

# **PUNCKNOWLE & SWYRE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a Meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30p.m.**

## **MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING**

Councillors G. Fry (Chairman), J Marsh (Vice Chairman), S Bowsher, M Buckland, P Bullen, C Marsh, B Pye, E Sinclair.

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

S. Rose (Parish Clerk), 6 members of the public, Dorset Councillor M Roberts.

### **1 PUBLIC TIME**

The Council is asked to note that Public Time is not part of the formal meeting of the Council and minutes cannot be produced. (Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 s 1 extended by the LGA Act 1972 s 100.)

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies from PCSO Alex Bishop.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record. Proposed B Pye, Seconded E Sinclair. AIF.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record. Proposed M Buckland. Seconded P Pye. AIF.

### **5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None.

### **6 UPDATE FROM DORSET COUNCIL**

A budget shortfall for this year will be met from reserves. It is anticipated that Council Tax on second homes will be approved in the next financial year. A policy decision to stop emptying road gullies except on demand has been reversed.

### **7 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Although there is still one council seat unfilled, this will not be advertised in the new year due to the impending election which will take place at the start of May.

The Chair reported that Dorset Council had removed the boulders from in front of the five-bar gate to the playing field without consultation with the Parish Council. These have been used for around 20 years to prevent people from parking there, something which is now occurring. It was felt parking cars outside the gate will obscure the vision of children leaving the Playing Field if they come out onto the road. It was agreed that the Chair will pursue this matter towards a resolution with Dorset Council.

The two defibrillators which are held under a Memorandum of Understanding with the South West Ambulance Trust are due for renewal early in the new year. The Chairman will investigate what is needed.

## **8 CLERK'S REPORT**

An extension to the DAPTC email service is available at an extra cost.

DAPTC are hosting a Councillors' networking event, possibly in March. More information to follow.

There has been no progress on adding the existing clerk to the bank mandate to view the bank statements online. It was **RESOLVED** that the bank mandate should be amended to enable Councillor S Bowsher to authorise payments. Proposed M Buckland, seconded PG Fry, AIF.

## **9 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Since the last Parish Council meeting the Steering Group met on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. The Finance Working Group, and the Engagement Working Group have also met. The full report of the Community Engagement Drop-In Sessions is nearly complete and will go on the website along with other information. The sessions had a reasonable turnout despite wet weather, and the report is a substantial piece of work. There is now an active network of about 86 people who have signed up to the mailing list. Main issues that came from this exercise reflect earlier discussions, namely that residents like the mix of housing in villages, and there is concern for the environment, and sustaining the character and feel of the villages. The next Steering Group meeting will take place on Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, when feedback will be examined to develop a Vision, before being checked with community. This exercise may also identify issues that fall outside remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Finance Working Group are working on submitting a proposal for modest funding from Locality to cover some initial consultancy costs and other project costs for the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> of March. They are also working towards the appointment of a consultant.

The focus for the next few months will be the draft Vision and Objectives of the plan, and how these will translate ultimately into policies. There will be a meeting with members of the Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in January to hear about their experience. Engagement with the business community is also being planned for early in the new year, and parish councillors were asked to review the current listing of local businesses in case they can offer any further information.

## **10 REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS**

### **i) Neighbourhood Watch and Community Police Report**

An incident of harassing behaviour at Puncknowle has been reported to the Police. Thefts from vehicles parked at Cogden have occurred.

### **ii) Allotments**

Councillor Buckland said he had cut back the hedges on the northern side and got rid of the trimmings.

### **iii) Footpaths**

Recent rainfall levels have made the footpaths difficult to use.

### **iv) Playing Field Committee**

A committee meeting was held on 28 November. They plan to have a working party in the Spring. This will be advertised on the gate with a temporary sign.

**v) Transport**

The issue of whether a bus stop can be granted at Vurlands Farm is believed to rest with Dorset Council.

**vi) Village Hall**

Nothing to report.

**vii) Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP)**

The DAPTC attended the last meeting which focussed upon the need to recruit candidates for the next election.

**viii) DAPTC**

Nothing to report.

**ix) Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington Website**

The working group led by Councillor Bullen have held 3 meetings with the website manager, representatives of community groups, the village hall committee, and have provided the Parish Council with a proposed new draft website structure for their comment. The working group has looked at other websites and wishes to increase the number of photographs and expand upon the narratives, with an emphasis on community use. The plans for improvements will involve a substantial amount of work for the website manager, and she received a vote of thanks from the members. Members agreed in principle to support the cost of extra work by the website manager for this one-off project; although costs are not quantified at this stage, it was felt that they could be met from reserves. It was **RESOLVED** that the improvements to the website should proceed. Proposed J Marsh, seconded P G Fry, AIF.

**x) Emergency Planning**

Recent high levels of rainfall led to some flooding issues in neighbouring areas. Residents are reminded to report blocked gullies and road issues to Dorset Council via their website.

**11 PLANNING**

**Applications**

No planning applications were included on the agenda for consideration.

**Decisions**

None

**Other Planning Issues**

After the agenda, an application for a property in Hoopers Lane has come through. This will be circulated by the Chair and Clerk, after consultation with the members a response will be submitted under the Scheme of Delegation.

**12 HIGHWAYS**

J Marsh will report to Highways that the gully at the bottom of Donkey Lane is blocked. S Bowsher agreed to report a blocked ditch at the end of Bull Lane which has led to flooding across the road. P Bullen will report a broken man-hole cover in Puncknowle.

**13 CORRESPONDENCE**

The clerk was invited to flag any important correspondence.

**14 FINANCE**

**1) It was RESOLVED that the items listed below be authorised for payment:**

Mr S Rose, clerk's salary for December	£342.60
Mr S Rose, clerk's salary for January	£342.60
Mr S Rose, expenses.	
Travel PSPC Meeting November 29 miles@£0.45=£13.05	
Travel PSPC Meeting December 29 miles @£0.45= £13.05	
Website meeting November 29 miles @ £0.45= £13.05	
Microsoft 365 one month subscription £5.99	£45.14
Website management D Sinclair December	£30.00
Website management D Sinclair January	£30.00
Village Hall Hire invoice 2023/26 N Plan meetings	£102.00
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>£892.34</b>

Proposed: Buckland, seconded F Marsh. AIF.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk's salary will be paid at the end of the month, instead of the beginning of the following the month. Proposed: Buckland, seconded F Marsh. AIF.

- 2) Bank Reconciliation and spending to date** - To be updated.
- 3) Grant Applications** - S Bowsher will arrange advertisements for Section 137 Grant Applications with a deadline of 4<sup>th</sup> February.
- 4) Grass Cutting Tender**  
Tenders are needed for the Grass Cutting Contract which expires on 31 March. S Bowsher to organise advertisements to go out with a response deadline of 4 February.
- 5) 2024/2025 Budget Finalisation**  
The budget of £11797 was agreed which would use £64 from reserves, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Precept would increase by 6.5% to £11,724.  
Proposed C Marsh, seconded Bullen, AIF.

**15 INFORMATION ITEMS**

The Village Hall Christmas Tea Party welcomes residents on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30pm. This is a free community event and will be followed by a carol service at the church.

**16 PUBLIC TIME**

- 17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** The next meeting at the village hall will be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30 pm.  
The meeting ended at 21.00pm.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....