

CHESELBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8th JANUARY 2024 AT
CHESELBOURNE VILLAGE HALL, COMMENCING 7PM

Present: Cllrs C Byrom, D Walsh, C Hampton, G Waters, N Searle, R Sewill, C Hampton

Chair: Cllr A Taylor

Clerk: Mrs A Crocker

Also present: 5 members of the public, including David Sharman

1. Public participation

David Sharman, Liberal Democrat candidate for Dorset Council Chalk Valleys ward in the coming Dorset Council elections.

Village Hall playing field – It was stated that, although the field floods when the stream breaches the bank near Brook Green and therefore may be inconvenient for the school, it may have alleviated flooding further downstream. When the field was leased to the village hall, there was a stipulation that there would be no buildings or structures put on it that may interfere with the stream as this was a natural water meadow and is used to take excessive water.

It was felt that communication between the village hall committee/trustees and local residents appears to be lacking. The neighbours would like to have been told what was happening with the village hall as they were unaware of the proposed work and the fact that a container has been put on site, seemingly without prior warning. However, it was noted that there is direct communication between the school and the Parish Council, and the Head Teacher is in constant touch with members. More will be done to ensure residents are aware of any such works.

2. To receive apologies for absence

23.85 Apologies have been received from Dorset Cllr Jill Haynes (prior meeting), PCSO Alison Donnison

3. Declaration of Interests

23.86 No interests were declared and no requests for dispensations had been received.

4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2023

23.87 A copy of the minutes had been issued to all members. Cllr Hampton proposed them to be a true and accurate representation of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Waters and agreed unanimously. The Chair signed the minutes in the presence of the meeting.

5. Matters arising for report only

23.88 The grit bins are now all in place and have been filled.

School Streets initiative – This had been highlighted at the November meeting and involved the potential closure of roads during school drop off and pick up. Cllr Taylor had followed this up with Chris Perry, Headteacher of Cheselbourne School, and reported that Dorset Council have looked at Cheselbourne and determined that it would not be possible to block roads. The village is not a priority where this scheme is concerned. Cllr Taylor informed members that nothing has been heard back from Cllr Bryan regarding his suggestion of double yellow lines outside the school.

6. Dorset Councillor’s Report

23.89 A copy of the latest report had been issued with the agenda. No comments were made.

7. PCSO’s Report

23.90 A copy of the latest report had been issued with the agenda. There was nothing to report with regard to Cheselbourne.

8. Parish Councillors’ Reports

23.91 Cllr Waters reported that there has been significant rainfall over the last month resulting in a number of flood alerts and warnings. These were reported to the village via the village WhatsApp site. There appear to be divided opinions in the village about the village hall playing field flooding and concern was raised at the time. The Environment Agency (EA) were invited to attend the site with the Chair, Cllr Waters and Cllr Searle and it was noted that water courses of the size of the one in the village would come under the Local Authority, not the EA. Any work carried out would have to be done with the consent of the landowner and the Local Authority, in discussion with the village hall. The Head Teacher is relatively relaxed about the playing field being flooded at the moment. However, should this flooding continue into March, April or May, this may change as the area is needed for school activities. The situation will be monitored.

Cllr Searle reported that the Community Speed Watch (CSW) team held one event in December but, subsequently, bad weather has prevented any further CSW sessions. There is still a lot of hunt activity around the area, but nothing has been reported to Police in respect of incidents in the village. Resilience Plans – At present, the only update may be around the Flood Plan. If anyone feels anything needs to be updated please contact Cllr Searle. The next litter pick is scheduled for the 27th January. If anyone wishes to volunteer, they will be most welcome - 10am outside the Rivers Arms. Electrical Vehicle chargers – The application forms have been submitted to the Rivers Arms. Another two sites may be considered, and these will be consulted upon in due course. The book exchange is working well and looks tidy. The 20mph initiative – Cllr Taylor reported that the speed surveys were carried out at the end of November. He subsequently spoke to Tony Burden of Dorset Council who reported that the results will be available shortly. Cllr Haynes has confirmed her full support for the initiative to both Cllr Taylor and Tony Burden, Dorset Council Road Safety Manager.

Cllr Byrom – CAG – The verge alongside bus shelter – the wind keeps lifting the fleece regardless of what is used to fasten it down. It may be time to remove the fleece.

Cllr Hampton – Brook Green footpath. No further information has been received from Dorset Council and there seems to have been no progress in the last six months. Cllr

Sewill reported that there is a possibility of asking Council a question in order to escalate the situation and he will look into this.

