

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**PRESENT:** Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman) Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), George Sotiriadis (GS) (via Zoom), Marion Walbridge (MW), Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH) (via Zoom)

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

**Members of the Public** – None

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Langham re Hilton PCC grant request, Cllr Jaques re Smithy Cottage planning application

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

Included within minutes below.

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

Cllr Haynes noted that Dorset Council would need to make savings of £10-12 million in the forthcoming year from a budget of around £370 million; it is anticipated that this will be manageable under the 'transformation process'. The Council will be re-purposing some existing buildings, for example libraries, to provide other services and consideration will be given as to whether some services can be outsourced or need to be provided at all.

Flooding is a major concern in the county with rising groundwater levels and river related issues. JMcG noted that blocked gullies were the main local concern. SJ mentioned a severe flooding event in Hilton and her belief that blocked drains along Village Road in Hilton may have contributed to this. JH advised that all gullies should be cleared twice yearly but if additional clearance is necessary this should be requested. Dorset Council is moving back to a system of 'Parish Maintenance Units' to deal with roads and drainage issues from March 2024.

It was pointed out that roads appear not to be being swept after re-surfacing and the loose gravel is blocking gullies. JH confirmed that the edges of potholes are no longer sealed for employee Health & Safety reasons. JH noted that recent rainfall has been exceptional and there is a real difficulty in dealing with this situation via existing drainage systems.

A complaint was raised concerning Dorset Council's intention to charge to straighten the 'Hilton' village sign, JH agreed to look into this.

### **6. OPEN FORUM**

JMcG raised the issue of the sudden switch off of power supplies in Ansty and Melcombe Bingham on 18<sup>th</sup> December. This was apparently communicated by letter though not all households received this. The community is not happy that this took place shortly before Christmas in a rural area which had quite an impact. The Clerk will raise a complaint with SSEN.

### **7. HILTON ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ISSUES**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Jones for his work in dealing with the on-going issue concerning the power line to Hilton. The landowners say that they are investigating burying the cable rather than dealing with the felling of nearby trees, citing the difficulty of safe working, and have asked for part funding of the cost of this from the PC. CJ noted that these ash trees could in fact be felled and the wood sold to cover the cost of the contractors' fees and in addition there may be a replanting grant available. It was agreed that the proposed burying of the cable is unlikely to be viable as SSEN don't invest in this activity unless reimbursed. The Parish Council certainly cannot provide any funding in relation to such an undertaking.

It was agreed that CJ would write to landowner suggesting a course of action and would explain the position of the Parish Council. This correspondence will be copied to Milton Abbas PC, given that the trees in question are actually in Milton Abbas Parish, although it is Hilton residents who are affected by power outages.

## **8. LOCAL BUSING REPORT**

SJ noted that the service has been well used and is averaging weekly income of £ 51.33, which meets the breakeven criteria of £2,500 per annum. It is understood that Melcombe Horsey Parish have set up and contributed to the reserve account that backs the project. It has been agreed that the contribution of Hilton Parish is likely to be £ 625, if this is required.

## **9. PARISH EVENTS PLANNING**

GS reported that a notice concerning D DAY 80 events has been posted to the Village News. A meeting will be held later in January to start the planning for the event. Consideration is being given to marking the event with an Annual Parish Picnic. It was noted that information from the Pageant Master had been received concerning the lighting of beacons to mark the day; it has been confirmed that a beacon will be lit in the Melcombe Horsey area. CL noted that usually the Bulbarrow beacon would be used to mark such occasions and confirmation of this will be sought.

## **10. GRANT APPLICATIONS**

**Hilton PCC** - The Clerk reported that the PC had now received a formal grant application with financial information documentation from Hilton PCC, concerning an application to assist with churchyard maintenance. It was agreed that this work is of community rather than exclusively church benefit. It was agreed that the PCC had provided an impressive and detailed financial summary with their application. The Chairman noted that if the churchyard needed to be 'closed' at any stage, the full financial responsibility for maintaining this would fall on the Parish Council. It was unanimously agreed to provide a grant of £500 for 2024. Proposed CJ, 2<sup>nd</sup> SJ

**Glebe Field** – a formal grant application has been received to part fund the purchase of bee-keeping equipment, including hives and bees. It was agreed that this is a new and highly commendable project. It was unanimously agreed to provide a grant of £ 250. Proposed CJ, 2<sup>nd</sup> SJ

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

**There were no new applications requiring a decision at the meeting.**

**P/HOU/2023/07272 - Smithy Cottage** Village Road Hilton Blandford Forum DT11 0DB - Erect summerhouse, (demolish existing).

The PC had agreed to support this application prior to the meeting due to the reply deadline imposed.

## **12. ELECTIONS 2024**

The Clerk advised that the deadline for receipt of nominations by Dorset Council is 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The Clerk will circulate the nomination application form to all those interested in standing and asked that these be brought to the next PC meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March. The Clerk will receive an updated electoral roll on 1<sup>st</sup> February to assist with application data and will make an appointment to take the completed nominations to either Blandford or Dorchester during March 2024. The first meeting of the new Council will not be until after 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024. If the election is uncontested and there are unfilled vacancies after 2<sup>nd</sup> May, these will be filled by co-option.

### 13. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

#### 11.1 Finance report:

The Clerk reported that the balance bank was healthy at £10,208.

#### 11.2 Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
08/11/2023	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses
10/11/2023	£ 23.98	G Sotiriadis	Wreath
10/11/2023	£ 50.00	Hilton PCC	Church clock
13/11/2023	£ 108.00	Defibstore	Defib pads
28/11/2023	£ 338.00	David Green	November 2023 pay inc arrears
01/12/2023	£ 500.00	Glen Brice	Glebe Field
08/12/2023	£ 143.88	Zoom US	Zoom renewal
21/12/2023	£ 35.89	C Jones	Land Reg fees
28/12/2023	£ 226.00	David Green	December 2023 pay

#### 11.3 New payments

- Clerks expenses - £ 9.20 authorised.

#### 11.4 Precept proposal

The Clerk proposed a precept request of £ 6,432 for 2024/2024, reflecting the general inflationary environment including pay agreements and making appropriate contingencies. Following the tax base revision, the impact of Council Tax will be an annual increase of £2.34 for a Band D property. It was **AGREED** to accept the precept request. Proposed CL, 2<sup>nd</sup> SJ

### 14. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

**Hilton & Ansty Noticeboards** – SJ noted that a quote from a local carpenter had been received and Cllr Jones had offered free wood which will reduce the cost of this. It was agreed to proceed with this work. Consideration will be given to replacing the Ansty (Brewery Hall) notice-board after the Hilton project has been completed.

**Hilton Village sign** – Dorset Council have advised that would charge to ‘straighten’ this sign. Referred to Cllr Haynes as noted above.

**Blocked gullies** – RN reported further instances of blocked gullies. The Clerk advised that these should be reported directly to Dorset Council using the online reporting tool.

**Ansty Bridge railings** - these have been inspected and will be re-inspected in April 2024 when hopefully the decision to reinstate will be taken.

### 15. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period November 2023 to January 2024:

Date	From	Subject
14/11/2023	Wessex Internet	Important update - Wessex Internet is bringing full fibre broadband to Hilton
28/11/2023	Hilton PCC	Churchyard maintenance grant request
04/12/2023	Climate and Ecological	Notes from Nov C&EE meeting
06/12/2023	Stephen Musgrave	Glebe Field grant application
07/12/2023	DAPTC	Working Together Webinars - Dorset Council's Recycling Team 14 Dec @4pm
13/12/2023	Dorset Highways	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Church Row Hilton 18th March 2024
15/12/2023	Adrian Simmonds	Flood Alert for the Devil's Brook, Dorset (R. Piddle Trib)
19/12/2023	Dorset Council	FW: Hilton signs quotes
22/12/2023	DAPTC	Election Toolkit & Training Packages for May/Nov 2024
05/01/2024	DAPTC	letter from Bruno Peek CVO - Re D DAY 80 6th June 2024

#### 16. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Receipt of election nomination forms
- Hilton Noticeboard update

#### 17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.10.

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

### **Report to the Parish Council October 2023 Councillor Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward, Dorset Council**

Dear Clerks, Councillors and Residents,

Please find my Dorset Council report for November and December. There is still a lot more work to be done on the budget and in particular we will not know our actual government grant and settlement details until 21<sup>st</sup> December giving the number crunchers much unwanted work over Christmas. The weather has been particularly bad, and many have suffered with the high rainfall and flooding, my deepest sympathy if this has happened to you and if there is anything in particular I can assist with please let me know. I therefor wish you all a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

#### **Dorset Shared Prosperity Investment Fund**

***The allocation to Dorset Council is £6.4M across three categories!! This is a HUGE amount of available grant funding so get your thinking hats on and apply.***

The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) are part of UK government Levelling Up policy. Their aims are twofold: To level up economically through improvements to productivity and to increase pride in place. They fulfil a broadly similar function to that covered by EU regional funding in the recent past, the main differences being (i) these funds are to be administered by Local Authorities rather than Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and (ii) rules governing how the funding can be used are much less prescriptive. Funding is to be used for

three Investment Priorities: Community and Place, Local Business, and People and Skills. Funding can be used for any combination of 41 defined Interventions within the three Investment Priorities. The funds will be opening next week and are available to businesses, schools, towns and parishes, community groups and the voluntary sector on a first come first served basis. Please share this as widely as possible this is a great opportunity to get proper funding into our rural areas. Please check the Dorset Council website for the information there isn't a link for me to send just yet.

