

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the remote meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th January 2022

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

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public and Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting after what has not been an easy year and wished all a Happy Christmas & New Year. The Chairman gave the Parish Council's condolences to Cllr Langham following her sad loss.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 2nd November 2021 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 Post Box

The Chairman confirmed that this had now been repaired.

4.2 Phone Box

The Chairman confirmed that the next stage would be the installation of cork tiles at the rear wall of the box and the repainting of the gold crown.

4.3 Old Brewery Hall

The Chairman reported that the Christmas Fayre had been very successful; no request for PC assistance had been received.

4.4 Ash Die-back

A written report regarding two trees of concern near the Brewery Hall had been received prior to the meeting. This will be followed up.

4.5 Hilton PCC Grant

Further information concerning the grant application had been received but there had been insufficient time to consider this. A decision concerning this will be made post meeting.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

JH had provided a written report for November & December prior to the meeting. JH gave a Covid-19 update noting that there were high numbers among the over 60's in the local area but the numbers per head of population were relatively low compared to the national average. There were implications for Dorset County Hospital in terms of the separation of patients.

JH noted that 'hybrid' meetings were the norm but central government was not supporting this practice which is based on 'in principle' decisions being taken. The Community Governance Review had been inundated with applications, some of which were very complex, for example around Bridport and Symondsburry. Dorset Council was struggling to

manage the process, which requires cross party support, hence the reasons for the publication of a revised timetable.

6. OPEN FORUM:

A resident raised the issue of the road closure at Hilton on 29th December which had resulted in heavy goods vehicles attempting to use the Knapp as an alternative route. This had caused damage to verges and was unacceptable. The Clerk had reported the concerns of councillors and residents to Dorset Highways who had said that this was a short notice closure and advance notification to residents had not been possible. It was pointed out to Highways that diversionary notices were not adequately sited in order to provide advance warning of the closure and Highways have provided assurances that they will look at this in the future.

The Parish Council will request that the Community Highways Officer makes a site visit to the Knapp to look at the signage and consider whether any further measures could be taken.

The Chairman noted that local roads were certainly not designed for the large lorries and tractors which are now using these routes.

GS reported that a neighbour had raised an issue with a flooded brook depositing silt in a garden. The Chairman suggested that the Environment Agency should be contacted.

7. SPEED SURVEY RESULTS

SJ noted the speed survey outcome and the advice from the Road Safety Team none of the tested locations met the criteria for a Speed Indicator Device, based that the fact that the 85thile results were close to the 30-mph limit. The Council resolved that no further action would be taken at this stage.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

Hawkes Field:

- i) JH noted that the application for change of use to continue the use of the former equestrian storage and office building as a dwellinghouse had been refused
- ii) The Clerk noted that the application for a new dwelling had also been recently refused
- iii) There has not been any decision concerning the Certificate of Lawfulness concerning use by heavy goods vehicles

CL noted that there is a planning webinar on 27th January with David Walsh to which all are invited.

9. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

8.1 Queens Platinum Jubilee event

The Chairman reported that the hire of marquees for the event would have insurance costs of £ 150 per marquee, and two would be required. CL confirmed that this would not have to be paid in the event that the event did not take place and the Council agreed in principle to meet this cost.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

10.1 Finance report:

The Clerks report showed that the financial position is still more than adequate, with the bank balance at 31st December being £ 12,095.16 and the general reserve being £ 9,757.09

10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
01/11/2021	£ 231.60	David Green	Oct 2021 Pay
03/11/2021	£ 28.35	David Green	Expenses
04/11/2021	£ 109.44	X2 Connect Ltd	Information signs
29/11/2021	£ 720.00	Dorset Council	Speed survey
30/11/2021	£ 266.80	David Green	Nov 2021 pay
07/12/2021	£ 22.47	Justine McGuinness	Lights & Batteries
08/12/2021	£ 115.10	Zoom - renewal	Renew Zoom
30/12/2021	£ 236.00	David Green	Dec 2021 pay

10.3 Precept confirmation

The Chairman noted that the publication of the tax base calculations did not materially alter the precept request for 2022/2023, which will be £ 5,612. The effect on Council Tax Band D is an increase of £0.87 pence for the year.

11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY:

11.1 Grit Bins

The Chairman noted that a salt bag had been delivered to Cllr Northover.

11.2 Road Signage

A report had been received from a resident with photographs showing instances of damaged and concealed road signs. This will be forwarded to the Community Highways Officer for attention. The Clerk advised that it is a landowner's responsibility to ensure that road signs are kept free of foliage.

CL raised the issue of the signage at the ford on Aller Lane, and noted that 6 cars have been lost in 6 months at this location. It was agreed that the PC should consider putting up its own warning signs and a quote for these will be obtained.

12. CORRESPONDENCE:

The Clerk had received correspondence which had been circulated:

- 12/11/2021 – Dorset Council – Blue Badge car park charging policy. The Chairman had been unable to access the online discussion and is waiting to see if this will be re-scheduled.
- 25/11/2021 - Flood newsletter & update from Adrian Simmons

13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 1st March 2022 at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:49

Signed(Chairman) Date

Report to the Parish Council November/December 2021

Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward

Dear Councillors

Please find my report for the end of the year.

Budget

We are about two thirds the way through the budget setting process now. This year for the first time it appears all directorates have been asked to not just report what savings they can make but also review what it actually costs to run a service. This brought out some interesting information and in particular that many activities on the Place budget were underfunded. This included some £2M for SEN transport as well as issues in Highways, Waste Collection and Environmental health and Planning. The total shortfall for this area was over £10M and was not really a surprise as this is the area that was traditionally cut to fund the two big overspend areas of adults and children's social services. The real crux of the matter is that we are underfunded as a rural council by central Government both our leaders at Dorset Council and our MPs are pressing for additional funding. However, we have set a balanced budget using some small amount of reserves. This year as Directorates have agreed what it is that they need to run the services they will be monitored very closely to ensure that they are keeping on track. This is an area that I will be reviewing in the transformation part of my new portfolio.

We have had two budget café all day sessions in house for councillors to question and understand the budget. We will now have scrutiny public meetings for both People and Health and Place and Resources before recommendations go forward to the Cabinet in January and Full Council in February. We are still working a bit in the dark as we have not yet had the government settlement for Adult social care. Worst case is an additional £4M and best case is £8M, at the moment we have £5M in the figures and I sincerely hope that the genuine need for this is recognised centrally.

Covid and Working Remotely

We are yet again struggling to contain Covid numbers. Dorset has a particularly high rate at the moment, higher than both the SW and the national average. Central Government has asked that people who can work from home. This does not help councils who are supposed to meet in person in order to make decisions. At Dorset Council we are continuing to meet remotely with the decisions on a "minded to" basis made by individual Cabinet members or in some cases senior officer having heard the remote debate. I have been contacted by a number of my parishes concerned about having meetings in rather restricted places. I would say firstly that you can do the same and meet remotely give a minded to decision to the Clerk to enact. Some however are looking at hybrid meeting which is what Dorset Council is looking to do from mid-January. This then brings up the issue of internet connections in village halls. However, I have looked into this with others, and it is possible to purchase a dongle which will provide the connection for about £40. Don't get the cheap ones! This way at least the public could Zoom in and fewer people would be in one place. Certainly, food for thought and I already use this system with two of my parish councils, it also covers that Climate Change issue of people driving about when they don't need to.

Spend to save schemes

I said in my last report that I would provide further information on some of the spend to save schemes which are in our transformation process. These are very varied and are in place to have an effect on the medium-term budget primarily, but some are just the right thing to do. Increasingly

government is putting out funding for councils to bid for and we need to be ready to act very quickly to take advantage of a bid process. To this end we have decided to appoint a corporate Director for Climate Change and the Environment. We did extremely well to get £19M from Central Government in the first round of climate change funding (the third highest amount given out) this was because we had a fully agreed strategy in place. With the money we were able to put solar on many of our buildings and schools, start to roll out charging points in our towns for electric cars and change from oil fired heating to air source heat pumps in many buildings as well. Several billion pounds will be available for bids next year and hence the need for a senior member of staff to lead and secure further funding going forward also showing our commitment as a council to the climate and ecological emergency agenda.

I have written previously about our purchase of St Mary's school at Shaftesbury to for a centre of excellence for both children with special educational needs but also as a training hub for staff involved in this area from right across the country. This is now going back to the original name of the house which is Coombe House and is due to open early next year. Already there is considerable interest in the concept, and we are looking to start taking booking soon for courses for visiting staff which will bring in additional income. Meanwhile the children attending should be travelling less far for their education to what is a truly superb site. You may remember that Dorset Council was able to purchase this at short notice and at £9M fully equipped it provides fantastic value for money.

At cabinet last week it was also agreed to fund the expansion of Beecroft Special Educational Needs school near Wimborne by a further 80 places into the former Wimborne first school which is next door so that a sixth form could be provided for 16-25 in the vicinity. There is still work to be done on the site but the saving of doing this will reduce individual post 16 placement currently from an average of £55K per young person per year to around £18.5K at Beecroft. This will be a saving of about £3M per year with still excellent provision when up and running.

We have been Government funding to be one of three councils to do some trial work on the Gigabit rollout. We have been looking at the use of this technology on sea conditions and a buoy prototype is currently afloat just off Lulworth. Not only can it give real time information on wave height and currents, but we have been looking at how these might also give indication on unexpected boat movements and hence intercept illegal immigrant boats. The same team are looking at farming and aquaculture and how using the phone signals we might remotely work in many agricultural settings. We have also set up 5G trials in Lulworth and also a Winfrith at the Battle Lab. This is an amazing but secret project that I was able to visit last week. Basically, many micro or small suppliers to the MOD are encouraged to work with each other to solve problems at the request of the MOD. They take small units on the secure site and are using the fully encrypted secure 5G network to work together. This is a unique setting as they can trial the solutions at Lulworth ranges where there is secure land sea and air space the only one in the country. The land is a Dorset Council site and we still have much more space to develop and support this superb innovation park, which in the well-paid jobs we so badly need.

Just to give an idea of other areas that are coming through the transformation hub we are looking to work with the government on the new rural bus strategy, it's early day yet but I hope to be able to give more information on that early next year. We are considering options to build our own dementia care homes. There is such demand locally that there are insufficient severe dementia places, and we are paying very high prices for placements which are sometimes not even in Dorset. We are looking to do some big changes to the council customer service provision not only opening up in our libraries but reducing all those different phone numbers and email addresses so that people can have their own secure on-line account, don't have to provide all that information each time they contact the council and like Amazon get an acknowledgement when they contact us with a timeline for the response. Many more exciting things just getting going and I will report on them as we get into next year.

Finally, a few good news things to end the year

We had an amazing result in the recent Children's OFSTED.

Overall Effectiveness GOOD

Experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers GOOD

Experience and progress of children who need help GOOD

Impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families OUTSTANDING

The ethos that "we will give every child a brighter future" shines through

You can park for free in Dorset Council Car Parks if you are a volunteer or are getting your Covid booster

The Verification process for planning applications is now up to speed and there is no backlog

All the planning systems from the old district councils have been migrated to one system

The search times are at last reducing. Not because there are less houses being sold but that the 7 new staff are now fully trained and working hard to catch up. Times are down from 61 working days to 48 and I expect there to be a further reduction before Christmas.

So still an amount of work to be done to make the six councils into one unitary but things are changing rapidly now and we are starting to work on what we need to do to make better outcomes for people as we look into the medium term of 3,5- & 8-years' time.

Wishing you all a safe and Happy Christmas

Best wishes Jill

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st March 2022

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

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public and Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 4th January 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 Telephone Box

The Chairman confirmed that painting of the box will resume when the temperature rises, after which the information signs, maps and tourist information notices can be installed. It should be ready well in time for the Jubilee.

4.2 Ash Die-back

CJ reported that the majority of problem trees had now been removed. He is still keeping an eye on a tree by Ansty Cross.

4.3 Ford Signage

The Council agreed to the purchase of two warning signs for the Ford. CL will place the order and use suitable fixing points.

4.4 The Knapp

The Chairman confirmed that the Community Highways Officer (CHO) has advised that 'unsuitable for HGV' signage could only be located on private land, the verges in the Knapp being too narrow. SJ reported that the two residents of the Knapp, although they would prefer there to be no street furniture, were prepared to agree to have signage on their land.

It was noted that £ 780 plus VAT quote from Dorset Highways was a considerable charge, although these could be installed at Dorset Council's expense when funding is available.

JH questioned the suitability of the proposed signage and felt that 'Except for access' may be more appropriate. JH will enquire with the CHO as to whether any more informative signage could be considered.

4.5 Recent Storms

The Chairman noted that recent storms had been very disruptive with Hilton village suffering a 5-day power cut. SJ noted that Dorset Council had made contact on the Tuesday after the weekend and two representatives had visited the village that afternoon and shortly after power had been restored. Although grateful it was felt that there could have been more accurate information from SSE which could have enabled an earlier response from Dorset Council. Local 'WhatsApp' and Facebook groups had raised awareness in Hilton and most

residents had been able to make alternative arrangements. It was suggested that a list of vulnerable people and a register of useful contacts could be considered.

SJ had identified some links concerning compensation claims:

<https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/19941940.claim-compensation-ssen-loss-power/>

https://ssen.custhelp.com/app/answers/answer_view/a_id/1000018

The Parish Council wished to thank the Wallis Family for allowing residents to use their showers during this difficult period.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

JH has submitted a written report prior to the meeting which is produced below. JH mentioned the Capital Leverage Fund and how important this could be local communities. It was felt that the Brewery Hall, for example, may benefit from the scheme.

6. OPEN FORUM:

CL gave notice that the annual litter pick and lunch would be held on 20th March. The Parish Council agreed to provide £ 50 towards costs. A resident noted that there had been a recent increase in the number of beer cans on local roadsides.

JMcG reported that a resident had raised a concern regarding impending changes to the specification for domestic central heating boilers, whereby oil-fired types must be replaced by electric versions. CL noted that there was also a particular problem for landlords who are required to make category 'C' rated carbon efficient improvements by 2026. It was agreed that discussion of this issue should be an agenda item for the May meeting.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

7.1 New Applications

a) P/FUL/2022/00705 - Aller Farm, Aller Lane, Lower Ansty, DT2 7PX

Change of use – proposed siting of 2 holiday cottages & parking

There were no objections to this proposal but the Council agreed that a substantial increase in the number of similar holiday dwellings of this type in the area could constitute over-development and the situation needed to be monitored.

b) P/PABA/2022/00264 – Moonfleet Farm

Erection of two agricultural buildings – legal determination referral did not require the PC to comment. The PC understands that this has been approved.

c) P/HOU/2021/05718 - Newton Cottage Aller Lane

Erect side extension - support comments had been submitted to Dorset Council

7.2 P/FUL/2021/04887 Higher Melcombe Manor

It was noted that this proposal had been referred to Melcombe Horsey PC, and not Hilton PC for comment. The Clerk had complained to Dorset planners concerning this and had not received a reply. The Chairman will consider whether a letter to the Chief Executive of Dorset Council is warranted.

7.3 Hawkes Field

It was noted that there had not been any decision in relation to the recent CLUED application relating to the parking of heavy goods vehicles.

The PC noted correspondence from a resident in relation to the failure by Dorset Council to take enforcement action in relation to the office and barn development.

8. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Chairman noted that the recent Melcombe Horsey planning issue, which had arisen because of the division of Melcombe Bingham between parishes, had highlighted the benefit of moving to a grouped parish structure. In addition, the lack of any representation for Stoke Wake residents was a concern.

JH noted that Group parish structures work well in the Piddle Valley, the Cerne Valley and Cattistock; however communities considering such a change do have some concerns. JH confirmed that there would not be any increase in Parish precept (and thereby Council Tax) arising from the change to a grouped structure.

Each parish involved in the proposed 'Group' must hold its own separate meeting and the decision of one Parish must not be allowed to influence others; the venue for a meeting needs to be carefully considered.

JH has held discussions with the Melcombe Horsey PC Chairman and understands that a Parish meeting will be arranged in either April or May. This will be notified in the Village News for the benefit of the whole community.

It was agreed that the residents of Stoke Wake should be provided with information concerning the proposal and asked to submit expressions of interest in holding a Parish meeting to the Hilton Clerk. It seemed likely that any meeting to discuss the issue could take place in April.

The PC agreed that its own Annual Parish Meeting would take place on Tuesday 5th April at the Brewery Hall when the proposal would be considered.

9. COMMUNITY SANDBAG STORE

Councillors were uncertain as to how a Community Sandbag Store would work, whether this involved the distribution of filled bags or the DIY filling of bags. It was agreed that the Floods officer should be asked to clarify the question.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

10.1 Finance report:

The Clerks report showed that the financial position is still healthy, with the bank balance at 31st January being £ 11,047.76 and the general reserve being £ 8,709.69

10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
07/01/2021	£ 50.00	David Stevens	Mowing War Memorial
12/01/2021	£ 176.00	HMRC	PAYE
14/01/2022	£ 500.00	Hilton PCC	Grant

28/01/2022	£	85.40	A J Ross	Queens Jubilee (bunting)
31/01/2022	£	236.00	David Green	Pay Jan 2022

The Clerks expenses of £ 18 were approved.

10.3 Grant application – Hilton PCC

CL, on behalf of Hilton PCC, thanked the Parish Council for the grant of £ 500 towards electrical work.

SJ noted that the Council's budget makes provision for the award of grants totalling £ 800 which had not been fully spent in the current year and if unspent would just add to reserves.

The PC agreed to award Hilton PCC the balance of the cost of the electrical work, a sum of £ 258.07.

The Chairman noted that this is a community use building and therefore the further grant is wholly appropriate.

11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY:

It was noted that the recently filled potholes along Aller Lane have reappeared due to the use of seemingly poor-quality materials.

Another issue was reported concerning flooding across Aller Lane between Vixens Retreat and Aller Green Farm. RN understands that a land drain may need to be installed to divert water away from the ditch.

These issues will be reported via the CHO.

The PC has received an offer from a resident to replace an oak fence in Duck Street, Hilton, with a bespoke metal version. The PC noted that the proposed fence appears to be rather high and the Clerk will clarify the offer with Dorset Highways before support for the initiative is given.

