm Eunice in February 2022 and had made an offer of a donation of £500 to be used for the benefit of Hilton village.

Further correspondence from Chris Slater had been received including a report on the day prior to the meeting advising of yet another fallen ash which had landed on a non-live line. SSEN had apparently attended to this incident as a matter of urgency.

The response received from SSEN confirmed that their responsibility for tree management only extends to trees within 3 metres of a line, and that it is the landowners responsibility to manage any other trees within the vicinity of a line. It was noted that the land in question is very steep sided and tree management may in fact be difficult and costly. It was noted that if SSEN are required to take remedial action to deal with trees outside the 3 metre zone, they will charge the landowner.

The Parish Council agreed that it would write to both SSEN and the landowner to attempt to bring resolution of the situation which appeared to have reached a stalemate. CJ would check if there is in fact a Forestry Commission approved management plan in place for the wood in question. The wood needs to be greater than 2.4 hectares to qualify for grant aid connected to the removal of trees suffering ash dieback.

### **Ash Die-back**

CJ had submitted a report noted an increased incidence of ash dieback towards Bulbarrow, on the road to Coombe Wood Hill and in Higher Ansty. SJ noted that there were also potentially problem trees in Hilton near the Knapp.

It was agreed that an article would be sent to the Village News reminding landowners that they are responsible for the safe condition of their trees especially adjacent to power lines, public highways and footpaths. Trees should be regularly checked for the obvious signs of deterioration, dark and black patches and disintegrating branches on the ground.

## 5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT

A written report had been received from Cllr Haynes and was taken as read. JH also noted that the analogue phone switch off in 2024 may cause difficulties for the elderly and other vulnerable phone users. Equipment will be supplied by BT but all those with a phone connection will need to have a power supply near to the phone socket.

Dorset Council has worked to give care leavers 'protected characteristics' which will assist when leaving the care environment in terms of dealing with landlords, and in providing support nursery care for children over 9 months.

## 6. GLEBE FIELD EVENTS

Glen Brice & Stephen Musgrave from Hilton attended the meeting and explained the initiative concerning Glebe Field, the 7-acre field behind All Saints Church in Hilton.

Following the canvassing of local interest and opinions, an enquiry had been made concerning the availability of the land and subsequently a 3 year Agricultural Business Tenancy had been agreed with the Diocese for non-agricultural use on 28 days per year. The field will be grass cropped and hedges managed by a local farmer.

Ideas have been sought for best use of the land and suggestions made including beehives, siting a bench, use for overspill parking and for marquee events.

Funding is needed for a new entrance although the management group do have a gate and posts. A Just Giving page has been set-up to assist funding the £1000-1500 needed per year to maintain the field.

SJ noted that SSEN had offered the Parish Council £500 for Hilton community use. It was unanimously **AGREED** that this funding would be provided to Glebe Field as a grant donation. It was suggested that the management committee also make a grant application for further funding which will be considered by the PC in due course.

## 7. LOCAL BUSING REPORT

MW and SJ noted that the trial scheme had been successfully running since September, being invariably fully booked and may well be self-funding in the longer term; however if this does not prove to be the case the scheme may request funding from the member parishes. The Council **AGREED** in principal to provide £1,000 of reserve funding should this be required.

## 8. PARISH EVENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE SETUP

Deferred until the January 2024 meeting

## 9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

### **P/OUT/2023/05987 - Brewery Farm Ansty Lane Ansty DT2 7PN - Erection of new dwelling**

The applicants attended the meeting and explained the request for outline planning permission to construct a bungalow. This is to facilitate working & living arrangements for



the family running Brewery Farm, a very busy commercial enterprise, which requires on site accommodation.

The single storey bungalow, likely to be constructed of brick and flint, will be modest in size, probably 2/3 bedrooms; it will be screened behind a leylandii hedge and no new access is required. There would not appear to issue with there being approval for two agricultural dwellings on the same site.

The Parish Council agreed to unanimously **SUPPORT** the application and looked forward to sight of the full planning application which will be submitted.

## 10. ELECTIONS 2024

The DAPTC had advised that nomination papers will be available from February 2024, with the deadline for submissions being Friday 5th April 2024. Parish Council elections in Dorset will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.

It was agreed that the Chairman would draft an article for the Village News publicising the election timetable with a request for residents to consider if they wish to stand for election. A number of Councillors will be retiring in 2024 and it is important that the Council has a full membership representing all the Parish villages in the future.

## 11. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 11.1 PC grants policy review:

The Parish Council had received a request for the restoration of a regular annual grant from the Hilton Parochial Church Council; the PC has noted this but confirmed its wish to continue with the existing grants allocation policy, as published. It was agreed that all applications must be made by completion of the grants application form (or similar) and should provide the evidence of funding and actual/proposed expenditure as necessary.

The Chairman noted that the use of public money must be transparent and any spending should be justified and capable of being explained.

### 11.2 Finance report:

The balance bank was in a reasonable position at £11,143, the latest precept instalment having been received

### 11.3 Retrospective payments approved:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>
06/09/2023	£ 80.00	Dan Stevens	Grass cutting
06/09/2023	£ 14.88	David Green	Expenses
28/09/2023	£ 210.00	David Green	Sept 2023 pay
03/10/2023	£ 40.00	Tim West	Google drive install (backup)
11/10/2023	£ 150.00	HMRC (PAYE)	Q2 PAYE 2023/2024
30/10/2023	£ 210.00	David Green	Oct 2023 pay

### 11.4 New payments

- Clerks expenses - £ 9.20 authorised.
- Wreath for Remembrance Sunday - £ 23.98 authorised

## 11.5 Budget proposal

The Clerk proposed a precept request of £ 6,432 for 2024/2024, reflecting the general inflationary environment including pay agreements and with appropriate contingencies.