### **Planning update**

As of the 6<sup>th</sup> December central government has agreed an increase in planning fees to reflect the true cost of determining an application. Fees will rise by 30% for major applications and 25% for other applications. The increase in fees come with an expectation on councils to make decisions in a timely manner. Decision times are being reduced from 23 weeks to 16 weeks with immediate effect on all applications paying the new rates. Failure to determine in the new timescale will result in a refund of the application fee.

Dorset Council is one of the largest planning authorities in the country and receives over 4000 applications every year. As previously mentioned in my reports recruitment continues to be a problem with considerable competition from the private sector. Our Building Control section is rated very highly and although we compete with private sector, we service over 70% of the market due to the good service provided. Currently there are 33 towns and parishes which have a neighbourhood Plan.

### **Budget**

We are predicting that our end of year figure will be a £15M overspend on a total revenue budget of £361M. The bulk of the overspend has been due to the high rates of inflation during the year running at over 10%. Construction materials for our highways for example have risen by over 20%. Our budget for 24/25 will require savings across the council of £22M to be made in efficiencies in year. We are determined not to cut services but to look at ways of working differently to make the savings. It will mean that there will need to be some staff cuts as we streamline services.

We are assuming that inflation will run at 3.2% in the coming year. 1% variance inflation causes + or - £2.8M difference to Dorset Councils budget. The recently announced raise in the National Living Wage will be managed through our inflation assumptions. The draft budget is assuming that we will take the 3% increase in council tax and 2% increase in the Adult Social Care precept. It is disappointing that we did not receive any additional funding from central Government in the autumn statement and as a rural area council we are challenging central Government that the formula for funding is wrong and does not take into consideration the additional costs that a very rural area brings to the council. It makes me personally very cross that we are penalised in this way when London boroughs with much more business rates in their budgets get as much as quadruple the grant which Dorset receives.

### **Childrens services update**

Dorset Council has 460 children in care of which some 66 are unaccompanied asylum seekers. The numbers of Dorset children in care are reducing and dropped 75 last year to this year. However, our cost remain the same as our provider costs have escalated this year partly due to inflation but also because some of the providers are to be quite frank making money for their shareholders from this area as they know there is insufficient provision. Some are showing profits of £500M in the last year. We are working hard to create our own children's accommodation in Dorset with four new sites opened this year to help control these costs. Some of the children in care have extremely high-cost placements because of their high needs. The NHS has closed all the mental health beds for level 4 the most complex cases and this has pushed these children out into council care. Our most expensive case costs over £60,000 a week! Our costs in this area have increased over 1000% in the last 5 years.

The key to controlling the costs is to know the children of our area and to provide support and help as early as possible. To help make our services accessible we are developing family hubs across the area with two opened this year and two more scheduled to open next year. We currently are working providing early help with some 1500 children to help keep them safe and well living with their own families. The council supports 7102 children with special needs, 601 children being home educated and importantly 295 young adults as care leavers. The service obviously also works closely with our schools and colleges, both council run, church schools and academies.

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**PRESENT:** Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman) Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), George Sotiriadis (GS), Marion Walbridge (MW), Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH) (via Zoom)

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

**Members of the Public** – Three

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

### **Hilton Power failures**

The Chairman reported that considerable progress has been made following referral of the issue to Simon Hoare MP by Chris Slater. The Parish Council has been advised that an improvement scheme is now scheduled for the summer although no details are available at this stage. SSEN have also advised that they are discussing issues with a landowner.

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

Cllr Haynes reported that Dorset Council had confirmed that double Council Tax would be applied to empty homes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and to holiday homes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The revenue receipts of around £8 million would be shared with all precepting authorities. A percentage of these funds would be used for affordable housing for local people, although it wasn't clear at this stage how the allocation would be made. Cllr Haynes confirmed that there would be further detail from central government on exemptions but it was likely that those properties which had planning permission to be solely holiday lets would be exempt and that future planning applications would be considered on a case by case basis. The Parish would be informed when further government guidance was available.

Cllr Haynes reported that flooding is an issue in parts of the county, particularly due to rising ground water levels in places such as Sydling St Nicholas. The condition of local infrastructure is being considered with Chris Loder MP. Dorset Council will allocate resources to acquiring land for carbon offsetting to address the phosphates issues relating to the Poole catchment area. A new fund for community projects has been launched

### 6. **OPEN FORUM**

David Sharman, candidate for the Liberal Democrats, introduced himself to Parish Councillors as did two prospective Parish Councillors.

### 7. **Local policing issues & Neighbourhood watch consideration –**

Following recent burglaries and other incidents JMcG had discussed setting up a local What's App group with interested parties. This would be used as a means of providing a local 'alert' system for Melcombe Bingham, Ansty and Hilton. This will be a community rather than Parish Council project and would be preferable to a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, which has been rather superseded.

### 8. **Hilton Village Noticeboard replacement update**

SJ confirmed that the new noticeboard had now been installed, was of a very high standard and should hopefully be maintenance free for a least a couple of years. A replacement board for the Brewery Hall will be discussed with John Lilley. The PC thanked SJ for co-ordinating this work and CJ for providing the wood free of charge.

## 9. Tree planting initiative

CJ suggested that planting of oaks to replace lost ash trees along the roadside would be a good idea but would require careful co-ordination with landowners. SJ also suggested planting along Rights of Way could also be considered. It was agreed to seek funding information from the Woodland Trust.

## 10. Elections 2024 – nominations

The Chairman and Council thanked Cllrs McGuinness, Jaques and Jones, who were retiring as Councillors, for all their work for the Parish over many years.

Nominations for the 2024 Election were collected by the Clerk and will be submitted to Dorset Council. If the election is contested there will be a cost to the Parish Council which will be met from earmarked reserves.

## 11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

There were no new applications requiring a decision at the meeting.

## 12. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 12.1 Finance report:

The Clerk reported that the reserves balance was in a good position, at this stage of the year, at £8,811.95, including a general reserve of £ 4411.90

### 12.2 Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
10/01/2024	£ 250.00	Glen Brice	Glebe Field
10/10/2024	£ 500.00	Hilton PCC	Grant
10/01/2024	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses January 2024
11/01/2024	£ 186.00	HMRC	Q3 PAYE
29/01/2023	£ 226.00	David Green	January 2024 pay
28/02/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	February 2024 pay

11.3 New payments - Clerks expenses - £ 27.58 authorised.

## 7. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

- **Hilton Village sign** – Dorset Council have ‘straightened’ this sign.
- **Blocked gullies** – RN reported further instances of blocked gullies.
- **Ansty Bridge railings** – a re-inspection in April 2024 is awaited

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period January to March 2024:

Date	From	Subject
10/01/2024	DAPTC	Working Together Webinar 18 January 2024 at 4pm via Zoom

16/01/2024	Maria Pollard, Dorset Council	Hilton sign straightening - re -quoted
30/01/2024	Democratic Services, Dorset Council	Information about standing as a local councillor for Dorset Council in 2024
30/01/2024	Chris Slater	Hilton Power Failures
31/01/2024	Rogan Craik, SSEN	Hilton Power Failures
01/02/2024	DAPTC	Election 2024 Resources - Dorset Council Area
05/02/2024	Dorset Highways	Revised Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Church Row Hilton on the 21st of March 2024
06/02/2024	Climate and Ecological	Notes from January C&EE meeting
06/02/2024	Chris Slater	Letter to Simon Hoare MP, re power outages
08/02/2024	DAPTC	Training at a Glance
08/02/2024	DAPTC	DAPTC Councillors' Networking Event 7 March
08/02/2024	DAPTC	Dorset Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation
09/02/2024	Simon Hoare MP	RE: Power Failures Hilton Dorset
19/02/2024	Rogan Craik, SSEN	RE Hilton Power failures
20/02/2024	Dorset CPRE	talk by George Hosford on The Future of Farming in North Dorset
20/02/2024	DAPTC	Training & Events at a Glance Test
20/02/2024	DAPTC	Recognition for long serving councillors stepping down in May
22/02/2024	Dorset Highways	Revised Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Church Row Hilton on the 20 <sup>th</sup> of March 2024
29/02/2024	Dorset Highways	TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CHURCH ROW, HILTON

## 9. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, Parish Meeting and PC meeting

## 10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.00.

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

## Report to the Parish Council January 2024 Councillor Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward, Dorset Council

### Double Council Tax for second homes up for vote

At the Full Council meeting of Dorset Council on 13<sup>th</sup> February I will be bringing a paper to ask members to consider agreeing to the recent legislation within the Levelling Up bill that will allow us to charge second homeowners double council tax. The number of people buying houses as second homes in Dorset has continued to increase and is responsible in part for the shortage of affordable homes here. Living in Dorset is a privilege and I hope that at least a proportion of the extra revenue that this could bring to the council will be used to support building affordable housing for local people. More on the next month

### Dorset Council tops the national polls for recycling!

DEFRA have just published the annual recycling figures for 2022/23. We have just found out that we are the **number one** unitary and disposal authority in the Country for the first time ever!

(Those ahead of us are collection only councils (i.e. the figures are on the kerbside service only and do not include Household Recycling Centres).

This is testament to the commitment of our residents; our waste strategy teams and our frontline waste operatives. This is a fantastic achievement for Dorset and one that we are hugely proud of.

### **Tree-mendous grant opportunity (sorry!)**

A new grant scheme aimed at supporting local communities to plant and care for trees in their area is now open for applications.

Funded by Dorset Council and managed by the Dorset National Landscape team, the [Dorset Community Tree Fund](#) is open to community organisations in the Dorset Council area. This includes parish and town councils, as well as schools and other established community groups interested in planting and caring for trees in their patch.

Trees play a crucial role in our natural world, from providing homes for wildlife to tackling climate change. However, planting the wrong tree in the wrong place can have a negative impact on local wildlife, communities, and landscape.

So, unlike traditional tree planting schemes, the [Dorset Community Tree Fund](#) goes beyond just providing grants for trees. It also offers support for the planning and design phases of planting projects. This extra support can help make sure trees and hedges planted in and by communities have a positive impact on Dorset's natural environment for years to come.

### **Almost half a million pounds awarded to local culture**

Dorset Council Organisational Revenue Support Fund for Culture has awarded £486,000 to 28 organisations over the next three years.

A total of 41 applications were received from arts and heritage organisations and accredited museums. A total of £217,000 has been awarded to arts and heritage and £269,000 to accredited museums.

This funding has been spread across the Dorset Council area to ensure residents and communities have cultural benefit around the county. All the organisations awarded with this money are based in and deliver their programmes within the council's boundaries.

### **Dorset Council prepares to sell old District Council office site and buildings in Wimborne**

Dorset Council has instructed its agents to begin marketing the vacant buildings and site of the old East Dorset District Council (EDDC) offices in Furzehill, Wimborne.

Following Local Government Reorganisation in 2019, the unitary authorities of Dorset Council and BCP Council were created to replace the county's former district and borough councils. As Furzehill was declared surplus to requirements by EDDC, Dorset Council inherited the empty office buildings.

Following Cabinet's approval of the Council's capital programme in March 2023, Furzehill was identified as a priority to sell to generate capital receipts. Capital receipts are money that councils can spend on funding other capital expenditure – such as land, buildings, and equipment - or for paying off debt. They generally cannot be used to fund services.

The Furzehill site consists of 2.73 hectares (6.76 acres) which was allocated for residential development and other alternative uses in the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan back in 2014.

### **Cabinet approves next steps in Levelling Up journey for Weymouth**

At its meeting on Tuesday 30 January, Dorset Council's Cabinet agreed to approve recommendations to progress vital next steps in the Levelling Up programme of work.

In January 2023 Dorset Council was awarded £19.5m by Government to help regenerate Weymouth's Waterside Economy. The council's ambitions include essential enabling groundworks to allow the eventual development of several key sites in the town.

### **North Quay and Weymouth Bowl**

Included in the recommendations discussed by councillors, was a request from officers to start a procurement process which will seek one or more development partners to develop both the North Quay and Weymouth Bowl sites. This would be subject to planning consent to demolish the old bowling alley on the St Nicholas Street site and an agreement from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to repurpose an amount of Levelling Up funding originally allocated to New Bond Street.

The former Weymouth and Portland Borough Council offices at North Quay are currently mid-demolition and until plans for a development in its place can be agreed upon, the site will become additional, temporary car parking. It is hoped the temporary car park will be ready in time for the Easter break later in spring.

A planning application to demolish the former bowling alley site is live on the council's website and is inviting comments from local people and businesses. A decision on this application is due to be made at the beginning of March by the council's Western and Southern Planning Committee. Following a robust soft market testing process, the council's property advisers recommend that the best strategy for future development on the North Quay site is for the council to dispose of it through a procurement process. This will allow the council to retain a considerable degree of control over the design and quality of any future build. Councillors have agreed that this is the best approach and approved the recommendation.

### **A vision for the Harbour and Peninsula**

Councillors also agreed to adopt a vision for the Harbour and Peninsula areas of Weymouth. A vision was developed by Professor Tony Bovaird, commissioned by Dorset Council to establish its ambitions, following engagement with stakeholders. The report divides the strands of proposed regeneration activity at the Harbour and Peninsula into short, medium and long-term options. Councillors agreed that the short and medium-term options are taken forward for progression, and the long-term options outlined in the report to be revisited at a later date.

### **Round 4 of the Household Support Fund reopens for applications**

Round 4 of the Household Support Fund (HSF) will reopen for applications at 10am on Tuesday 6 February 2024 for low-income households in the Dorset Council area.

The government scheme funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, provides support 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 to 8 weeks.

Dorset Council households will be able to apply if they:

- pay council tax to Dorset Council
- have an annual household net income of less than £30,000 and
- have savings of less than £16,000 and
- **have not applied** for a previous HSF payment within the last 6 months (since August 2023)

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.

Residents should apply online. The application form will open at 10am. Find more details including future application window dates here: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/household-support-fund>

If you need help completing the form, you can telephone Customer Services on 01305 221000 or visit a [customer access point](#).

For further information on all the support available, whether be access to food, money and debt advice or support with your household bills, visit our cost of living webpages at [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help).

### **Could you offer a stepping stone to a young person leaving care?**

Supported Lodgings can help young people who are leaving our care, experience the transition to adulthood in a safe and secure environment, whilst learning emotional and practical skills that will help them thrive.

We want to end the 'cliff edge of care' that can happen when young people turn 18 years old, and to do this, we need more people to open their homes and become Supported Lodgings carers.

Katie\* has been living with a Dorset Council Supported Lodgings provider for the past three years and says:

*"My experience in supported lodgings has been really positive and it has taught me a lot. I've learnt lots of things that have grown my confidence and made me feel ready for moving on. I've made a great connection with my supported lodgings provider, and she has supported me through anything I've needed help with."*

Supported Lodgings is often able to be combined with a career or busy lifestyle as you do not need to provide full-time care. Sharon Cooper, age 56, lives in Wimborne and is a Dorset Council Supported Lodgings provider who also runs her own business. Over the last 10 years, Sharon has looked after around 10 young people between the ages of 16-25. She said: "I enjoy helping the young people achieve their goals or aims in life no matter how big or small, and watching them grow and develop as people. When you provide Supported Lodgings, you have a fantastic support

network around you, including help from Dorset Council's Fostering service and other Supported Lodgings providers."

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## **Report to the Parish Council February 2024**

### **Council Tax Premium on Second homes and empty houses in Dorset**

I was pleased to present the paper to full council on this matter and to have received the support of fellow councillors at full council.

For those properties classified as Long-Term Empty and Unoccupied a 100% premium will, from 1 April 2024, this will be applied after one year rather than the existing 2 years.

The introduction of the 100% council tax premium on second homes will come into effect on 1 April 2025, making a total council tax charge of 200%. Unlike empty dwellings, there is no requirement for a property to have been used as a second home for a fixed period of time before the premium can apply so it becomes chargeable from day one that a property is considered a second home (or dwelling periodically occupied).

Where exceptions are provided for in law and once final regulations have been provided, Dorset Council will adopt and apply such exceptions. The council website will be updated as soon as this information is available.

The additional funding will be distributed to all precepting authorities and Dorset Council are looking to spend a percentage of the new monies on affordable homes.

### **Voters encouraged to get their ID ready ahead of this year's local elections**

Residents are reminded that they will need to be registered to vote and show an approved form of photo ID when they go to the polling stations on 2 May to elect for Dorset Council councillors as well as Town and Parish Councils.