12. CORRESPONDENCE:

The Clerk had received correspondence which had been circulated:

- 25/01, 01/02, 09/02, 16/02 - Dorset Deserves Better newsletters re the Local Plan for Dorset
- 20/01 – CPRE – comment on the DC Local Plan
- 25/01 – Dorset Council – ‘Bus back better’ consultation
- 11/02 – Green Lanes Environment Movement (Gleam UK) – re HM Govt consultation concerning the use of Byways Open to all Traffic (BOATs) or unsealed unclassified roads (UURs) by motorised vehicles
- 15/2 – a resident – re signage/road surface at The Knapp
- 24/02 – a resident – re oak fence at Duck St Hilton (as above)

CL noted that the issue concerning the redesignation of footpaths as byways-to-all-traffic or unsealed unclassified roads and their subsequent use by motorised vehicles is of general concern to the Parish within the AONB. CL will respond to the consultation on behalf of the PC.

The Clerk noted that the ‘Dorset Deserves Better’ campaign appears to have been rather effective in highlighting county-wide objections to the Dorset Local Plan, and may have influenced the decision of Dorset Council to announce that the Plan in its present form is

not suitable in terms of housing numbers, meeting local housing need or in the specification of construction types. It was noted that the Council is now expressing support for fewer but larger scale developments such as that planned north of Dorchester. Dorset Council is now discussing revisions to the Plan with HM Government ministers.

CL also noted in the Cotswolds for example, all new developments have to be consistent with the local vernacular, in terms of materials used, a condition that does not appear to be applied in Dorset.

13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Changed central heating boiler specifications (PC meeting)

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Annual Parish meeting will be held on 5th April 2022 at the Brewery Hall. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and a Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022 at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:50

Signed(Chairman) Date

Report to the Parish Council January/February 2022

Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward

Dorset Council's budget proposals for next financial year

The budget was approved at Full Council and was not changed from that described in last month's report.

Land searches (When moving House)

The number of working days to respond to land search requests shot up during the pandemic due to a variety of reasons including a massive increase in the number requested and a major shortage of skilled staff who were also being poached from Local government. The response rate is now down to 28 days from 63 last October. It is still some way off the target of 10 days, but we hope to achieve that soon.

Dorset Tourism Award - Moors Valley

Moors Valley in Ashley Heath won the Dorset Tourism Awards Large Visitor Attraction of the Year <https://www.dorsettourismawards.org.uk/winners> This is a fantastic achievement for the team and great recognition for the work Dorset Council have undertaken with regards to large open spaces / visitor provisions throughout the pandemic. One of our daytime cleaners, Christine, also won the Unsung Hero Award for her efforts throughout the pandemic in ensuring our facilities were clean and hygienic. Christine isn't actually employed by Dorset Council and works for Churchills, who are contracted for our cleaning provisions, but was nominated by our ranger team for her exceptional efforts and attitude over the last 2 years.

Vulnerable women – help available

Vulnerable women in Dorset will benefit from a new scheme which supports them to develop new skills and responses that can help them create a more positive future. Dorset Council has

committed to a nationally evaluated programme, called Pause, which works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in their children needing to be removed from their care. The programme aims to give women the opportunity to pause and take control of their lives, breaking a destructive cycle that causes both them and their children deep trauma. There are women in every local authority in the UK with complex and challenging needs to whom many children are born but who are unfortunately subsequently removed into care. Dorset is no different. The mothers are typically disadvantaged and living with social, emotional, environmental and health related challenges. In Dorset, most shockingly, women who are eligible for Pause support are 36 times more likely to die earlier compared to women of the same age. This includes death because of suicide or domestic violence but also preventable or treatable physical illnesses. Children who are removed into care are more likely to experience outcomes significantly poorer than their peers

Maintenance of highway verges

Maintenance of highway verges is an important but costly undertaking for Local Authorities. It is necessary for safety as well as aesthetic reasons. With the squeeze on public finance, we have much less money to satisfy this demand. Dorset Council are taking an innovative ecological approach to managing our verges, reducing soil fertility through the collection of grass cuttings, introducing species of flowering plant which restrict grass growth and ensuring low nutrient soils are used in road construction. The result, slow growing, beautiful wildflower verges which attract and sustain pollinating insects, and lower costs as the need to cut verges is reduced.

When designing a new road scheme, or as part of works to existing roads, we make sure the finishing layer of soil is as low in nutrients as possible - or leave it as bare mineral and add some wildflower seed. The ecosystem established will never require high levels of maintenance. This methodology has been introduced successfully on the Weymouth relief road and on the Blandford bypass with fantastic results where verge cutting is required only twice a year compared to the seven cuts previously carried out. Wildflower coverage has increased significantly along with the associated pollinating insects. Since these pilot studies this method of highway verge maintenance has been rolled out across many of our urban verges. It does take a couple of seasons for the results to start to be seen which can make it difficult for members of the public to accept the change particularly where they are used to numerous cuts happening over the summer months. However, the long-term results are aesthetically pleasing, great for the environment and significantly reduce costs.

Climate Change

Dorset Council is delighted to welcome Steven Ford as our new Corporate Director for Climate and Ecological Sustainability. Steven has over 18 years' experience of working in public policy related fields and joins us from Cornwall Council where he is currently Head of Environmental Growth, Climate Change and Heritage. In this role, he was tasked with delivering their carbon neutral action plan as well as the wider environmental growth and landscape management agenda, working with a multitude of partners.

Steven's primary objective at Dorset Council will be the successful delivery of our vital Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Strategy, ensuring that ecology and sustainability are placed at the center of shaping and influencing the climate debate. He will play a leading role in developing natural solutions to address climate change and ensure our ambitious plans for reducing our carbon footprint are fully developed and kept on track by working closely with councilors', senior officers and services across the entire organisation.

New Government resource to help keep children safe from sexual abuse

All children have a right to be safe from sexual abuse, and we all have a role to play in keeping them safe. It's estimated that one in ten children in England and Wales will experience sexual abuse before they turn sixteen. That is equivalent to three in every classroom. Most children won't tell anyone at the time of their abuse. That's why it's important for everyone to know how to spot the potential signs of child sexual abuse and where to go to go for support if they are concerned. The Government's new Stop Abuse Together website can help you learn to spot the signs and have regular conversations with your child which can help keep them safe and know when it's right to reach out for more support. If you feel something isn't right, then you can call the NSPCC hotline (0808 800 5000). No matter what's happened, there is always someone who will listen to you and take what you say seriously.

A Local Plan that is right for Dorset – Statement from Cllr Spencer Flower, Leader of Dorset Council

Local Plans are a key component of the planning system. They shape how land use and places will change and develop in the future. This is why I have been, and continue to be, in a dialogue with the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and his officials, offering a constructive, bold and ambitious alternative for the way we develop our new Local Plan – one that is right for Dorset. In my dialogue with Michael Gove, I have been arguing that the current national planning framework is not providing councils with the means to promote sustainable development through their Local Plans but is instead about chasing housing targets. I am seeking reform of this framework and proposing that Dorset could be a pilot for a new way of creating Local Plans, based on sustainability and local needs over the next 30 years, that also recognises the ambitions of our Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. We must have a Local Plan in place: without one we face the risk of unmanaged development in Dorset, but it has to be the right plan. Our hard-working and innovative planning officers have ensured the draft Local Plan is the best it can be, but it is constrained by current planning legislation.

As a result, of the unprecedented 9,000 responses our public consultation received, many residents share my view that the draft Local Plan chases housing numbers rather than prioritises local needs. I also believe it is better to have fewer bigger-scale new developments in Dorset which bring in the necessary funding and infrastructure, rather than lots of small developments which put further pressure on already-stretched community resources. I have asked Mr. Gove to consider several radical alternatives:

- allow Dorset to pilot a radically different approach to Local Plan making break the link between the housing land supply numbers and the Duty to Cooperate – i.e., the requirement for Dorset Council to accept unmet housing need from neighboring councils
- allow Dorset an extension of two years until April 2026 to give more time for the new Dorset Local Plan to be developed and approved. During this extended period of plan preparation, Dorset should be protected against speculative housing development by suspending the five-year land supply requirement or by other means necessary
- fully recognise the climate and ecological emergency in the planning system, including new building regulations.

We recognise that this is national policy and may require changes to primary legislation, which is not in our gift locally. Representing you is a privilege that I take extremely seriously, and my approach to the Government recognises both my and Dorset Council's commitment to the needs and aspirations of the residents of Dorset. I am a strong advocate for Dorset and remain committed to lobbying for a better deal for the communities of Dorset. Here is the link to the statement on the council's newsroom: <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2022/01/26/a-local-plan-that-is-right-for-dorset-cllr-spencer-flower-leader-of-dorset-council/>

Capital Leverage Fund - Dorset Council

Dorset Council has recently launched a new grant fund for voluntary and community groups who are looking to secure funding towards the development, improvement or refurbishment of their facilities, spaces, and community buildings. The Capital Leverage Fund will look to provide successful applicants with a grant of up to 20% of their total project costs up to a maximum of £25,000. Not for profit organisations both small and large who meet the funds criteria are welcome to apply. Applicants will need to demonstrate clearly when applying how they plan to secure the remaining project costs and ensure that if awarded a grant that they can secure the remaining funds within two years of any grant offer. Grants will not be released until all funding is in place.

Full details of the fund's priorities, criteria; eligibility and guidance on how to complete the online application form are provided on the Dorset Council webpage. Furthermore, there is also comprehensive information on what questions applicants can expect to be asked when completing their application form along with details of the assessment dates. The Capital Leverage Fund is an 'open access' fund for organisations in the Dorset Council area and applicants can submit their application at any time between 10th January 2022 and early January 2023. There will be three separate assessment dates throughout the year so please ensure you read the guidance fully and understand what supporting information you will be required to provide when applying. Applications will only be accepted on the council's online application form.