ACTION: CLLR SEWILL

Cllr Walsh attended the DAPTC AGM on the 18th November and a copy of draft minutes can be found in the correspondence file. The two key motions were to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant and to agree to DAPTC becoming a limited company. Individual town and parish councils can sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant if they wish. This will be put on the agenda for March. The second motion referred to the transition of DAPTC from constituted membership to a company limited by guarantee. It was hoped this could be completed by 1st April 2024 but this is a very tight deadline. Further consultation is needed, and details will be sent out early this year.

9. Police, Traffic and Roads

23.92 To receive a general report

Nothing to report.

23.93 To review the 20mph initiative from Dorset Council

This has already been covered under Item 23.91.

10. To consider planning applications

23.94 P/FUL/2023/05932 Barn south of Rosehill Lodge, Streetway Lane
Change of use & conversion of existing redundant agricultural building to class C3 residential use

This application had been reviewed by email and supported.

P/FUL/2023/05974 Northfield Farm, Cheselbourne
Change of use of land for stationing 4 shepherd's huts & 1 communal forest shelter

A site meeting was held on the 19th December and the application was supported.

11. To receive an update on PlusBus

23.95 Cllrs Taylor and Byrom attended a meeting before Christmas with representatives from neighbouring parish councils. It was noted that, between the start of the bus service on the 14th September and the end of November a total of 109 trips had been made, with an average of 9 passengers on each trip. 57 people had registered for the service. It is anticipated that each of the five parishes would need to contribute £500 once the existing grant expires, in order for the service to continue.

Cllr Searle noted that the service does not appear to be well supported by the village as only three people from Cheselbourne have registered. However, it is being well supported as a whole and we should continue to support it. If we pull out, there is a possibility that the service will begin to corrode.

Cllr Sewill observed that the service will need to build up some resilience for future years.

It has been agreed that some of the larger supermarkets in Dorchester and Blandford will be approached on the basis that the service is taking customers to them and, perhaps, they would be willing to make a donation towards maintaining the service. To make a meaningful difference, significant funding will be needed. There are various grants available from various other sources and these are being looked into. It was suggested that we support the initiative for a year and then review the situation.

11. Finance

23.96 To note the nationally agreed salary increase of £1/hour for the Clerk, backdated to 1st April 2023

Duly noted.

23.97 To agree the payment of accounts

The following payments had been requested:

Hugo Fox	January 2024 web hosting	DDR	11.99
HMRC	PAYE November & December 2023	BACS034	81.60
A Crocker	November/December 2023 salary	BACS035	490.38

The total amount requested is £583.97.

Cllr Hampton proposed the payments are made. This was seconded by Cllr Searle and agreed unanimously.

23.98 To agree the budget for the year 2024-2025, set the Precept and review the reserves held

A draft proposal had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting.

The Clerk's salary is increased by 3%, IT increase by £80 to £300 to take into account the Hugo Fox monthly fees. Office expenses had been added at a cost of £150. Grass cutting is increased by £50 and £50 had been added for Election costs. All other costs remain the same or have been reduced. The result is an increase of £327 to £5,818.00.

Cllr Hampton proposed that the precept of £5818 is accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Waters and agreed unanimously. The Clerk will submit the request.

ACTION: CLERK

23.99 To review the reserves held

The ear marked reserves currently consist of £720.90 for the Climate Action Group and £13,079.90 for the Play Park. There is a further £4,627.22 held in the general reserve.

It was felt that any contribution to PlusBus should be taken from the general reserve. The figure of up to £500 was suggested and this would be earmarked from the reserve pending the need arising. Another set of figures for the PlusBus usage will be available in March. Cllr Sewill proposed that we support the initiative up to a maximum of £500 and the money should be taken from the general reserve. This was seconded by Cllr Hampton and agreed unanimously. This will be shown as an ear marked reserve from

April 2024.

23.100 To agree the appointment of an auditor for the year 2024/25

The current auditor is Paula Harding of Barker Fox Ltd. Cllr Hampton proposed we remain with them for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Waters and agreed unanimously. The Clerk will contact the auditor accordingly.

ACTION: CLERK

13. To receive an update on the play park works

23.101 Cllr Byrom reported that the Play Park Group will be meeting next week to agree the supplier. Three quotations had been sought. Once the supplier is agreed upon, the equipment can be installed. It is hoped that the work would be undertaken during the summer months. One of the requirements of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is that the work should be completed by the end of February 2024. Clearly, this is not going to happen. The next round of funding opens in February and the application will be submitted in the middle of February.

14. Date of next meeting

23.102 The next meeting will be on Monday 4th March 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.35hrs.

Signed: