

Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting held in the Village Hall at Puncknowle on 4 February 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

Councillor P G Fry (Chairman), Councillor J Marsh (Vice Chairman), Councillors S Bowsher, M Buckland, P Bullen, C Marsh, and S Main. Dorset Councillor Sally Holland.

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor S Bowsher acting as clerk and B Bowsher, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and five members of the public.

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 1060 s 1 extended by the LGA Act 1972 s100).

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor K Strawbridge, PCSO Alex Bishop and Footpaths Officer D Bird.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 3 December 2024 be agreed and signed as a correct record. Proposed M Buckland, seconded P Bullen. All those who had been present at the meeting in favour.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

Item 9 on the agenda was brought forward to this point.

6 UPDATE FROM DORSET COUNCIL

Devolution update

BCP have voted to join the devolution application with Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire. Whether our bid has been successful is still outstanding. We are hoping that we are making the first tranche, being early adopters then hopefully we will have potential for access to more funding.

Budget for 2025/26

Dorset Council has set out proposals for a **£416 million** budget in 2025/26 – up £39 million on last year. Among the allocations are £14.5 million for adult social care and housing, £1.5 million for children's services and £4 million for transport, highways and planning services. This is to be approved at the 11th of February's Full Council Meeting, so hopefully there will be more information after this. Cost saving measures will need to be put in place to ensure that there is a balanced budget, and this will link into the transformation plan.

Dorset wins a Global Award for supporting Innovation

DC has gained international recognition for a ground-breaking system which supports innovators looking to work in the county. It has been named a Startup Ecosystem Rising Star 2024 by the International Chamber of Commerce and Mind the Bridge in the Visionary Public Procurement category. This was in relation to the online platform the council introduced - Digital Innovation Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) which aims to reduce the barriers to smaller companies looking to innovate in the county. The online platform allows companies of all sizes to register and bid for opportunities to work with the council.

7 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

8 CLERK'S REPORT

- 8.1 Clerk Vacancy: Interviews are ongoing.
- 8.2 Staff Sickness and Absence Policy will be considered at the next meeting.
- 8.3 Resolve to fill Casual Vacancy on Parish Council.
Following his continued absence Councillor Sinclair is no longer a member of the Council. It was **RESOLVED** that the casual vacancy will be notified to Dorset Council and advertised.
Proposed J Marsh, seconded P Bullen, AIF.
- 8.4 Councillor Training: Councillors were urged to take up training courses, especially regarding representing the community as consultees for planning applications. The clerk offered to provide a list of current planning policies to members.
- 8.5 Parish Online digital mapping service provides a lot of useful information, and it was **RESOLVED** that the parish council would continue the annual subscription to this service once the current subscription expires next year. Proposed J Marsh, seconded C Marsh, AIF.
- 8.6 The IT Software will be upgraded in February. It was agreed that the Projector Screen needs to be replaced with a model more able to cope with the scale of the presentations.
- 8.7 Review of Banking Arrangements. Councillor P Bullen should shortly be added to the mandate.
- 8.8 The current Internal Control Systems for Finance were discussed, and it was agreed that they are effective and adequate.
- 8.9 Dorset Council are still looking into a revised estimate of costs for a Bus Stop at Vurlands Farm.
- 8.10 Dorset Council Climate Emergency survey. Responses were agreed and Councillor Bullen accepted the role of representative.
- 8.11 It was agreed that the DAPTC Call for comments on MHCLG consultation on standards and conduct will be completed by Councillors C March, P Bullen and S Bowsher at a separate meeting.

9 TRAFFIC SPEED ON THE COAST ROAD

A member of the Speed Watch Team (SWT) in Swyre had been on touch with Dorset Councillor Sally Holland, our MP and the Parish Council prior to the meeting and had agreed to present their thoughts at this meeting.

The SWT have been recording traffic speed twice a month at varying times of day for well over a year, and the results provide evidence of a problem; the Swyre readings are regularly among the top three across the 80 plus Speed Watch Teams in the County. The SWT also described the speed of the traffic as being of concern to pedestrians.

Neighbouring villages are looking at lowering their speed limit to 20mph, and the feeling from the SWT is that motorists need more inducement to slow down in Swyre, possibly as part of an integral plan, although a 20mph limit may not resolve the problem. There followed some discussion about alternative ways to slow the traffic, and about consulting with the community. It was agreed that the next step would be to invite a member of Dorset Council to talk to the Council about possible options, and an invitation will be sent.