The fund is open to a range of different organisations including Cultural themed organisations such as arts, heritage, and accredited museums. Village halls can also apply to the fund to help with capital projects that might include hall repairs, addressing climate change, new build projects, landscaping or improvements to existing facilities including play areas, multi-use games areas and parking. Sports clubs wishing to improve their club facilities can also apply to the fund. For more details on other projects that are eligible click on the link above.

Places of worship (church buildings) are not eligible to apply. However, the panel will consider 'distinct buildings' used for community activities i.e., a community hall but it must be a separate charity or trust and you must be able to demonstrate extensive community use.

We expect interest for this new grant to be very high, so please can you circulate to any local groups you think might be interested. If having read the guidance you still require further information, or wish to discuss your project in more detail before you apply please contact a member of the teams via communities@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk for Voluntary and Community projects (including play) and LeisureWDWP@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk for Cultural projects (arts, accredited museums , heritage, sport and physical activity) and we'll get back to you.

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022

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

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

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Justine McGuinness offered to continue as PC Chairman for a final period of 12 months. This was seconded by Cllr Jaques and unanimously supported by all Cllrs. Cllr McGuinness signed the Chairman's Acceptance of Office
2. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Langham offered to continue as PC Vice Chairman for another 12 months. This was agreed & supported by all Cllrs.
3. **APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO VARIOUS POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

These were agreed as follows –

1. **Trees** – Cllr Jones
2. **Highways** – Cllr Northover
3. **Footpaths** – Cllrs Langham & McGuinness
4. **Planning applications** – Cllrs Jaques & Sotiriadis
5. **Defibrillator** - Cllr Sotiriadis
6. **Ancient Monuments** – Cllr Walbridge

In addition, non-councillor Adrian Simmonds was appointed as Floods Officer.

4. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT, CERTIFICATE of EXEMPTION, ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT and STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS** - were all approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting of Hilton Parish held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022

1. CHAIRMANS REPORT:

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his work during the year and reported that the year had featured noteworthy progress in several respects despite the Covid pandemic and had successfully worked towards the restoration a degree of normal life after two very difficult years.

The re-purposing of the telephone box as a tourist Information Centre had been a great achievement and this will be formally opened during the Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend on the 2nd June at 4 p.m. The Chairman thanked Marc for all his work in relation to this.

Cllr Jones was thanked for recording and reporting incidences of ash-die back throughout the Parish.

Cllr Northover and Cllr Jaques were thanked for dealing with Highways and Footpaths issues during the year.

The Chairman also thanked Cllr Jaques for assisting in the preparation of the exhibition for the Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend and thanked all involved in organising events.

The Chairman noted that the Council now had rigour in financial accountability with a formal grant policy in place and was much more business-like in its approach to awarding a grants, for example to All Saints Church, Hilton. The Chairman thanked Cllr Langham for her work in connection with the Church.

The Chairman noted that the PC had dealt with planning applications very effectively and noted that the Parish Council was still an important part of Local Government, being between two parliamentary constituencies, and always holding contested elections.

2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR:

The Chairman noted that digital communications will be become and increasing part of everyday life and the PC will play its part in this.

The PC will continue to deal with issues such as ash die-back, highways concerns, footpaths issues and planning applications.

The replacement of the bench seat at Hilton will be a project for the year as will the possible installation of a new bench in the Ansty/Melcombe Bingham area.

MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022

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

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

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 1st March 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 Telephone Box – The work on the conversion of the telephone box is virtually complete.

The Chairman has ordered a map which will be laminated before being installed, and as noted above, it will be opened as a Tourist Information Centre at the Jubilee weekend.

Advertising for local businesses will reviewed by JMCG before being promoted on the Information board.

4.2 Litter pick – The PC agreed to reimburse CL £ 75 towards the true cost of the litter pick

4.3 Signage at the Knapp – JH had discussed wording of the signage with the Highways Officer and is has been agreed that this should be restricted to 'Unsuitable for HGV's'.

The PC agreed that Dorset Council should be asked to provide the signs.

4.4 Ash Die back – CJ asked CL & RN to keep an eye on several trees at roadside on their land.

4.5 Signage at the Ford – CL brought the new corex signs to the meeting which all agreed were very good. These will be put up shortly.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

Cllr Jill Haynes had conducted a tour of her parishes with Council Leader Spencer Flower, and has explained the particular issues concerning Hilton and its neighbouring parishes.

Dorset Councils 'Transformation' programme had produced savings of £ 7.6 million in the first year, involving some 19 projects, and the Council is on track to deliver total savings of £ 27 million by 2024.

The Council has reviewed what the actual costs of providing services are and as a consequence has allocated a further £ 10 million to the 'Place' function (Highways, Footpaths & the Environment).

The Council will be holding an 'Away Day' at the 'Battle Lab' at Winfrith for the Senior Leadership Team to develop ideas of where the authority wants to be in 5/10 years' time.

JH acknowledged that some planning decisions in the Poole basin area have been held up because of concerns relating to phosphorous in the water supply. The Environment Agency and DEFRA have been making farm visits to test supplies although the delay really only concerns large scale developments of new properties, rather than extensions or alterations.

JH was asked about DC's preparedness for nuclear war and advised that whilst there was an 'emergency hub' of partners there had not been any specific instructions as such. It had been observed that there had been a lot of military activity in the local area. It was noted that a number of Ukrainian refugees had arrived, were now living locally and had been welcomed by the community.

In relation to planning policy, JH agreed to take up the decision of the Planning Policy Team not notify Hilton PC of proposed developments in neighbouring parishes which may significantly impact on Hilton Parish in terms of transport and possible flooding issues.

6. OPEN FORUM:

There were no issues raised.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

7.1 New Applications

There were no new applications.

7.2 Application ref P/HOU/2022/01967 - 5 Hillside Hilton Blandford Forum DT11 0DB
Erect single storey side extension. Remove existing timber lean to outbuilding

SJ had spoken to near neighbours and there were no objections. Suitable comments had been posted on the planning portal before the deadline of 2nd May 2022.

7.3 Hawkes Field

There were no further updates in relation to the outstanding CLUED application relating to the parking of heavy goods vehicles.

8. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Chairman noted that the Hilton Parish meeting had supported the recommendation to form a Grouped Parish Council; the Melcombe Horsey Parish meeting had voted against the proposal. The parish meeting of Stoke Wake had not been well attended and the recommendation was only supported by two votes to one, with two abstentions; those present did not feel as though they could make a decision for the rest of the community.

The Parish Council agreed by a majority that there was insufficient support to justify taking the proposal forward. The Clerk will make suitable comments to Dorset Council.

9. COMMUNITY SANDBAG STORE

The Chairman noted the suggestion by the Floods Officer that the PC considers setting up a sandbag store. The Chairman had taken local soundings and had received comments that these were very difficult to manage and would be largely impractical given the geographical nature of Hilton Parish. The PC agreed that actions should be limited to asking residents to understand the particular risks in their own neighbourhood and prepare accordingly.

10. H. M. THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE WEEKEND UPDATE

The Chairman noted that total costs for printing and other items would now be circa £ 500. The PC agreed to set aside funding from the reserves for this purpose, to include bunting and printing/lamination costs.

10.1 Exhibition stand funding request – a request for funding assistance in relation the exhibition boards had been received but the PC felt that at £ 500 to £ 700 these were too expensive; SJ had located a second-hand exhibition board which may suitable for around £ 150.

10.2 Flower Festival donation request – The PC agreed to provide a £ 100 donation towards the flower festival to be held at All Saints Church.

11. PARISH BENCH SEATS

11.1 Hilton - Queens Golden Jubilee bench seat – replacement

The Chairman noted that the existing seat in Hilton had disintegrated, and a replacement should be obtained. It was agreed that would ideally be or oak or larch, or possible another hardwood. CJ agreed to research suitable examples.

11.2 Melcombe Bingham – new seat

The Chairman proposed that the PC considers obtaining a new seat for either the Village Hall, the Green at Melcombe Bingham or for near the phone box. It was agreed that suitable examples and quotes should be obtained for the next meeting.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

12.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was very positive, with both the precept and VAT repayment having been received, the bank balance at 30th April stood at £ 12,514.07 and the general reserve was £ 10,176.00.

10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
02/03/2022	£ 18.00	David Green	Expenses
02/03/2022	£ 258.07	Hilton PCC	Balance of Grant
03/03/2022	£ 89.40	Flags & Bunting	Platinum Jubilee
04/03/2022	£ 70.00	The Old Brewery Hall	Hall Hire 5/4 (inc deposit)
16/03/2022	£ 60.00	The Old Brewery Hall	Hall Hire 20/4 (inc deposit)
28/03/2022	£ 45.00	SPD UK Ltd	Cork tiles for Tel Box
30/03/2022	£ 284.00	David Green	March 2022 pay
08/04/2022	£ 181.60	HMRC (PAYE)	PAYE
20/04/2022	£ 230.40	Justine McGuinness (re Wix)	Reimburse Wix cost
25/04/2022	£ 78.00	Dorset Council	Salt dumpy bag (from 2021)
29/04/2022	£ 43.20	4D Signs	Ford signage

12.2 Clerk's expenses of £ 36.46 were approved.

13. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

Cllr Northover noted the excellent work of Dorset Council in dealing with the road flooding issue at Aller Lane. A culvert had been dug under the road, a ditch deepened and the road re-surfaced which has alleviated the problem.

14. CORRESPONDENCE:

Date	From	Subject	Notes
03/03	John Burridge (Dorset Council)	Oak fence at Hilton Duck St culvert.	Estate type fencing only approved. Clerk will write to Charles Tibbey
07/03	Dorset Deserves Better Campaign	Newsletter 5	Noted
11/03	Dorset Deserves Better Campaign	Tipping Points for Change event 28/3	Past event notification
14/03	Carol Byrom	Litter picking along Long Lane proposal	It was felt that this road was largely covered by existing litterpickers
15/03	Dick Rowe	Tree trunks left at Brightsmead	Reported to Sovereign HA and subsequently removed
18/03	Dorset Deserves Better Campaign	Letter to Spencer Flower	Campaign pressure letter - Noted
18/03	Corinne Holbrook	Replacement road sign - Brightsmead	Added to works list
19/04	Flood Wessex	SSEN Resilient Community Fund Grants	Noted, but not discussed
22/04	Dorset Deserves Better Campaign	Newsletter 6	Noted
29/04	David Walsh - Dorset Planning	Planning update meeting 27 th May	Event notification. JMcG may attend this if available

15. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

Bench seat proposals

16. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 5th July 2022 in the Fox's Den room at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:25

Signed(Chairman) Date

Report to the Parish Council April 2022

Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward

Budget

April saw the final figures for the 21/22 budget and I am pleased to report that despite some significant challenges with Covid costs it was on target. We also reviewed the savings made in year one of our transformation programme and there was some slippage here. £7.1M savings were made against a target of £10M but much of this is being rolled into this year. In other words, the savings will be made but not as quickly as we had hoped. These will be rolled into this year's programme which is anticipating £6.5M plus the delayed savings from last year. All by making changes to the way we work and some investment to save the council is on track to have made £27M savings by 2024. This is desperately needed for us to balance the books. Dorset Council receives no Government grant, if we were treated in the same way as other shire counties our Grant would be about £6M, or as an urban authority somewhere closer to £50M. The formula for funding does not take into account the costs of our rurality or the fact that we have the highest population of over 85's in the UK. As a council we are petitioning our MP's and the Government to get us a fairer deal.

Additional funding for high needs block

We have finally managed to get an agreement with the Dept. of Education to put some funding into the education of special needs children in Dorset. This school's budget has historically run as a deficit a bit like a credit card debt. In five years' time the rules will change and the council will become responsible for the debt and I'm sure you know that we cannot have a deficit budget. The estimated debt at that time was some £68M. We have been negotiating for a little while to resolve this and have turned down initial offers but have now agreed on £47M over the five years and we will cover the rest under our savings programme. This is a great result, and we appear to have done much better than many other councils, the first tranche of £17 M was paid this week.

Dorset Integrated Care System

This is to go live 1st July. The newly appointed CE is Patricia Miller. Patricia was until recently the CE of Dorset County Hospital and it's great to have someone with both passion and local knowledge to be at the helm. The Clinical Commissioning Group will be disbanded, and all future decisions about health services will be made by the ICS board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. There is an independent Chair who is Jenni Douglas-Todd and just appointed as the new chief medical officer Dr Paul Johnson. Hopefully, this will bring Health and Adult Social Care much closer together and working together to achieve health outcomes for people in Dorset. Further info on ourdorset.org.uk

Pilot Project

A pilot project in Weymouth and Portland looking to improve lives for children and families in one of our most deprived areas. Called safeguarding families together. Particular focus is on families where there are parents with substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health

issues. This will be done through multi-disciplinary professionals that are able wrap around support for the whole family.

Harbour works

Harbour dredging work due to start in May and June in both West Bay and Lyme Regis this may cause some congestion in these areas.

Last full council

There was a disruption at the last full council when Climate Change protesters entered the Chamber and super glued their hands to the central table. They continued to shout and disrupt the meeting which was adjourned, and the chamber cleared while the police were called to remove the protestors. The meeting resumed in public in another part of county hall and the days business was concluded. Unfortunately, we now find the Extinction Rebellion are calling others to join in a big protest outside county Hall for the councils AGM next week. This will mean addition security will be needed and unfortunately that is at a cost to the tax payer.

As further information on this issue Dorset Council is in the top 10 performing councils in the UK on Climate issues. The UK accounts for less than 1% of climate change emissions and so in my view protest should be about other countries with poor records and few legislative restrictions in place.

Agreement on access to Dorset council land for digital infrastructure

Agreement to allow communications companies to access Dorset Council land to get broad band connections to hard-to-reach place shas been agreed. A normal way-leave is charged for access to the land but in the case of providing connectivity to rural premises it has been agreed to provide that at a peppercorn lease. Hopefully this will encourage some of the providers to work out solutions for those difficult to access properties

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th July 2022

PRESENT: Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice Chairman) Shulla Jaques (SJ) Rodney Northover (RN) Marion Walbridge (MW); (JH), Clive Jones (CJ) George Sotiriadis (GS)

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

Members of the Public – One

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Jill Haynes sent apologies
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings held on the 3rd May 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 Jubilee week-end report – The Chairman reported that the weekend at gone very well and proposed that Cllr Jaques and Caroline Soer should be thanked with a round of applause for their work on the amazing exhibition at the Village Hall. The Chairman has thanked the sewing group for all their work on the bunting with a box of chocolates. The Jubilee ‘facts’ trail had been very well received and the refurbished phone box looked very good.

The Chairman gave special thanks to the Dorchester Town Crier, Alistair Chisholm, who had visited the village on the Thursday of the holiday weekend and provided, without charge, some very entertaining announcements.

The Chairman also thanked Alison Musgrave and all at Hilton Church.

4.2 Signage at the Knapp – SJ reported that a resident on whose land one of the signs would be placed wished to discuss the siting of the sign with Dorset Highways. The Clerk suggested that the resident speaks directly to the Community Highways Officer.

4.3 Rural Bus Services - CJ noted that the villages are now bypassed by the X12 Blandford to Dorchester service and there were many in the community, including newly arrived Ukrainians, who would be prepared to pay and use a service. CJ suggested that a 3 times weekly service calling at Winterbourne Stickland, Milton Abbas, Hilton, Ansty, Melcombe Bingham and other local villages could be introduced, perhaps using a smaller 12-16 vehicle.

It was agreed to approach the bus companies directly with this suggestion.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

Cllr Haynes had submitted a written report which was taken as read.

6. OPEN FORUM:

There were no issues raised.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

7.1 Applications Update/New applications:

1) P/HOU/2022/02321 Land opposite 17 Church Row, Hilton, DT11 0DQ - Erect garage & store

GS & SJ had visited the site and spoken to neighbours. Concerns had been raised in relation to the possible use of the garage for commercial purposes, with possibly 4 vans and several cars using the building in connection with the electrical business based at the property. Suitable comments had been returned via the planning portal.

2) P/LBC/2022/03279 & P/HOU/2022/03469 Ramblers Cottage, Melcombe Bingham, DT2 7PE - Erect front porch, (demolish existing).

The PC had supported both related applications for a necessary improvement and comments had been returned via the planning portal

3) P/HOU/2022/01586 Rose Cottage Aller Lane, Lower Ansty , DT2 7PX - Erect two storey extensions (demolish existing)

The applicant attended the meeting and explained the proposals: the main house is some 200-300 years old but with a 1950's extension which is rotting; the extension is rather incongruous and has an unusable loft space The footprint of the proposed new additions is about the same as the existing building but the shape slightly different being more linear and energy efficient

It was noted that a near neighbour has commented in relation to the general size of the proposed alterations.

CJ suggested that a treatment plant may be more suitable than a septic tank and CL felt that more flint could be used in the front side of the proposed extension.

The Council agreed to support the proposal with comments.

7.2 Hawkes Field

It was noted that the Certificate of Lawful Use application to use land and buildings for parking of heavy goods vehicles and vans at Hawkes Field had been refused by Dorset planners.

8. PARISH BENCH SEATS

The Council agreed to buy two 1.8 metre teak bench seats for Hilton & Melcombe Bingham. The order will be placed when the Village Hall committee have agreed to the proposal concerning Melcombe Bingham.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

9.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 30th June standing at £ 10,295.54 and the general reserve at £ 8,124.21.

9.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Amount	Payee	Reason
03/05/2022	£ 284.00	David Green	April 2022 pay
04/05/2022	£ 36.46	David Green	Expenses

05/05/2022	£	75.00	Catherine Langham	Litterpick contribution
13/05/2022	£	241.00	Zurich Insurance	Insurance
16/05/2022	£	100.00	Hilton & Ansty Church	Flowers donation
17/05/2022	£	178.95	DAPTC	Subscriptions
18/05/2022	£	30.00	Old Brewery Hall -	Coffee Morning donation
30/05/2022	£	196.00	David Green	May 2022 pay (adjusted)
07/06/2022	£	59.78	Justine McGuiness	Jubilee expenses
08/06/2022	£	200.09	Safelincs	Replacement defib battery
21/06/2022	£	300.00	Midsummer Music Fest	Jubilee w/e Marquee hire
23/06/2022	£	106.23	Caroline Soer	Jubilee exhibition costs
24/06/2022	£	180.92	Shulla Jaques	Jubilee exhibition costs
30/06/2022	£	240.10	David Green	June 2022 pay

9.3 Hilton Church clock donation – the Council agreed to make a donation of £ 50 towards maintaining the church clock, providing that evidence of maintenance costs is provided.