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**Bike It Plus** - More children are now cycling to school in Dorset thanks to the success of the Bike It Plus project, says a [new report](#). Bike It Plus, which is funded by Dorset Council and run by the charity [Sustrans](#), has been working with schools across Dorset to help encourage more young people to walk, cycle or wheel to school. In the past year, the project has supported over 36 schools to deliver fun and engaging activities that boost the skill levels of young people in walking,

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**Council approves a balanced budget** - Dorset Council's budget of £377 million for 2024-25 has been approved by councillors at the Full Council meeting on 13 February. This continues the council's commitment to maintain frontline services, without the need for cuts to balance the budget. This year's budget setting exercise once again took place against a national background of extreme pressures for councils. These pressures include the high level of inflation which affects the cost of delivering council services, and also the continued growth in need for services that we provide to some of our most vulnerable residents. Dorset Council provides around 450 different services to just under 380,000 residents. While Dorset Council is not in the same financial position as many other councils across the UK, council tax will increase next year by just under 3 per cent and the adult social care precept by 2 per cent this is essential to ensure that services are not cut. The increase is equivalent to £1.82 extra per week for a Band D property.

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**PRESENT:** Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman) Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Clive Jones (CJ), Rodney Northover (RN), George Sotiriadis (GS), Marion Walbridge (MW), Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH) (via Zoom)

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

**Members of the Public** – Three

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

### **Hilton Power failures**

The Chairman reported that considerable progress has been made following referral of the issue to Simon Hoare MP by Chris Slater. The Parish Council has been advised that an improvement scheme is now scheduled for the summer although no details are available at this stage. SSEN have also advised that they are discussing issues with a landowner.

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

Cllr Haynes reported that Dorset Council had confirmed that double Council Tax would be applied to empty homes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and to holiday homes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The revenue receipts of around £8 million would be shared with all precepting authorities. A percentage of these funds would be used for affordable housing for local people, although it wasn't clear at this stage how the allocation would be made. Cllr Haynes confirmed that there would be further detail from central government on exemptions but it was likely that those properties which had planning permission to be solely holiday lets would be exempt and that future planning applications would be considered on a case by case basis. The Parish would be informed when further government guidance was available.

Cllr Haynes reported that flooding is an issue in parts of the county, particularly due to rising ground water levels in places such as Sydling St Nicholas. The condition of local infrastructure is being considered with Chris Loder MP. Dorset Council will allocate resources to acquiring land for carbon offsetting to address the phosphates issues relating to the Poole catchment area. A new fund for community projects has been launched

### 6. **OPEN FORUM**

David Sharman, candidate for the Liberal Democrats, introduced himself to Parish Councillors as did two prospective Parish Councillors.

### 7. **Local policing issues & Neighbourhood watch consideration –**

Following recent burglaries and other incidents JMcG had discussed setting up a local What's App group with interested parties. This would be used as a means of providing a local 'alert' system for Melcombe Bingham, Ansty and Hilton. This will be a community rather than Parish Council project and would be preferable to a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, which has been rather superseded.

### 8. **Hilton Village Noticeboard replacement update**

SJ confirmed that the new noticeboard had now been installed, was of a very high standard and should hopefully be maintenance free for a least a couple of years. A replacement board for the Brewery Hall will be discussed with John Lilley. The PC thanked SJ for co-ordinating this work and CJ for providing the wood free of charge.

## 9. Tree planting initiative

CJ suggested that planting of oaks to replace lost ash trees along the roadside would be a good idea but would require careful co-ordination with landowners. SJ also suggested planting along Rights of Way could also be considered. It was agreed to seek funding information from the Woodland Trust.

## 10. Elections 2024 – nominations

The Chairman and Council thanked Cllrs McGuinness, Jaques and Jones, who were retiring as Councillors, for all their work for the Parish over many years.

Nominations for the 2024 Election were collected by the Clerk and will be submitted to Dorset Council. If the election is contested there will be a cost to the Parish Council which will be met from earmarked reserves.

## 11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

There were no new applications requiring a decision at the meeting.

## 12. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 12.1 Finance report:

The Clerk reported that the reserves balance was in a good position, at this stage of the year, at £8,811.95, including a general reserve of £ 4411.90

### 12.2 Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
10/01/2024	£ 250.00	Glen Brice	Glebe Field
10/10/2024	£ 500.00	Hilton PCC	Grant
10/01/2024	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses January 2024
11/01/2024	£ 186.00	HMRC	Q3 PAYE
29/01/2023	£ 226.00	David Green	January 2024 pay
28/02/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	February 2024 pay

11.3 New payments - Clerks expenses - £ 27.58 authorised.

## 7. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

- **Hilton Village sign** – Dorset Council have 'straightened' this sign.
- **Blocked gullies** – RN reported further instances of blocked gullies.
- **Ansty Bridge railings** – a re-inspection in April 2024 is awaited

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period January to March 2024:

Date	From	Subject
10/01/2024	DAPTC	Working Together Webinar 18 January 2024 at 4pm via Zoom

16/01/2024	Maria Pollard, Dorset Council	Hilton sign straightening - re -quoted
30/01/2024	Democratic Services, Dorset Council	Information about standing as a local councillor for Dorset Council in 2024
30/01/2024	Chris Slater	Hilton Power Failures
31/01/2024	Rogan Craik, SSEN	Hilton Power Failures
01/02/2024	DAPTC	Election 2024 Resources - Dorset Council Area
05/02/2024	Dorset Highways	Revised Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Church Row Hilton on the 21st of March 2024
06/02/2024	Climate and Ecological	Notes from January C&EE meeting
06/02/2024	Chris Slater	Letter to Simon Hoare MP, re power outages
08/02/2024	DAPTC	Training at a Glance
08/02/2024	DAPTC	DAPTC Councillors' Networking Event 7 March
08/02/2024	DAPTC	Dorset Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation
09/02/2024	Simon Hoare MP	RE: Power Failures Hilton Dorset
19/02/2024	Rogan Craik, SSEN	RE Hilton Power failures
20/02/2024	Dorset CPRE	talk by George Hosford on The Future of Farming in North Dorset
20/02/2024	DAPTC	Training & Events at a Glance Test
20/02/2024	DAPTC	Recognition for long serving councillors stepping down in May
22/02/2024	Dorset Highways	Revised Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for Church Row Hilton on the 20 <sup>th</sup> of March 2024
29/02/2024	Dorset Highways	TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CHURCH ROW, HILTON

## 9. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, Parish Meeting and PC meeting

## 10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.00.

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

## Report to the Parish Council January 2024 Councillor Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward, Dorset Council

### Double Council Tax for second homes up for vote

At the Full Council meeting of Dorset Council on 13<sup>th</sup> February I will be bringing a paper to ask members to consider agreeing to the recent legislation within the Levelling Up bill that will allow us to charge second homeowners double council tax. The number of people buying houses as second homes in Dorset has continued to increase and is responsible in part for the shortage of affordable homes here. Living in Dorset is a privilege and I hope that at least a proportion of the extra revenue that this could bring to the council will be used to support building affordable housing for local people. More on the next month

### Dorset Council tops the national polls for recycling!

DEFRA have just published the annual recycling figures for 2022/23. We have just found out that we are the **number one** unitary and disposal authority in the Country for the first time ever!

(Those ahead of us are collection only councils (i.e. the figures are on the kerbside service only and do not include Household Recycling Centres).

This is testament to the commitment of our residents; our waste strategy teams and our frontline waste operatives. This is a fantastic achievement for Dorset and one that we are hugely proud of.

### **Tree-mendous grant opportunity (sorry!)**

A new grant scheme aimed at supporting local communities to plant and care for trees in their area is now open for applications.

Funded by Dorset Council and managed by the Dorset National Landscape team, the [Dorset Community Tree Fund](#) is open to community organisations in the Dorset Council area. This includes parish and town councils, as well as schools and other established community groups interested in planting and caring for trees in their patch.

Trees play a crucial role in our natural world, from providing homes for wildlife to tackling climate change. However, planting the wrong tree in the wrong place can have a negative impact on local wildlife, communities, and landscape.

So, unlike traditional tree planting schemes, the [Dorset Community Tree Fund](#) goes beyond just providing grants for trees. It also offers support for the planning and design phases of planting projects. This extra support can help make sure trees and hedges planted in and by communities have a positive impact on Dorset's natural environment for years to come.

### **Almost half a million pounds awarded to local culture**

Dorset Council Organisational Revenue Support Fund for Culture has awarded £486,000 to 28 organisations over the next three years.

A total of 41 applications were received from arts and heritage organisations and accredited museums. A total of £217,000 has been awarded to arts and heritage and £269,000 to accredited museums.

This funding has been spread across the Dorset Council area to ensure residents and communities have cultural benefit around the county. All the organisations awarded with this money are based in and deliver their programmes within the council's boundaries.

### **Dorset Council prepares to sell old District Council office site and buildings in Wimborne**

Dorset Council has instructed its agents to begin marketing the vacant buildings and site of the old East Dorset District Council (EDDC) offices in Furzehill, Wimborne.

Following Local Government Reorganisation in 2019, the unitary authorities of Dorset Council and BCP Council were created to replace the county's former district and borough councils. As Furzehill was declared surplus to requirements by EDDC, Dorset Council inherited the empty office buildings.

Following Cabinet's approval of the Council's capital programme in March 2023, Furzehill was identified as a priority to sell to generate capital receipts. Capital receipts are money that councils can spend on funding other capital expenditure – such as land, buildings, and equipment - or for paying off debt. They generally cannot be used to fund services.

The Furzehill site consists of 2.73 hectares (6.76 acres) which was allocated for residential development and other alternative uses in the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan back in 2014.

### **Cabinet approves next steps in Levelling Up journey for Weymouth**

At its meeting on Tuesday 30 January, Dorset Council's Cabinet agreed to approve recommendations to progress vital next steps in the Levelling Up programme of work.

In January 2023 Dorset Council was awarded £19.5m by Government to help regenerate Weymouth's Waterside Economy. The council's ambitions include essential enabling groundworks to allow the eventual development of several key sites in the town.

### **North Quay and Weymouth Bowl**

Included in the recommendations discussed by councillors, was a request from officers to start a procurement process which will seek one or more development partners to develop both the North Quay and Weymouth Bowl sites. This would be subject to planning consent to demolish the old bowling alley on the St Nicholas Street site and an agreement from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to repurpose an amount of Levelling Up funding originally allocated to New Bond Street.

The former Weymouth and Portland Borough Council offices at North Quay are currently mid-demolition and until plans for a development in its place can be agreed upon, the site will become additional, temporary car parking. It is hoped the temporary car park will be ready in time for the Easter break later in spring.

A planning application to demolish the former bowling alley site is live on the council's website and is inviting comments from local people and businesses. A decision on this application is due to be made at the beginning of March by the council's Western and Southern Planning Committee. Following a robust soft market testing process, the council's property advisers recommend that the best strategy for future development on the North Quay site is for the council to dispose of it through a procurement process. This will allow the council to retain a considerable degree of control over the design and quality of any future build. Councillors have agreed that this is the best approach and approved the recommendation.

### **A vision for the Harbour and Peninsula**

Councillors also agreed to adopt a vision for the Harbour and Peninsula areas of Weymouth. A vision was developed by Professor Tony Bovaird, commissioned by Dorset Council to establish its ambitions, following engagement with stakeholders. The report divides the strands of proposed regeneration activity at the Harbour and Peninsula into short, medium and long-term options. Councillors agreed that the short and medium-term options are taken forward for progression, and the long-term options outlined in the report to be revisited at a later date.

### **Round 4 of the Household Support Fund reopens for applications**

Round 4 of the Household Support Fund (HSF) will reopen for applications at 10am on Tuesday 6 February 2024 for low-income households in the Dorset Council area.

The government scheme funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, provides support 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 to 8 weeks.

Dorset Council households will be able to apply if they:

- pay council tax to Dorset Council
- have an annual household net income of less than £30,000 and
- have savings of less than £16,000 and
- **have not applied** for a previous HSF payment within the last 6 months (since August 2023)

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.

Residents should apply online. The application form will open at 10am. Find more details including future application window dates here: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/household-support-fund>

If you need help completing the form, you can telephone Customer Services on 01305 221000 or visit a [customer access point](#).

For further information on all the support available, whether be access to food, money and debt advice or support with your household bills, visit our cost of living webpages at [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help).

### **Could you offer a stepping stone to a young person leaving care?**

Supported Lodgings can help young people who are leaving our care, experience the transition to adulthood in a safe and secure environment, whilst learning emotional and practical skills that will help them thrive.

We want to end the 'cliff edge of care' that can happen when young people turn 18 years old, and to do this, we need more people to open their homes and become Supported Lodgings carers.

Katie\* has been living with a Dorset Council Supported Lodgings provider for the past three years and says:

*"My experience in supported lodgings has been really positive and it has taught me a lot. I've learnt lots of things that have grown my confidence and made me feel ready for moving on. I've made a great connection with my supported lodgings provider, and she has supported me through anything I've needed help with."*

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# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Catherine Langham (CL), Rodney Northover (RN), Chris Roberts (CR), George Sotiriadis (GS) (by Zoom) & Marion Walbridge (MW).

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

**Members of the Public** – None

- 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Catherine Langham was nominated, seconded and elected as PC Chairman for 2024/2025. Cllr Langham signed the Chairman's Acceptance of Office
- 2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Sotiriadis volunteered to act as PC Vice Chairman for 2024/2025. This was agreed & supported by all Cllrs.
- 3. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO VARIOUS POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

These were agreed as follows –

- 1. Highways** – Cllr Northover
- 2. Footpaths** – Cllr Roberts
- 3. Planning applications** – Cllrs Langham & Sotiriadis
- 4. Parish Events** – Cllr Sotiriadis
- 5. Trees** – Cllr Roberts

Other responsibilities will be allocated as necessary at subsequent meetings. Arrangements will be made to post notices to the Parish Noticeboards.

#### **4. COUNCILLOR ACCEPTANCES OF OFFICE**

The Clerk received signed Acceptances of Office from all Councillors accepting to abide by the Hilton PC Code of Conduct 2022.

#### **5. COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

Following the 2024 Election the Parish Council declared one Vacancy which will be notified to Dorset Council and co-option will be considered when necessary.

#### **6. 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 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

## **1. CHAIRMANS REPORT:**

Outgoing Chairman Justine McGuinness noted that the Parish Council had achieved a great deal in the previous term, noting considerable success in securing the re-introduction of a bus service following the efforts of Cllrs Clive Jones, Shulla Jaques, and Marion Walbridge. There had also been successes in noting and dealing with instances of ash dieback thanks to the efforts of Cllr Clive Jones.

Chairman Catherine Langham provided a report:

The year from May 2023 started off with a successful Coronation party at Moonfleet, by kind permission of Cllr Jones. Hilton village held a tea party followed by a church service.

In July it was agreed to replace all the village name signs and although the PC was disappointed to have to pay £ 1,000 for new signs, this work was carried out and the new signs are a great improvement.

At September's meeting a customer liaison manager and engineer from SSE attended the meeting to discuss the ongoing problem with regular power cuts in Hilton village. Eventually a compensatory payment was agreed for 101 households. Work is ongoing to protect the line through woods which is affected by falling ash trees. A further donation of £500 was made to Hilton by SSE and this has been used for improvements to the Glebe field.

Cllr Jones continued to monitor ash dieback and alert landowners where trees were in danger of falling on roads or property.

Cllrs Jones, Jaques and Walbridge were instrumental in the setting up of a community bus scheme operated by Plus Bus which has proved to be successful to date with weekly journeys to either Dorchester or Blandford.

A grant of £500 was awarded to Hilton PCC for maintenance of the churchyard and a further £250 to the Hilton Glebe field project for the purchase of bee keeping equipment.

Cllr McGuinness suggested setting up a neighbourhood WhatsApp group which would provide a local 'alert' for the villages.

Cllr Jaques organised a new noticeboard which was installed in Hilton using wood provided by Cllr Jones. This has been made by local craftsman John Lilley.

Cllr Langham organised the annual litter pick in mid-March and as usual, this collected a large amount of rubbish. The ensuing BBQ was enjoyed by all, with around 50 people taking part.

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

The Chairman noted that there were several objectives for the forthcoming year:

- renovation of Parish fingerposts
- renovation of the bridge railings at Ansty
- improvement to footpaths including new waymarkers and dealing with access issues

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**PRESENT:** Cllrs Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman), Chris Roberts (CR), George Sotiriadis (GS) (via Zoom), Rodney Northover (RN), Marion Walbridge (MW)

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

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Woodhurst
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman provided an update regarding these items:

### **Notice board for the Old Brewery Hall**

The construction of the new board has been arranged with John Lilley. Clive Jones has very kindly offered to supply the wood for this project.

### **Hilton Power Failures**

Chris Slater has submitted a further report to SSEN relating to observations concerning work carried out to restore power lines which has taken place without the removal of dead ash trees; the Parish Council has not seen the response to this or received any further information concerning the line improvements promised for summer 2024.

## **5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Haynes was unable to attend the meeting and had advised that there would not be a report until the new Dorset Council has held its first meeting.

## **6. OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present and no questions arising.

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

### **P/HOU/2024/02320 - Hatherly Farmhouse Coniger Knap Higher Ansty DT11 0HF**

*Demolish existing conservatory and erect two storey rear extension*

It was noted this is a proposal for a very large and modern extension. It was agreed that a site visit would be made by Cllrs Langham & Sotiriadis before any comments would be returned.

### **P/HOU/2023/04216 – Praglia, Higher Ansty (now Bay House)**

A resident had made a complaint concerning a possible breach of planning permission and had requested that the PC take up this matter. The Clerk and Chairman noted that the Parish

Council has no powers in this respect and Dorset Council will not intervene without the production of evidence. The onus is on anyone affected by building work to take to gather evidence, using professional advisors if necessary, and refer any concerns directly to Dorset Council's Planning Enforcement Team.