It was noted that the impact of Council Tax would be minimal – an annual increase of £3.01 for a Band D property.

It was AGREED to accept the proposed budget and precept request. The decision will be confirmed in January 2024.

## 12. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

**Hilton & Ansty Noticeboards** – the possibility of replacing the noticeboards with a non-wood alternative was considered. It was agreed that something in oak may be more suitable and approaches would be made to a local carpenter if he would be prepared to take on these projects. CJ offered to provide the wood on a free of charge basis.

**Grit Bins** – the delivery of a dumpy bag of salt to Cllr Northover has been arranged and hopefully Dorset Council will refill strategic bins for free as usual.

**Blocked gullies** – these will be reported by CJ directly to Dorset Council and the issue of the poor condition of the railings by the bridge will be followed up.

**Possible pollution** – it had been noted that there may some overflowing septic tanks in Melcombe Bingham and a reminder will be placed in the Village News for residents to check that their tanks comply with current legislation.

## 13. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period September to November 2023:

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Subject</u>
18/09/2023	Chris Slater	Re: Hilton Power failures
18/09/2023	Matthew Fisher	Hilton Power failures
29/09/2023	Dorset sign shop	Signage quotes
03/10/2023	Dorset AONB	Dorset AONB Annual Forum Invitation
03/10/2023	Matthew Fisher	Question about lane ownership, The Retreat
04/10/2023	Rogan Craik, SSEN	RE: [EXTERNAL] Hilton village - power supply concerns
11/10/2023	DAPTC	2024 Elections - Resources & Support
12/10/2023	Adrian Simonds	Short Article for Village News?
12/10/2023	CEE Support meeting	C&EE support meeting Wed 18 Oct 12.30pm.
16/10/2023	Matthew Fisher	Re: Question about lane ownership, The Retreat
18/10/2023	DAPTC	Providing Access to the DAPTC Website for Councillors and your colleagues
19/10/2023	Chris Slater	Hilton village - power supply concerns - SSEN response
01/11/2023	SSEN	SSEN Distribution Yellow Alert – Storm Ciarán
01/11/2023	Dorset AONB	Reminder - Dorset AONB Annual Forum Invitation
06/11/2023	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support Meeting	Notes from Oct C&EE support meeting
06/11/2023	Chris Slater	Hilton Power lines incident

## 14. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Precept confirmation
- Noticeboard replacement
- Planning for D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & other events
- Local busing report update

## 15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.20

Signed .....(Chairman) Date .....

### **Report to the Parish Council October 2023**

#### **Councillor Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward, Dorset Council**

### **Public Space Protection Order**

The Dorset wide PSPO is before Cabinet next week for review. This order states when dogs can be on beaches and other public areas and also when they can be running free and when they must be on leads. There has been a lot of public comment but there are likely to be few changes to the existing order. In particular, dogs will continue to be banned from many of our beaches in the summer months but are allowed on in the winter.

### **Joint Venture for temporary/contingency workforce**

The council has agreed it enter into a joint venture to provide contingency workers. This is currently done via an agency but that has not necessarily given the flexibility needed. The Joint Venture will have dedicated staff working at county hall enabling a close relationship with the service managers and a true understanding of the kind of staff needed. These can range through dustbin loaders, social workers, school staff right up to senior management. Sometimes staff are required just for a few days and sometimes as long as a year for a specific piece of work or while a member of staff is being recruited, on maternity leave. It is a real challenge to find the right people at short notice and the new venture will connect us much more closely to the process.

### **Budget 2024/5**

The budget setting process continues with a daylong workshop being programmed for early December. The continued pressures in many areas but in particular Special Needs Children, Adults with Special Needs and the price of materials for roads etc. seem to be increasingly difficult to control. We will need to find savings of some £30M next year from a budget of £362M.

### **Our Future Council**

Our Future Council is a programme looking at how the council can provide services differently without cutting the quality of service. Phase one is happening at the moment and is joining up many of the councils computer systems and removing others so that there is accurate data. Most of our individual phone numbers will be removed and training given so our call centre will handle these calls. (e.g. parking fines) It will also roll out the customer account so people can do all their interactions with the council in one place. Be it blue badge applications, garden waste bins, a missed recycling collection or a change of address this should be able to be done in one place without having to get into a host of individual council web pages. Phase 2 of this programme will be an internal review of processes and stripping out unnecessary governance activity. The council needs to become more agile and leaner

## **Dorset Business Festival**

I spent an interesting day last month with the Dorset Chamber of Trade at their business festival. I was asked to be on a Q&A panel on workforce and retention. There were interesting people on the panel with me including big manufacturers from Bournemouth and a previous MD of John Lewis. The session lasted over an hour and was one of six sessions in the day. We discussed enthusing young people early and making them aware of Dorset opportunities, in particular the vast range of modern apprenticeships which allow people to earn as they learn. There was also concern raised about the cost of accommodation putting people off coming to Dorset to work.

## **Two Executive Directors to retire.**

In recent days two of our Executive directors have announced they are going to retire. John Sellgren the Director of Place will leave the council in early January. John has been with Dorset Council since it was formed and has been a very positive leader who has a vast experience in the environment area. I have to say he is also a charming person and will be greatly missed. The Place Directorate is vast, too big really, and an executive lead will be taken on short term while the future make-up of the directorate is considered.

Vivian Broadhurst is also retiring but not until next March. Viv was taken on originally on a short term basis to cover for the previous director of Adults and housing who was on long term sick leave. She then moved to the substantive role three years ago. She has made a terrific difference in Adult Social Care, is a great leader and really has managed to get a grip on this budget in what is a very difficult area. Again I have had a close working relationship with Viv and found her a caring and sometimes very funny lady who will also be greatly missed at the council.