9.4 Clerk's expenses of £ 9.00 were approved.

10. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

RN reported that there was a lot of white lining on the roads but pot holes had not yet been filled. RN reported that the grass around the war memorial seat has been cut twice this year.

It was noted that a step is missing leading to the footpath near Brewery Farm and that there is a stile in poor condition on footpath s30/10. These will be reported to the Dorset Rangers.

The Chairman had reported a bad odour in several areas in Melcombe Bingham to both the Environment Agency and Environmental Health.

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Notes</u>
12/05/2022	WO2 Alex Miller (C Coy 6 Rifles)	Rifles High Tea - 1 July 2022	Community engagement event – JMcG had attended – related to promoting volunteering for the Territorial Army and for adult instructors
16/05/2022	John Burrige (Dorset Council)	Deterioration of oak fence at Hilton Duck St culvert.	Confirmation that DC will be working with Charles Tibbey on the new fence
07/06/2022	Climate Action Network	Notes and presentation from May CEE support meeting	Philip Colfox (Symondsburry) comments of interest re local food networks
10/06/2022	Dorset Deserves Better	Letter to Cllr Flower re BCP 'unmet need'	Campaign pressure letter
14/06/2022	Mike Garrity - Head of Dorset planning	Slides from 27th May presentation	David Walsh of DC to be invited to the next PC meeting

12. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

David Walsh, Dorset Council - to discuss local planning policy and issues.

13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 6th September 2022 in the Fox's Den room at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:50

Signed(Chairman) Date

Report to the Parish Council June 2022

Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward

There are many people locally struggling with the cost of living at the moment and I am afraid things will get worse as we go into the autumn and winter. Dorset Council now has a dedicated page on its website which can offer help and advice. For many people this situation is new to them, and they have not had to ask for help before, but it is vital that they get help as soon as possible and don't wait until their situation is desperate. The page covers the following areas:

- Money – debt – benefits available
- Access to food
- Housing
- Support for families with children
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Energy – water – Phones – broadband costs
- Employment.

If you know and one who is starting to struggle, please encourage them to get help as soon as possible.

At cabinet last week we had a report on the first quarter of the budget. The budget this year is £312.4M which comes from the following sources

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Rural services delivery grant | £ 2.5M |
| 2. New Homes Bonus | £ 1.7M |
| 3. Business Rates | £ 44.3M |
| 4. Council tax | £263.9M |

As of the first quarter we are on target to come in on budget but there are a number of issues that make this year a particular challenge. Firstly, we have inflation running nationally at about 9% currently and forecast to rise higher, although many of our costs are fixed in the year it will certainly be problem going forward. There is also the sky-high price of fuel at the moment and this we do buy in advance, but it is still a large increase in our costs. This covers a big area including home school transport, adults to day centres, our highways operations and or waste services. Shortage of staff is another difficult problem. There is a national labour shortage both in private and public sector, increasingly we are struggling to recruit at the pay point offered. I'm sure you will have seen in the press about pay demands across the board but we are on a fixed income so it will be difficult to

manage. There is also the risk of uncollected council tax and business rates as the economic situation hits individuals and businesses alike. Currently, this is quite good compared to some other areas running in the 96% area.

There is a TEC lounge open in the Greenwood Centre, Maiden Castle Road, Dorchester Sponsored by Dorset Council. This is an actual living area which can give a realistic feel of what tech support can be like for those looking for safe but independent living. It's well worth a visit for anyone trying to help elderly parents or with a partner experiencing memory or mobility issues.

In June there has been a recruitment drive for people to join the Shared Lives scheme. This scheme helps people over 16 with additional needs. Sometimes this might be someone supporting them during the day a bit like an adult child minder, for others it is offering respite care while their normal carers have a break and for some it is offering an adult foster home. Many have found this an extremely rewarding experience so that it enriches the lives of both sides involved. There is payment for this provision similar to foster carers. If you are interested look up Shared Lives on the council website.

Finally, this month watch out for the increasing risk to cyber security. On Friday evening last week fraudsters spoofed a Dorset Council email, and it was sent to several thousand email addresses purporting to come from the council. Attached to the email was an invoice and of course if anyone opened the invoice then the fraudsters were able to access secure information on that computer. Staff worked late that night and the council systems were not compromised. It is something we practice but we do need everyone to be aware how much this kind of attack is increasing.

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th September 2022

PRESENT: Cllrs Justine McGuinness (JMcG) (Chairman), Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice Chairman), Shulla Jaques (SJ), Rodney Northover (RN), Marion Walbridge (MW), Clive Jones (CJ) George Sotiriadis (GS), Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH), Dorset Councillor David Walsh (DH), Dewlish Parish Councillor Mike Few (MF) and Cheselbourne Parish Council Chairman Andrew Taylor (AT).

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

Members of the Public – Two

- 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 5th July 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** CL re Hawkes Field Farm
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman provided these updates:

4.1 Jubilee benches – have been installed at Hilton and at The Old Brewery Hall (OBH), Ansty. The benches have been well received by all and the bench at Hilton looks very spectacular. A group Council photograph has been taken at the OBH bench.

4.2 Cost of Living crisis – information produced by Dorset Council has been posted to notice boards and the website.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

JH had submitted a written report prior to the meeting and also reported that Dorset has received £ 6 million in funding for the Superfast broadband to enable 7,000 hard to reach homes to be connected; 10% of this funding will be allocated to businesses.

JH met Prime Minister Boris Johnson on his flying visit to see the Wessex Internet cable laying machinery in action in North Dorset.

6. LOCAL BUS SERVICE

CJ and MW attended a meeting with the Damory bus company. (Excelsior Coaches Ltd) with a few to exploring the possibility of re-introducing a local bus service for the villages linking Blandford and Dorchester. It is clear that with rising fuel prices and the cost of running electric vehicles many residents would be unable to access the local towns. In addition, many Ukrainian families have moved into the area and cannot easily get about.

The bus company have advised that they would consider introducing a service if it can be run economically or with grant funding but need to be assured of likely passenger numbers to be certain that it will be viable. CJ noted that in Aberdeen there is a service that charges £ 1 per journey, although locally £ 2 would be more realistic. CJ noted that the bus company only has large 52-seater buses. Damory had stated at the meeting that their collision record using larger buses was better in the country lanes than on the A and B classified roads.

CJ has received 22 expressions of potential user interest to date but requires more support from those definitely committed to using a service. AT and MF agreed they could promote the idea within their parishes. AT noted that any service has to meet 3 criteria: Affordability, Reliability and Convenience. There was a concern that any service need to run regularly to avoid the possibility of being 'stranded' in a location. MF noted that in Dewlish that volunteers had operated an informal arrangement linking Puddletown and Milbourne St Andrew when the local service ceased few years ago, but this had been suspended during Covid-19 although there have been requests for a re-introduction of the service.

JH advised a German company had taken over Damory and it appeared as though services were in fact being rationalised which has implications for school bus services. Dorset Council had failed in a bid to receive funding under the Bus Back Better scheme and was challenging this decision. Dorset Council do have some of their own vehicles so there may be a possibility of these being used at non-peak periods, although they would be looking at 9 seaters because of the licencing position, rather than anything larger. JH noted that a 'Whats App' based service in Buckland Newton had worked relatively well, particularly for young people.

It was agreed that 'hail and ride' would be better than operating to fixed bus stops. AT and MF agreed to provide CJ's contact details via their Facebook pages. The Clerk has also contacted Winterbourne Stickland PC regarding the initiative.

7. OPEN FORUM

There were no issues raised.

8. PLANNING FORUM – David Walsh (DW), Dorset Council

DW reported:

- the process of amalgamating 6 Dorset Councils planning departments into a single unitary authority had been very arduous and had involved the physical transfer of some 4.3 million documents.
- a review of enforcement services has been ordered; between April and August 2022 381 new cases had been reported. These are investigated similarly to police run cases and take time to complete which is not fully appreciated by all. Decisions can be appealed but no longer to the European Court of Human Rights. The review of services will seek to categorise cases into high/medium and low priority and the timescale for enforcement of domestic cases will be extended from 4 years to 10 under the Levelling Up legislation
- Gillingham has seen the successful bid for £ 7.3 million in infrastructure funding in connection with the South side relief project. His focus is on building communities rather than houses.
- the Dorset Local Plan is under review and will be the key to all future decision making and some decisions will be made in early October but there is a concern regarding general costs within the construction industry.
- there is a problem with what concepts such as 'less than substantial harm' actually mean when planning applications are being considered; the concept of 'sustainability' is a major consideration in deciding where any new developments can be located.

The Chairman noted that a particular problem locally is the split of Melcombe Bingham between two parishes and that fact that the PC is not always advised of decisions in a neighbouring parish which may impact on Hilton.

CL raised the issue of local holiday homes and glamping applications and the impact of these on local infrastructure, which is not really taken into account. DW suggested that a Neighbourhood Plan involving several villages may be considered.

A resident raised the issue of the absence of recent enforcement activity in relation to Hawkes Field farm and had gained the impression that officers were overwhelmed with cases to such an extent that cases were neglected. DW explained that cases were prioritised and where there was a risk to Health & Safety, Heritage assist, Conservation or Noise, these took priority.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

9.1 Hawkes Field

The Chairman noted that the Parish Council had submitted comments in relation to the appeal, the outcome of which is awaited.