## 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 and the overall financial position was good.

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

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
06/03/2024	£ 605.00	John Lilley	Hilton Noticeboard
06/03/2024	£ 27.58	David Green	Expenses
11/03/2024	£ 345.60	Wix	Website Hosting
28/03/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	March 2024 pay
08/04/2024	£ 241.00	Zurich	PC Insurance
10/04/2024	£ 162.00	HMRC	Q4 PAYE 2023/2024
29/04/2024	£ 226.00	D Green	April 2024 pay

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

### 8.4 Other payments agreed

Supplier	Reason	Amount
J P Consultants	Internal Audit	£ 70.00
DAPTC	Annual subscription	£ 196.54
Justine McGuinness	Tug of War rope	£ 105.00
Catherine Langham	2024 Litter pick	£ 75.00

## 9. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

The Council thanked Cllr Northover for his work in renovating the bench seat.

Cllr Northover reported two roads issues, a pothole and a defect. The Chairman will report these to Dorset Council.

## 10. FINGERPOSTS RENOVATION

Cllr Shulla Jaques has agreed to clean several Parish fingerposts although some are in need of renovation. It was noted that the CPRE offer grants of £100-£200 per post towards these costs. It was agreed to take photographs and make the necessary enquiries in relation to refurbishment.

## 11. CORRESPONDENCE:

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

Date	From	Subject
07/03/2024	Dorset Deserves Better	Open Letter to Spencer Flower about Dorset Local Plan 06-03-24

15/03/2024	Dorset CPRE	Dorset CPRE February/March 2024 Newsletter
21/03/2024	Dorset Highways	Proposed temporary closure C139, Stoke Wake
25/03/2024	Clive Kellaway	The Memorial Seat located on the Bullbarrow turning.
16/04/2024	Flood Wessex	Flooding support resources for Dorset communities
17/04/2024	Chris Slater	Hilton Power Supply
28/04/2024	Clive Kellaway	Follow up - The Memorial Seat located on the Bullbarrow turning.
29/04/2024	Dorset Highways	TEMPORARY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT NOTICE TEMPORARY CLOSURE, C139, STOKE WAKE
01/05/2024	Dick Rowe	Planning query

## 12. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

Footpath signage

GS confirmed that a D-DAY 80 commemoration event and PC Annual picnic would take place at Moonfleet Farm on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

## 13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty. There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:58

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

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**

**PRESENT:** Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman) Rodney Northover (RN), Chris Roberts (CR) George Sotiriadis (GS), Marion Walbridge (MW), Ian Woodhurst (IW) Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH) (via Zoom)

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

**Members of the Public** – None

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings held on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

**D-DAY 80 Event** – it was noted that the event was successful although numbers attending were estimated to be around 1/3 down on the event held in 2023. The reasons for this were not entirely understood. GS suggested that planning for next year should probably begin earlier and be co-ordinated to avoid any clash with other events in the Parish; it could possibly take place on the week-end before the May Spring Bank Holiday or the first week-end in June. GS suggested that if more people were asked to provide something for the event, it could potentially be larger and better attended.

The Parish Council Thanked Clive & Linda Jones for the use of Moonfleet Farm and for all assistance provided.

**Parish Noticeboards** – The Parish Council Thanked Cllr Roberts for assisting John Lilley with the installation of the new Brewery Hall noticeboard.

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

Cllr Haynes reported that the new Council was currently in the induction and training period, involving some 32 new Councillors.

There is a potentially significant change in planning policy under consideration, whereby in relation to larger applications, a Parish Council will be allowed to refer a decision to the Planning Committee if there is disagreement with a case officer. The criteria for this treatment has not been confirmed at this stage. This may impact on the timescale for deciding applications.

There has been progress in relation to the settlement of the Poole Harbour catchment area phosphates and nitrates issues; a sum of £4.6 has been provided to fund mitigation measures. The issue is now only confined to nitrates impact only and there are some 90 or so pipeline cases to be decided. Natural England and the Dorset Wildlife Trust have acquired Lyscombe Farm which will be rewilded under the Nutrient Mitigation Scheme. CL questioned how this project could actually be linked to resolution of the nitrate discharge issue concerning Poole Harbour.

Cllr Haynes will be working on the Audit & Governance and Licensing committees in the new Council, and will be raising questions in relation to the financing of new reduced car parking tariffs in trial sites and how cost of living resources would be best utilised.

It was noted that the Council had benefitted by £4 million following the scrapping of the extension of HS2 rail line and this had been used for pothole repairs.

## 6. OPEN FORUM

There were no public questions.

## 7. COUNCILLOR VACANCY

It was noted that there had not been any expressions of interest in the Councillor vacancy and was agreed that the position would be advertised via Facebook and the Village News. . GS noted that there were also councillor vacancies in other local parishes.

## 8. FINGERPOST PROJECT

It was agreed that the Parish Council would proceed with the refurbishment of the fingerposts at Ansty Cross and Cuckoo Lane. The cost of refurbishing each post will be circa £280; some grant funding has been agreed by Dorset CPRE and a request for additional funding has now been made.

It has been reported that the fingerpost at Bulbarrow Hill is in poor condition. It is uncertain whether or not this falls in Hilton Parish, CL will look into this and advise further.

## 9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

### 9.1 New applications received:

#### **P/LBC/2024/03429 + P/HOU/2024/03428 - Abbots Barton The Knapp Hilton DT11 0DE**

*Replace existing conservatory with garden room, erect porch to east elevation and erect rear porch canopy. Re-roof existing dwelling with plain clay tiles, extend and re-roof existing store/workshop. Insert two windows into bathroom*

Although ostensibly acceptable, it was noted that this application also includes a proposal to install PV panels. The PC will consult neighbours before making a comment.

#### **P/HOU/2024/03470 - Orchard Lands Hilton Blandford Forum DT11 0DQ**

*Erect single storey side extension.*

It was agreed to support this application providing the extension remains fully within the village settlement boundary.

**9.2 Bay House** –It was noted that Dorset Council Planning Enforcement will only consider an issue if evidence is provided by those who consider that they have been adversely affected by a development and that a planning infringement has taken place. CL has written to a resident in relation to his concerns regarding the roof height and suggested that he obtains professional advice with regard to measuring this.

**9.3 P/HOU/2024/02320 - Hatherley Farm** – it was noted that this application had been approved by Dorset Council.

## 10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 10.1 Finance report:

The Clerk reported that the reserves balance was in a good position, at this stage of the year, with the bank balance at £ 6,815.53 and general reserve at £ 2,415.13. The main expense since the last meeting being cost of replacement of village signs not previously billed in 2023.

GS now has online bank access and approval levels will be changed in due course.

### 10.2 Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
15/05/2024	£ 70.00	J P Consultants	Internal Audit fee
15/05/2024	£ 196.54	DAPTC	Subscription
15/05/2024	£ 105.00	Justine McGuinness	Tug of War rope
15/05/20224	£ 75.00	Catherine Langham	Litterpick
15/05/2024	£ 9.00	David Green	Expenses
28/05/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	May 2024 pay
03/06/2024	£ 25.95	George Sotiriadis	Rosettes
03/06/2024	£ 20.25	George Sotiriadis	Competition prizes
05/06/2024	£ 605.00	John Lilley	Brewery Hall Noticeboard
10/06/2024	£ 68.00	Clive Jones	D-DAY 80 costs
17/06/2024	£ 1,847.58	Dorset Council	Village signs replacement
28/06/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	June 2024 pay

10.3 New payments - Clerks expenses - £ 27.58 authorised.

## 11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

- **Ansty bridge railings** – these were due for inspection in April 2024. The Clerk has asked the Community Highways Officer for an update
- **Rights of Way** – CR has met with Dorset Ranger Graham Stanley and raised a number of RoW issues. The Rangers have written to landowners concerning the width of paths & bridleways. CR has dealt with an issue of problem barbed wire.
- **Path Gate** – MW raised an issue concerning a resident wanting to use a mobility scooter on a bridleway. It was noted that this is not a Byway to All Traffic (B.O.A.T) and should not be used in this way. The gate entrance will be measured though to check its compliance.
- **Parked vehicles** – MW raised an issue concerning vehicles parking at Ansty Cross triangle. It was agreed that no action could be taken concerning this.
- **Large Pothole along Cuckoo Lane & Collapsed Manhole by Pleck Barn** – noted by RN. These will be reported to Dorset Highways

## 12. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period May – July 2024:

Date	From	Subject
20/05/2024	DAPTC	Dorset Council Website - Register of Interests (ROI) Updates & Deletions
10/06/2024	Dorset CPRE	Re: Fingerpost Renovation Project, Hilton Parish Council - £ 90 grant agreed
10/06/2024	Clive Jones	RE: Annual Parish Picnic

11/06/2024	Flood Wessex	Flood Warden Newsletter - Spring 2024
15/06/2024	Dorset CPRE	Dorset CPRE June 2024 Newsletter and 20th June Planning Conference
25/06/2024	DAPTC	NEW - training for councillors on Saturday 20 July in North Dorset

**13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Councillor Vacancy

**14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.30.

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

**Report to the Parish Council May 2024 Councillor Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward, Dorset Council**

Dear Clerks, parish councillors and residents please find my rather brief report for May.

At the Dorset Council elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 Councillors were elected to represent their ward for a 5 year term. (Future terms will revert to 4 years)

82 Councillors represent wards in the Dorset Unitary council and at this election there was a high number of new councillors (33) to the role. Each councillor represents roughly 3700 people.

There was also a change in administration with the Liberal Democrats taking the controlling majority on the council. Seats were taken as follows:

- Liberal Democrats     42
- Conservatives            30
- Green party                4
- Independents             4
- Labour                        2

The month of May has been a mass of induction and information meetings to get councillors up to speed not only on what the council does ( some 360 service areas) but also for some completely new IT systems and ways of working remotely. As well there has been mandatory training in areas such as licensing and Planning. There has been a full council meeting to agree roles such a Chairman of full council and committees as well as members of Cabinet and their responsibilities. There have been no other formal committee meetings until training has been completed.

The budget for the first year of this new council was set and agreed by cross party support at the February 2024 full meeting of the council. It is possible that the new regime may have policy changes to bring forward which could make changes to the budget but these will have to go through a process of Overview Committee, Cabinet and possibly full Council, so any changes are not likely to happen until the Autumn.

With no decisions being made I have nothing further to report at this time and apologise for the rather dry nature of my report.

Best wishes Jill

# **HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024**

**PRESENT:** Catherine Langham (CL) (Chairman) Rodney Northover (RN), Chris Roberts (CR) George Sotiriadis (GS), Marion Walbridge (MW), Ian Woodhurst (IW)

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

**Members of the Public** – None

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST PC MEETING**

**Community Transport Funding** – it was noted that a request had now been received confirming the funding support contribution required from Hilton Parish Council for a 2 year period. The documents confirming the necessity for this funding had not originally been sent directly to the Parish Council, in addition two of the Councillors most involved with this initiative did not stand for election in May, hence the communication delay. The Chairman has now requested sight of the audit trail of funding for the project before payment is made. It is likely that there will be an ongoing requirement for at least £500 per year funding from Hilton Parish.

**Hilton Power Supplier** – The Parish Council noted that SSEN are in confidential dialogue with the landowner concerning work to improve the stability of the power supplies to the village.

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

The Unitary Councillor was not present, a report have been received for July 2024, which was taken as read.

### **6. OPEN FORUM**

There were no public questions.

### **7. COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

It was noted that there had been two expressions of interest in the Councillor vacancy although possible candidates were unable to attend the meeting for personal reasons. It is hoped that they will be able to attend the next meeting November, the PC would like to resolve this issue before the start of next year.

### **8. FINGERPOST PROJECT UPDATE**

The Chairman reported that the fingerpost on Bulbarrow Hill, which is not in the Parish, had been mistakenly dismantled prior to repair, rather than the post at Cuckoo Lane. The plan remains for the refurbishment of the two fingerposts in the Parish; Dorset CPRE have agreed to make a grant of £150 towards these costs.

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

## 9.1 New applications

There were no new applications for review.

## 9.2 P/OUT/2023/05987 Brewery Farm Ansty Lane Ansty DT2 7PN The construction of a rural workers dwelling

It was noted that this outline application, despite being supported by the Parish Council, had been refused by Dorset Council planners. The primary reasons for refusal were cited as being:

- the enterprises of Brewery Farm, which do not relate to livestock, by reason of their nature, do not present an existing functional need for a full time worker to live at or near to them
- it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would not result in an increase in flood risk

The Unitary Councillor not being a statutory consultee, had been unable to intervene in the decision making process.

## 9.3 Planning process changes

Dorset Council have now confirmed major changes to the Planning process when Parish Councils and Case Officers disagree concerning 'major developments'. These decisions will now be automatically referred to the Planning Committee for a decision.

'Major developments' are defined as developments involving any one or more of the following—

- (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
- (b) waste development;
- (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where—
  - (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is **10 or more**; or
  - (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);
- (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is **1,000 square metres** or more; or
- (e) development carried out on a site having an area of **1 hectare or more**;

## 9.4 Rogers Hill wind turbine

The Chairman noted that there is a proposal to construct an additional 135 metre wind turbine at Rogers Hill, near Bere Regis. This structure will be taller than Salisbury Cathedral or the London Eye, and it does seem likely that it will be visible from Hilton Parish, notably along the Ice Drove. The developers have yet to publish a zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) projection which may confirm its potential impact on the Parish.

The Chairman had suggested to the developers that instead a smaller additional 60 metre turbine could be constructed; however this idea has been rejected, it seems for economic reasons.

It was agreed that, at this stage, a formal response can only be made if Hilton Parish is a statutory consultee, although there is nothing to stop any individual raising their own objection.

## 10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

### 10.1 Finance report:

The Clerk reported that the reserves balance was in a good position, at this stage of the year, with the bank balance at £6,015.01 and general reserve at £ 1,415.01. A further precept instalment is expected at the end of September 2024

### 10.2 Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
03/07/2024	£ 21.52	David Green	Expenses
03/07/2024	£ 5.00	Chris Roberts	Keys
05/07/2024	£ 120.00	Dorset Council	Salt bag
10/07/2024	£ 162.00	HMRC	PAYE Q1 2024/2025
17/07/2024	£ 40.00	DAPTC	Training
29/07/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	July 2024 pay
28/08/2024	£ 226.00	David Green	August 2024 pay

**10.3 New payments** - Clerks expenses of £ 17.24 were authorised.

## 11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

**Rights of Way** – a Notice to Landowners, specifying their obligations with regard to the maintenance of Rights of Way, has been drafted with the assistance of Dorset Rangers. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the most appropriate course of action would be for this to be published in the Village News. It should be noted Dorset Council usually contributes a minimum of 25% and possibly more towards the cost of replacing access stiles and gates:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/public-rights-of-way-maintenance>

It was agreed that specific issues with landowners should be dealt with via Dorset Rangers.

**Ansty bridge railings** – as previously reported, these were due for inspection in April 2024. The Clerk had asked the Community Highways Officer for an update but a response has not been forthcoming, a further request for an update will be made.

**Fly Tipping** – the Chairman reported that fly tipping of stripped cable on the bridleway between Hilton and Milton Abbas had now been cleared.

## 12. CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received in the period July – Sept 2024:

Date	From	Subject
05/07/2024	Chris Slater	Re: Hilton Power Supply
17/07/2024	DAPTC	Mid to late July - Upcoming Training & Events at a Glance
23/07/2024	SSE	RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Hilton Power Supply
23/07/2024	Dorset Highways	TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF MARSH LANE, HAZELBURY BRYAN
26/07/2024	Dorset CPRE	Dorset CPRE July 2024 Newsletter, Conference recordings & presentations
29/07/2024	Dorset CPRE	Fingerpost grant
31/07/2024	Dorset Museum	Dorset Museum & Art Gallery appeal to acquire a Bronze Age bracelet from Hilton, Dorset
02/08/2024	Dorset Highways	PROPOSED TEMPORARY CLOSURE, VILLAGE ROAD, HILTON - 14th Oct

02/08/2024	Dorset Highways	URGENT CLOSURE OF ANSTY LANE, HARTFOOT LANE - ANSTY AND MELCOMBE BINGHAM, HILTON
06/08/2024	Dorset Council	IMPORTANT: Changes to Planning Scheme of Delegation
08/08/2024	Flood Wessex	Flood Warden Newsletter - Summer 2024
20/08/2024	DAPTC	Expressions of interest for in person councillor training - North Dorset
20/08/2024	Carol Eastment	Contribution to Community Bus Service
23/08/2024	Dorset CPRE	Dorset CPRE August 2024 Newsletter, NPPF Consultation, The Oak Fair

It was noted that sufficient funds had now been raised for the Brone Age gold bracelet found in Hilton Parish to be kept in Dorset.

### 13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- Budget & Precept proposal
- Councillor Vacancy

### 14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in the at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.00

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

### **Report to Parrish Councils July 2024**

#### **Cllr Jill Haynes Chalk Valleys ward.**

Dear Councillors, Clerks and members of the public, please find my report for July.

The new council is looking at priorities and has reduced them down to four areas. The Council are doing some public consultation on this at the moment but unfortunately all the eight sessions do seem to be in the main towns. With little representation for rural areas. However, you can make your views known by going to the Dorset council web site on [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/a-big-conversation](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/a-big-conversation)

There are going to be four main priority areas

- 1 Communities for all
- 2 Responding to the climate crisis
- 3 Providing high quality housing
- 4 Growing our economy

At the moment there is very little further in detail and the consultation will no doubt bring further clarity about the public's requirements and help guide priorities

I thought I would give a single topic report about the current position on Priority 3 Housing and Housing need to give you greater information in this area, and my apologies if it is a bit lengthy.