The council members agreed unanimously that it will support attempts to try and address the issue and expressed thanks to the members of the Speed Watch Team for the valuable work they do. Finally, residents are requested to record any near miss accidents on the Dorset Council website.

The meeting returned to item 6 on the agenda at this point.

10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Neighbourhood Plan has continued to be very busy with Steering Group (SG) meetings on 18th December that included a joint discussion with PC of first outputs from the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) and 23rd January.

Funding

Following the Parish Council meeting in December, a revised request for a budget provision of £670 had been put to the PC via the Clerk on 20th December and It was **RESOLVED** that the Council grants this request. Proposed C March, seconded P G Fry, AIF. This provision would be met from reserves.

Housing Needs Survey Feedback

There was a public meeting at the Village Hall on 15th January where Jacqui Cuff from Dorset Community Action presented the findings from the HNS undertaken in November to residents and neighbouring parish representatives. The notes of this meeting are available on the website, but to note the key points:

- There was a good turnout at this meeting of about 50 people. This included Dorset Councillor, Sally Holland, and representatives from Burton Bradstock Community Land Trust and the Chair of Chesil Bank grouped parish council.
- There was a pleasing response rate of nominally 54% to the survey (134vresponses across 247 households).
- There was clear support for the principle of affordable housing, but further work was needed to assess the demand.
- The report of the survey will be issued soon.

Evidence Base, Plan Preparation and Community Survey

There's been significant activity over the last two months to prepare Eight Topic Papers. These address all the main issues within the Plan and detail the evidence in the context of the Dorset Local Plan. These are now being reviewed by our consultant, and the SG has scheduled two reviews with the consultant to go through these drafts in mid-February and early March.

One important output of these Papers is to help shape the Community Survey. This is being planned for March and will endeavour to provide community feedback to help "fill the holes" where evidence is still required to support potential policies. The Topic Papers are also important in helping to define where further information is needed from Dorset Council.

Linked with the Community Survey, the SG also hope to conduct a Youth Survey and is planning an event with some of our youngsters to get their views and help in designing the Survey.

11 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

i. Neighbourhood Watch and Community Police Report

There was nothing reported by our PCSO from our three villages, but suspicious activity around outbuildings has been reported further afield, and an incident is under investigation. Residents are asked to be vigilant and to make sure that their property and cars are kept locked. Within the last few days, the safe in Puncknowle church has been broken into and money was stolen.

ii. Allotments

Nothing to report

iii. Footpaths

Thanks were expressed to Dave Bird who had cleared a fallen tree next to the footpath alongside the playing field, and Councillor Buckland for removing the debris.

In response to a complaint sent to Dorset Council, Dave Bird organised a group of volunteers to clear the Bull Lane Bridleway on 1st February. There were 9 volunteers in total and the Parish Council expressed thanks to all those who contributed.

- iv. **Playing Field Committee**
Most issues raised in the latest safety report have been dealt with. Councillor Buckland is ready to treat the moss on the path and matting when the weather warms up. Repairs to the seat will be carried out when the weather improves. A working party will be organised in the Spring.
- v. **Transport**
Transport was the topic of the BLAP meeting last month – see below.
- vi. **Village Hall**
The Village Hall Committee have asked for another Parish Council member to replace Eonne Sinclair on their committee. Councillor Buckland offered to do so.
- vii. **Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP)**
Councillors Fry and Bullen attended the meeting with a focus on transport. This highlighted the lack of funding for rural transport against urban transport. Furthermore, funding for transport in Dorset is believed to be around 30% of the funding provided to Devon. The Dorset Council Community Bus Plus Bus Service therefore remains of vital importance to our residents.
- viii. **DAPTC**
The January Western Area meeting was postponed.
- ix. **Puncknowle, Swyre & West Bexington Web Site**
The parish council website is in the process of being updated.
- x. **Emergency Planning**
Councillor Fry continues to monitor the defibrillators. The battery has been replaced for the defibrillator sited at the Manor Hotel, West Bexington.

12 PLANNING Applications on which the Parish Council is being consulted: Please note that in Planning Matters the Council acts as consultee of the Principal Authority, the Principal Authority being the deciding body.