9.2 New Applications:

1) P/HOU/2022/04149 -2 Hillside Hilton Dorset DT11 ODB

Install 10 No. solar PV panels on the SW front roof elevation.

The applicant attended the meeting and explained the reasons for installing panels as being reduce his carbon footprint to safeguard future generations, though he wasn't sure if an application was necessary or not. The Clerk noted that 'no objection' comments had been returned in August.

2) P/HOU/2022/04871- Diamond Cottage The Knapp Hilton DT11

3) P/LBC/2022/04872 - Diamond Cottage The Knapp Hilton DT11

Removal of fireplace internal brickwork (fitted in the 1980's) to expose original recess, to be re pointed in lime mortar. Extension of chimney stack by 10-12 courses using locally sourced bricks and traditional mortar. Refitting of chimney pot. Connection of traditional stove in fireplace recess

There were no objections to these related applications for necessary work.

4) P/HOU/2022/04984 - Knapp Cottage The Knapp Hilton Dorset DT11 ODF

Increase the capacity for car parking to two standard-sized car parking spaces. No objection comments had been returned before the meeting.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

10.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 31st August standing at £ 8,210.45 and the general reserve at £ 6,039.12, major expenditures being the new bench seats.

10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>
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07/07/2022	£ 9.00	David Green	July Expenses
12/07/2022	£ 172.40	HMRC	PAYE
19/07/2022	£ 625.50	Jati Ltd (bench seat - OBH)	Bench seat
19/07/2022	£ 677.99	Jati Ltd (bench seat - Hilton)	Bench seat
01/08/2022	£ 240.10	David Green	July 2022 pay
08/08/2022	£ 120.00	The Fox Inn	Room hire (annual)
30/08/2022	£ 240.10	David Green	August 2022 pay

10.3 Hilton Church clock donation – the PCC had explained that the clock is not maintained annually but has a periodic repair bill of several hundred pounds every few years. It was agreed the Council agreed to make a donation of £ 50 subject to written confirmation of this arrangement.

10.4 Hilton Defibrillator – a request had been received to fund the cost of a new battery for the village defibrillator. It was agreed that £ 200 would be granted.

10.5 Clerks Expenses - £ 34.76 was approved.

11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

Knapp's signage – SJ reported that the residents of Monmouth and Diamond cottages had agreed to have signs situated on their properties but had requested site meetings with the Community Highways officer.

Hartfoot Close drains – JMcG reported that the foul smell reported around the Close has been investigated by camera, jetted through and no leakages were found. The situation is much improved.

Signposting – CL reported that some rights of way were not well signposted. RN agreed to look at this.

Stile near Brewery Farm – this is causing difficulty for dog access. The Chairman will discuss the situation with the landowners.

12. CORRESPONDENCE:

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Subject</u>
13/07/2022	Climate and Ecological Emergency Support Meeting	Notes from June meeting
13/07/2022	Dorset Deserves Better	Questions for Dorset Council 14/07/2022
18/07/2022	Dorset Council	Tour of Britain cycle Race information
09/08/2022	Dorset Highways	Smell of sewage - Hartfoot Lane
11/08/2022	Weldmar Hospicecare	Introduction to services - van visit to parish
15/08/2022	Climate and Ecological Emergency	July meeting notes
22/08/2022	DAPTC	Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) meetings
26/08/2022	Dorset Highways	Road sign at the Knapp's
27/08/2022	Philip Clive	Thanks to the PC re the bench seat

13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Budget proposals
- Local Bus Services initiative update.

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st November 2022 in the Fox's Den room 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 August 2022

Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council

Government Funding for EV Charging points

Dorset has been announced as one of just nine areas in England to receive funding from a new government scheme which aims to improve electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

The funding comes from the new Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure pilot scheme, through which, Dorset Council has managed to secure £2.7million to increase the number of EV charge points in the council area. The council will be working closely with local communities, landowners and businesses to identify the best locations to install the new charge points. The council has prioritised getting chargers into the county's main towns to date. This next round of work will focus more on increasing provision in Dorset's more rural areas – something that will be key if Dorset hopes to meet the government target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2050.

On top of a planned 175 fast chargers, this pilot will also include the installation of a small number of rapid or ultra-rapid (50 kW to 150 kW DC) chargers on or near main roads to support en route charging. Some charge points will be located at popular tourist locations where both residents and visitors can access them. The new chargers will benefit a range of drivers, primarily targeting Dorset residents without access to off-street parking while also meeting the charging demands of those travelling into Dorset.

Road resurfacing works

Over the last 14 weeks, 457,000m² of road has been surface dressed – where bitumen is sprayed on the surface and finished with a thin layer of new stone chippings. This method prolongs the life of roads by providing a waterproof seal, to prevent potholes forming from water damage, and improves skid resistance. Around 123,000m² of main road was treated as part of the work – with these 'premium' sites also having a lock-in treatment over the top of the chippings to further protect the new surface.

Capital Leverage Fund

There are still two weeks left to apply for round two of the grants so be quick!. The next assessment panel is taking place next month so applications for this round need to be completed **no later than 12 September 2022**.

The Capital Leverage Fund can help fund a range of projects, including village hall or community building enhancements, renovations, maintenance, or new build projects, including car parks, play areas, multi-use games areas, theatres, community sports clubs, sports pitches and landscaping.

We also welcome applications for projects that helps to address climate change themes, new public art, or heritage capital projects including accredited museums.: We hope to see many applications for these grants. There are grants available for up to £25,000 depending on the project. We know that the grants can significantly boost capital projects that can demonstrate how they support their local communities and help to make Dorset a great place to live, work and visit.

You can apply for a capital grant of between £1,000 and £25,000, to fund up to 20% of your total project costs. Projects need to meet at least one of the Dorset Council Priorities and the Cultural Strategy Priorities. Applications can only be accepted via our online application form. To apply for a grant, you can download the application guidance, support materials and an application form from the website. Applications are considered three times a year and the final round three of the grants will be early next year.

Working From Home

Some people have been asking me about the amount of our staff who work remotely. On 6 October 2020, Cabinet approved the implementation of the Dorset Workplace. As described in the Cabinet paper the Dorset Workplace established a change from providing space for 70% of office-based staff to work from an office down to providing space for 40% of office-based staff to work from an office and therefore 60% of staff would be working from home or another remote location. This has permitted, as expected, leases for office buildings around Dorchester to be surrendered including South Walks House being repurposed and leased to the NHS for a period of 20 years, and to reduce the cost of the office estate as anticipated. The reduction in the number of commutes to work also assisted our climate change ambitions.

We currently have a total headcount of 4633 staff which works out as 3782 FTE. Many of our workers are counted as mobile and do not work from a specific location – waste disposal staff and highways workers for example, and these total over 1000 people. Other front-line staff do have a fixed base and they have not changed their work practice at all and are still working in our public facing roles – like those in our leisure centres, libraries, harbours, country parks or even at the crematorium. These number just under 700 roles. This leaves us with the staff whose work is desk based, who are hybrid working and can and do work from home or other locations. However, it is often that they also work from a local office or library as well as from home which we all call now ‘remote working’. Most of these staff are in the office about two days a week. Among these are some who are not office based but do come in from time to time for team meetings and to complete reports - our social workers, environmental health and highways supervisors for example. This is exactly what we were looking for in the Dorset Workplace paper of 2020. These roles total 2947. Of our total headcount some 1500 staff are not online as their roles do not need them to work digitally. In addition to these numbers, we, like many organisations, are struggling to recruit at the moment and have in excess of 150 vacant posts. Recruitment is a national issue for councils and often workers leave to get a higher paid post in the NHS or private sector.

We are currently working at the figures predicted in 2020 with approximately 40% of those who are counted as hybrid workers in the office at any one time.

HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st November 2022

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

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 6th September 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** CL re Hawkes Field Farm, Church Clock, Church facilities improvement plan
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman provided these updates:

4.1 Church Clock – a request for additional funding for the Church clock had been received from the PCC, though without any additional information relating to actual maintenance costs being provided. It was agreed that funding at present should be restricted to £ 50 pending sight of evidence of future maintenance costs.

CL noted that the Church is the only Hilton meeting place and the PC has in the past agreed to fund floodlighting which is of benefit to the wider community; it is planned to put in facilities including a loo and servery to enable village events to take place; these would require a water supply and drainage. A working party is being set up which would be making a request for grant funding at some stage. CL confirmed that Hilton Church is required to be pay around £ 16k Salisbury diocese to fund the cost of a vicar.

4.2 Ash Die back – It had been reported to CJ that a large branch has fallen on the road to Hilton and as a consequence he had looked around the area for other instances of problem trees. Some have been noted and will be reported to the two landowners concerned.

It was agreed that property owners should be reminded that Ash Die back poses a real risk to the public where collapsing trees overhang highways and other publicly accessible places, that any trees that showing signs of deterioration are dealt with professionally and that adequate insurance cover is in place.

5. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT:

JH had submitted a written report in relation to Children's services prior to the meeting (attached below) and noted that a review of Adult Social Services would be produced shortly.

Dorset Council is currently around £ 7 million off budget, the situation has been complicated by inflation and the need to fund a 6% pay rise. Total underfunding is around £ 20 million which will increase next year and the Council is considering what additional savings can be made in terms of management of buildings particularly in the care sector.