Dorset's average house prices are twelve times the average local wage, this is one of the highest ratios outside of London and the South East. The Council wants to increase the supply of housing

that local people can afford to rent and buy. This includes increasing the supply of affordable housing and social housing by working with developers and with Registered Providers of social housing / Housing Associations.

Over 80% of the households currently on our social housing register are of working age (16 – 64 years). This statistic shows we need to prioritise and increase housing supply.

We currently have 6133 people and families on the housing register with approximately 485 new applicants each month. **The council gives free advice, assistance and information to everyone even if they are not on the register.**

There are four categories on the register A-D but it is definitely NOT only those in the top category are those who are housed. Some 50% of those on the register are single people – not surprisingly, needing 1 bed accommodation.

Dorset Council does not own or manage any social housing, this is dealt with by our register Providers/ Housing associations. They advertise between 75 & 100% of their stock through the Dorset Home Choice Allocations Scheme. All applications must go through the scheme and the council shortlists before sending on to the provider to make the decision. Shortly a new update on the system Social housing in our area makes up approximately 12% of the total homes. These are provided by locally active Housing Associations, also known as Registered Providers of Social Housing.

will also give people an idea of the waiting time for appropriate housing in the area they have asked for. The backlog is reducing and has, for most people, gone from 12 to 6 weeks. Social housing in our area makes up approximately 12% of the total homes. These are provided by locally active Housing Associations, also known as Registered Providers of Social Housing.

During 2022/23 the number of households losing their private rented accommodation increased dramatically as landlords decided to turn many properties into an Air B&B.

This accounted for 17.8% of all homeless approaches, where households were unable to find other rental properties, and impacts the council's ability to discharge its homeless duties. Compared to other councils we have done rather well in this area but there is always more to do. Our homeless cases last year were **down** 17.4% compared to the national average **up** 15.4%. Working in a number of ways we have ensured that over 200 families did not become homeless. Measures include working with landlords, helping with ensuring people claim the right benefits and support into employment.

As of September 2023, just over 360 landlords have joined our Landlord Forum and we are encouraging new members from across the whole Dorset Council area. Whilst this is a sizeable number, membership is mostly landlords with properties in the west of our area, who have been established as a group since before Dorset Council became a Unitary Authority in 2019.

In a survey of Dorset landlords, 25% of respondents said that they were planning to leave the market or reduce their number of rental properties, within the next 5 years which is of considerable concern to the council.

We need to work with landlords and other housing providers to improve the quality of accommodation for Dorset residents, not least because in turn this will help to improve people's health and wellbeing.

### **Reduce the number of long-term empty homes in Dorset**

Empty properties can make an area feel run down and undermine community spirit. They can also become the focus of anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and rodent activity.

Returning an empty property to use cannot only resolve these environmental and social problems, but can also provide a 'new' home, which helps meet housing demand, reduces pressure on new build development and can also provide an income and asset for the owner.

We want to encourage owners to bring empty properties back into use as homes. We recognise that properties are often empty for a wide variety of reasons and our role is therefore to initially influence and encourage property owners. This can include advice about undertaking repairs, selling the property or renting it. However we may also take appropriate enforcement action where these informal negotiations fail. We have brought back into occupancy 41 houses in the last 4 years but it is a very slow and complex process.

The council also takes action on housing standards in the private rental sector and took over 116 actions and notices served against landlords last year to ensure that people live in safe and healthy homes. Housing is a very small team and I am proud of the excellent work that they do to support people in our communities.

## Report to Parish Council's 5/9/24

### Cllr Jill Haynes Chalk Valleys Ward

Dear Clerks, Councillors and members of the public,

After my report on Housing matters last month this time I am providing an update on some of the proposed central Government changes to planning. The proposals are out to consultation at the moment but will have a considerable impact on Dorset if they are implemented.

On 30 July, the Government made a Written Ministerial Statement and announced a consultation on a series of changes to the planning system, including a draft revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Responses are invited by 24 September. (So a very short time frame!)

The proposed changes aim to increase house building across the country. There is a new standard methodology for calculating housing targets, which would result in them being significantly higher. Targets would be mandatory rather than advisory, and where they cannot be met due to constraints, then the potential for neighbouring councils to meet them should be examined. There would be greater flexibility around potential development within the Green Belt, where necessary to meet housing requirements. New legislation would be introduced to require a level of strategic planning across the country, and in the meantime the existing 'duty to cooperate' is proposed to be strengthened. All councils are urged to bring up to date local plans in place as soon as possible. Changes to the process of preparing local plans, as previously proposed, are still due to take effect, but the timing of their introduction will be later, and councils are advised not to wait for that change before progressing their plans. These changes will have very significant implications for the preparation of the Dorset Council Local Plan, which will need to be based on the new higher housing targets. The consultation also includes suggestions for increasing planning application fees, so that the fees would cover a greater proportion of the costs of considering applications.

The most significant implication for this Council is the change to the standard methodology for calculating housing targets. **The standard methodology housing target for Dorset Council, under the proposed new methodology, will increase from 1,793 homes a year to 3,230, which is well beyond the scope of the options we consulted on in the 2021 local plan consultation.** To put the Dorset figures into further context, there are currently 10,128 homes with planning permission and not yet built, and a further 5,376 allocated in plans: a total supply of 19,186. **Planning for new homes does not guarantee their provision, and it is not certain that the market would be able to deliver the level of increase proposed.** The consultation documents say that environmental constraints **may** prevent the targets being achievable in some areas, and this is likely to be the case in Dorset, with its two National Landscapes and variety of highly protected habitats sites. This will however require strong arguments, a full review of green

belt opportunities, and examination of whether any unmet need could be met in neighbouring areas.

There are over 100 questions to be answered in the consultation document and the Dorset Council response will be debated at the Cabinet meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

I totally agree that there is a real problem with house prices both for purchase and for rent and that there are insufficient numbers of affordable houses in Dorset. However, the proposals do not seem to address or understand what happens in a rural, picturesque region like Dorset. Most new houses do not go to local people but to those moving in from outside. We already have passed planning for over 10,000 homes but they developers are not bringing these forward in the current economic climate. Perhaps we can do more for locals as they have in some of the National parks where all development has a local only clause on the planning? We all know that developers agree to the affordable aspect of an application and often then say they cannot afford to build them and so all the houses become market price. Putting smaller developments into our villages without further infrastructure like schools, Dr's and bus services will not work. We need to strategically plan bigger settlements which cover all these things and that cannot be done quickly.

The proposals will just open the door for development where developers will make the most money and there will be nothing the council will be able to do as we cannot get to the numbers required for the five-year housing supply to stop them. It is verry worrying and quite frankly depressing.

### **Planning Enforcement**

Much of my mail box is complaints about planning issues and so I though I would give a bit more information on this area. The first point to note is that it is done at the discretion of the council, and therefor not as the word implies we do not force people to do something. The idea is to ensure that matters are safe and the default is to ask for a planning application to regularise a position.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("Act") provides the main legislative framework for dealing with breaches of planning control. The Act provides the Council with the necessary powers to deal with breaches of planning control whilst the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), provide government guidance on how the Council should deal with breaches of planning control.

The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) states:

Effective enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is **discretionary**, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control.

I think that the priority criteria chart is helpful in showing the council's priorities in enforcement matters. A rough idea on caseload is some 40-60 matters are reported each month and a similar number are resolved r signed off although there may be some months for this to happen on an

individual case. .

Priority	Examples of Alleged Breach Of Planning Control
<p>1 Site visit within 1-2 working days of receipt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unauthorised development/activity which is causing immediate and irreversible harm in the locality.</li> <li>• Unauthorised works to trees subject of a Tree Preservation Order or to trees in a conservation area.</li> <li>• Unauthorised works to a Listed Building.</li> <li>• Development which is likely to give rise to a serious risk of harm to public health, public safety or seriously compromise highway safety (including a Breach of Condition).</li> <li>• Development that may adversely affect or destroy a site of nature conservation value.</li> </ul>
<p>2 Site visit within 10 working days from receipt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationing a new residential caravan in the countryside (including gypsy sites and travelling show people sites).</li> <li>• Works not in accordance with a planning permission.</li> <li>• Householder development.</li> <li>• Commencement of development (following the grant of planning permission) without discharging 'pre-commencement' conditions – except for issues such as landscaping or means of enclosure, which are unlikely to require immediate action.</li> </ul>
<p>3 Site visit within 15 working days from receipt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All other breaches of conditions.</li> <li>• Changes of use not covered by Priority 1 or 2.</li> <li>• Earthworks and changes to land levels.</li> <li>• Display of advertisements.</li> <li>• Agricultural developments.</li> <li>• Equestrian related developments.</li> <li>• Gates, walls, fences.</li> <li>• Satellite dishes.</li> <li>• Untidy land.</li> </ul> <p><u>(Note: adverts and fence issues may be increased in priority if highway safety issues are identified).</u></p>