12.1

APPLICATIONS

1.1 Application No P/HOU/2024/07136

St Giles Beach Road West Bexington DT2 9DG

Erect front porch and rear extension with associated internal remodelling and external landscaping works.

Supported under the Scheme of Delegation:

“The design is suitable for the location and does not intrude neighbouring properties”.

1.2 Application P/NMA/2024/07504

Granary Lodge Beach Road West Bexington DT2 9DF

Non-material amendment - update approved plans to reflect revised deck area to planning permission P/HOU/2024/06032 (Remove Conservatory, erect single storey side extension, erect covered seating area, erect a veranda).

For information only.

1.3 Application P/LBC/2024/07505

Old Rectory, Rectory Lane Puncknowle DT2 9BW

Replace windows to main house south elevation.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council support the application considering the Conservation Officer's comments and conditions in their letter of 6 August 2024.

Proposed J Marsh, seconded C March, AIF

1.4 Application P/LBC/2024/07439

Old Rectory, Rectory Lane Puncknowle DT2 9BW

Repair wall, reroof and provide new internal floor and main door.



It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council support the application considering the Conservation Officer's comments and conditions in their letter of 6 August 2024.
Proposed J Marsh, seconded C March, AIF

1.5 Application P/HOU/2025/00054

Aston Beach Road West Bexington DT2 9DF

Erect front and rear two storey extensions. Erect garden outbuilding.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council supports this application with the proviso that the two skylights above the kitchen are non-opening and are fitted with obscure glass. Proposed J Marsh, seconded C March, four in favour, one abstained.

1.6 Application P/FUL/2025/00325

Land to the East of Chalet 14 Beach Road West Bexington DT2 9DG

Erection of a gate and gate posts along with associated groundworks.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council objects to this application which we think is contrary to Planning Policy ENV1. The applicant's authority to install the gate and pay for it is unclear, and the impact upon the wider environment is not adequately evidenced. Proposed PG Fry, seconded C March, AIF.

12.2

DECISIONS

Application No P/HOU/2024/07136

St Giles Beach Road West Bexington DT2 9DG

Erect front porch and rear extension with associated internal remodelling and external landscaping works.

Granted 28.01.2025

Application No P/HOU/2024/05644

Old Rectory, Rectory Lane Puncknowle DT2 9BW

Remove existing tennis court and enclosure. Erect ancillary building with gym and wellness spaces with associated landscaping works. Install solar panels and air source heat pump.

Granted 13.12.2024

Application No P/LBC/2024/06126

Old Rectory, Rectory Lane Puncknowle DT2 9BW

Alter the exterior of the kitchen extension and replace snug window

Granted 04.12.2024

12.3

OTHER PLANNING ISSUES

There was some discussion about the Holiday units at Swyre Retreat and the clerk was asked to draft a letter.

13 GRANTS

Awaiting more quotes from the Village Hall Committee regarding their grant request.

14 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Nothing to report.

15 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

The schedule of correspondence received during December and January had been sent to the members.
No matters arising.



16 FINANCE

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

Mrs Dianne Sinclair (Website management)	£30.00
Dorset Council Election Recharges Invoice 1801441784	£50.00
Chesil Beach Garden Services Invoice 4671	£102.00
Footprints Invoice 12742 Flyers for HNS Results Meeting	£39.00
K Hussey Playing Field Inspection 4 th quarter 2024	£40.00
Dev in Transition Inv 6 Neighbourhood Plan Consultancy	£362.32
Village Hall Rental Jun-Dec 24 Invoice 2025/52 Neighbourhood Plan	£219.00
Village Hall Rental Jan-Dec 24 Invoice 2025/53 Parish Council	£111.00
Reimburse P G Fry – The Manor Defib Battery (Med UK Invoiced to PC)	£323.40

Total Payments	£1,276.72
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Proposed P Bullen seconded M Buckland, AIF.

2 A Bank Reconciliation and spending to date against budget had been circulated to the members.

17 INFORMATION ITEMS

The next Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting will be held on 27th February in the Village Hall at 7pm.

18 PUBLIC TIME

See item 1 above.

19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the Council's next meeting will take place on Tuesday 4th March 2025 commencing at 7.30p.m. at the Village Hall in Puncknowle

The Meeting Ended at 9.38pm

There followed a closed meeting of the Napper Charity.

Signed



Dated

4-3-2025.