CL noted that a new cycle track had been installed between Martinstown and Maiden Castle at a cost of £ 1 million. JH advised that this was ring fenced funding, as was the

£ 19 million for climate change initiatives.

6. PUBLIC SESSION

CJ reported that there was a flooding issue at the bridge at Ansty, with the culvert being overgrown and blocked. RN advised that he had unblocked this twice but it requires extensive work. This will be reported to Dorset Highways.

MW noted that three vehicles had recently become stuck in the ford despite the new signage. It was agreed that the onus is on drivers to take responsibility for their own actions.

CL reported that the incidence of fly tipping at Ice Drove had only been dealt with by Dorset Council after being reported to JH.

7. LOCAL BUS SERVICE

CJ reported that he now has 36 expressions of support for the reintroduction of a bus service from residents in Ansty, Hilton, Melcombe Bingham, Dewlish and Cheselbourne but he is waiting until there at least 60 supporters before making a further approach to Damory; it was noted that several parishioners had yet to formally confirm their interest. If the required level of support is forthcoming, CJ will ask Damory to consider operating a trial service possibly on Wareham/Dorchester market days. The Clerk will re-ask Winterbourne Stickland PC to confirm if there is any local support for the initiative and it was agreed that there should be a further push to promote the proposal.

The Chairman suggested that the PC should participate in the 'Next Door' local information network site. GS will have a look at this.

8. CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS

It was agreed that the PC would contribute to the cost of trees at Hilton and Melcombe Bingham and this will be discussed with those responsible in both villages. .

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES

9.1 Hawkes Field

CL noted that the appeal in relation to the new house had been heard in Dorchester on 11th October and that a site visit had been arranged; the appeal Chairman had advised that a decision would be communicated in a 'a few days', although to date no decision has been notified. CL noted that evidence to the appeal included a financial report from 2018 which was considered to be still extant.

9.2 New Applications:

There were no new applications to consider.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

10.1 Finance report:

The Clerk's report showed that the financial position was good, the bank balance at 31st October standing at £ 10,124.89 and the general reserve at £ 7,953.56 there being no major expenditures since the last meeting except a grant in respect of the purchase of a defibrillator battery for Hilton.

10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:

Date	Reason	Payee	Reason
07/09/2022	£ 34.76	David Green	Expenses
28/09/2022	£ 240.10	David Green	Sept 2022 pay
12/10/2022	£ 172.60	HMRC (PAYE)	PAYE Q2 2022-2023
28/10/2022	£ 240.10	David Green	Oct 2022 pay
28/10/2022	£ 204.00	CJH Hunter	Hilton Defib battery reimburse

10.3 Budget proposal

The Clerk had prepared a budget for 2023-2024 proposing a precept of £ 5,700, an increase of £ 88.00 from the current year. The proposed precept would mean an increase of £ 0.38 pence to the average Band D Council Tax. There were inflationary pressures to consider but these had been kept to a minimum. The Clerk noted that the parish precept is amongst the lowest in Dorset.

SJ questioned whether any increase in precept was necessary at all given the level of reserves. The Clerk noted though that reserves may be healthy any grant request could deplete these and the increase was very small. After discussion, the PC unanimously agreed to the budget proposal as presented. This will be confirmed at the January 2023 meeting.

11. HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS

It was reported that the bridge railings may require a repaint or replacing, they were last repainted 3 years ago; an inspection will be made by CJ.

The Chairman noted that some speed signs have become very overgrown and need cutting back.

It was noted that a damaged stile had been repaired (CJ).

12. CORRESPONDENCE:

Date	From	Subject
07/09/2022	Carol Eastment - Melcombe Horsey PC	Local Bus Services – support for the initiative
16/09/2022	Dorset Council	Tree Preservation order - Aller Lane
16/09/2022	Planning Inspectorate	Planning appeal - Hawkes Field Farm - new house
20/09/2022	DAPTC	Dorset Council Planning Engagement Session
26/09/2022	Dorset AONB	Community Tree Scheme
04/10/2022	Dorset Deserves Better	Local Plan delay
07/10/2022	Climate and Ecological ESM	September meeting notes
12/10/2022	Dorset Council	Local Plan update
14/10/2022	Dorset Volunteer Centre	Christmas Meals volunteering
16/10/2022	Adrian Simmonds	Fly tipping report - Ice Drove
20/10/2022	Dorset Highways	Temporary Rd closure -Conigar Knap
24/10/2022	Dorset Council	Presentation pack for Town and Parish Councils

The Chairman also reported that a letter had been received from the owners of the Fox Inn concerning noise complaints.

13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:

- Budget confirmation
- Bridge condition update
- Ash Die-Back update
- Local Bus Services update

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 in the Fox's Den room at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:08

Signed(Chairman) Date

Report to the Parish Council September 2022
Cllr Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys ward, Dorset Council

Dear Clerks

I haven't done a single area report for a while, and I thought that such good progress has been made in Children's services that I would dedicate my whole report to that this month. With a net budget of £74.4M this area is extremely difficult to control the expenditure as we have little control of the children who come into the system but, quite rightly, a statutory duty to look after their welfare.

Best wishes , Jill

Children's services October 22

- We continue our commitment to early help and support for families and focus on delivery of our Children, Young People and Families Plan
- We offered almost 21,000 Holiday Activity & Food Programme places this summer across 77 venues in Dorset Council area through our Summer in Dorset programme and almost 30,000 swimming places funded for children 0-16 for the 6 weeks summer holiday period across 10 swimming pools - increasing water confidence, personal social and emotional development and physical activity at the same time
- Children's services colleagues, working in partnership with others including schools/early years settings, Citizens' Advice in Dorset and Age UK have supported people through another round of the DWP funded Household Support Fund.
 - £130,000 paid to 650 households with children
 - £11,000 paid to Dorset Care Leavers
 - £1.1m paid to support over 11,000 pre-school and school children with meals during the school holidays
 - £750k to pensioners – with more being allocated
 - £260k to working age people receiving benefits
- With support from Public Health Dorset we have:
 - Funded almost 5,500 early education hours for children preparing to go to school this September including almost 1,000 hours for children with additional needs and, or a disability – helping them with a strong September start

- Awarded the contract to BCHA to deliver [PAUSE](#) – a programme to support women who have had multiple children removed from their care which we know will offer them much better support but also prevent the likelihood of this happening in the future
- Delivered a '[healthy movers](#)' project in East Dorset which has proven not only to help with physical activity but to improve wellbeing and speech and language too
- We have supported young people in many different ways:
 - to take part in local democracy through our MYP elections, youth council and in having their say in how services are run through Takeover Challenge, Corporate Parenting Board, participation in recruitment
 - Distributing over £100k in grants to local youth organisation to create activities and opportunities
- Through the creation of the Pineapple project – working with the local community in Weymouth to help girls feel safer in their communities.
- We have secured funding for children's services through some successful national bids to help us to do more locally:
 - £875k over the next 2 years to support the development of Family Hubs
 -
- **Birth to settled adulthood progressing well.** The service re-design element is progressing with plans to identify improvements for preparation for adulthood and a seamless transition for our children and young people.

Despite conditions for families and communities having been very difficult over recent years, and children in care populations increasing significantly elsewhere in the country, we have managed our children in care population numbers well, supporting more families to stay together where this is safe.

Our data tells us that the children in care population in Dorset has increased by 6 between April 2021 and August 2022, from 449 children to 455. However, when we discount the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) who are children in care, for whom we have no control or ability to limit (until we reach our minimum Government defined quota of 67), we can see that the number of children in care has reduced, as follows:

Total children in care population – April 2021 = 449
 Total children in care population - August 2022 = 455

BUT

Children in care population minus UASC – April 2021 = 440
 Children in care population minus UASC – August 2022 = 417

We have had an increase in UASC between April 2021 and August 2022 of 29 children, from 9 to 38. If our UASC numbers had remained at 9 as they were in April 2021 our total care population now would be 426, a reduction of 23 children from the 449 that were in care in April 2021.

We have succeeded in increasing the number and percentage of children in care for whom we have secured permanence, as follows:

- Permanence fostering – At the end of August 2022, 55 % of young people who have a permanence plan for permanence fostering have achieved this compared to 39% at the same time last year.
- Special Guardianship Orders - 17% (12) of children who left care in the six months prior to August in 2022 were made subject to Special Guardianship Orders compared to 14% (9) in the six months prior to August 2021
- Adoption – 17% (12) of children who left care in the six months prior to August in 2022 were adopted compared to 11% (7) in the six months prior to August 2021

- Return Home to Parents - The number of children who left care to return to birth family in the six months to August 2022 was 20. This compares to 13 in the six months to August 2021.

Achieving a permanent placement ensures children have a secure stable and loving family to support through childhood and beyond, to create a sense of security, continuity, commitment identity and belonging. We have continued to focus our attention in supporting our children to achieve permanence. Permanence can be achieved in a number of ways:

- We will be launching our first Mockingbird Fostering Constellation on 12th November.
- Ofsted visited 45 Dorchester Road children's home to undertake the registration visit recently and we are expecting a positive outcome of registration within the next ten days. Official launch was 12th October 2022.
- The number of Good and Outstanding schools in Dorset has risen from 75% in 2020 to 80% today. We continue with our ambition to ensure every child is learning in a Good or Outstanding school in Dorset.