

Stinsford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11 January 2016 at 7.00pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College

Present: Dr Andy Stillman (Chairman), Mr George Armstrong, Mr Chris Hext, Mr Will Molland and Mr Richard Wheal

Also in attendance: Cllr Patrick Cooke (West Dorset District Councillor), Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes (Dorset County Councillor), PCSO Sarah Pilcher, Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

1. Apology for Absence

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Mr Kim Payne.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

2.2 The Chairman declared a personal interest in planning application WD/D/15/002882 by reason of being a customer of the Home and Away Cattery.

3. Dorset County Council Matters

3.1 Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes reported the following:-

(i) The County, Borough and District Councils had commissioned the Local Government Association to examine the financial implications of various options for the future of local government in Dorset. The Leaders, together with officers, had been to see central government about the proposed unitary in South East Dorset and were told that the onus was on the Dorset Councils to find a viable solution.

(ii) The Government had reviewed the formula for the allocation of Revenue Support Grant to County Councils and Dorset had been told that this would be phased out sooner than anticipated. For 2016/17, it was originally forecast that the County Council would have a funding gap of £17M; the latest announcement had indicated that an additional £7.2M would be required. A considerable amount of work was therefore being put into identifying further savings to address this.

(iii) The review of the Youth Service was nearing completion and it was recommended that the model of provision move away from being buildings-based with greater focus placed on early intervention with vulnerable children and young people through schools. Premises currently owned by the County Council would be offered to community groups to operate but if no interest was forthcoming, these would be closed.

4. West Dorset District Council Matters

4.1 Cllr Patrick Cooke reported the following:-

(i) A scrutiny working group on development management had recently met with the new Development Control Manager and the views provided by the Chairman and Parish Council had been useful in informing his participation in this meeting. He added that it was noted that much of the planning process was statutory and the fees set nationally. These were not covering the actual costs and represented a difficult balance for all councils. However, the Manager was aware of where the problems

were in relation to the performance of her department and was seeking to make improvements.

(ii) The Slyer's Lane Wind Farm application would be considered by the Development Control Committee on 28 January. The officer's report would be available on 18 January. He anticipated a long but interesting debate on the application.

5. Public Participation Time

- 5.1 Kate Bailey sought clarity about the ability of cyclists to use the path along London Road from the Stinsford Hill roundabout to Grey's Bridge. The Clerk explained that her understanding was that part of this route was a cycle path and that the Parish Council had previously agreed that it would be beneficial for the whole route to be designated as such given the heavy traffic flow on that stretch of road. It was noted that an increasing number of students cycled to Kingston Maurward College and that if this was a designated cycle path, this may encourage more to do so. It was, however, recognised that whilst the brambles had been cut back, the surface of the path would benefit from clearance in order to ensure that its maximum width was available for users. It was resolved that a request for this be submitted to the County Council, as Highways Authority.

Action: Clerk to submit request to Dorset County Council that the whole route be designated as a cycleway and cleared to enable safe usage.

- 5.2 The Chairman welcomed the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), Sarah Pilcher, to the meeting. PCSO Pilcher informed the Parish Council that over the past six months there had been a number of outbuilding break-ins but the level of crime remained generally low. However, the main issue concerning the Police at the present time was an increase in poaching, particularly in the area of the parish abutting Tincleton. Work was therefore underway to engage with farmers and gamekeepers in order to target specific areas with alarms, cameras, etc to deter poaching. Local residents were asked to notify the Police if they noticed anything suspicious. In addition, theft from vehicles parked in beauty spots remained an issue and signs to remind people not to leave valuables in their cars would soon be erected in appropriate places.
- 5.3 The Chairman invited PCSO Pilcher to submit to the Clerk any information she would like made available via the Parish Council's website. She thanked him for this offer and explained that the Police Dorset Alerts service was available online which residents could sign up to; she would include a reminder about this when she next submitted an article for inclusion in The Pilot.
- 5.4 Mr Armstrong, on behalf of a resident, raised the issue of the gravel and stones being dragged into the road near Bockhampton Cross by the agricultural contractors entering and exiting the fields. It was considered to be a road safety hazard. Similarly, the roadside hedges along the stretch from Bockhampton Bridge to the West Stafford bypass were becoming overgrown and narrowing the road as well as obscuring the vision of drivers. He suggested that the Parish Council write to the farmers/landowners concerned requesting that these issues be addressed or the County Council as Highways Authority to ensure that the roads were safe to use. Mr Molland explained that he was acquainted with the relevant farmer/landowner and suggested that he raised this informally in the first instance. The Parish Council welcomed this suggestion.

Action: Mr Molland to raise these issues informally with the relevant farmer/landowner.

6. Minutes

- 6.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record, subject to the following amendment:-

Minute 163.1 – to read “*It was resolved that the following items be added to the agenda for the next meeting: Cuckoo Lane traffic and parish bad weather plan (to be discussed by Mr Armstrong and Mr Payne in advance).*”

- 6.2 Further to minute 158.1, Mr Wheal reported that the surface of the bridleway alongside the Hardy’s Birthplace Visitor Centre was much improved. The Parish Council expressed their thanks to Giles Nicholson, Dorset Countryside Area Ranger, for progressing this.
- 6.3 Further to minute 159.5, the Chairman informed the Parish Council that he had circulated the review of the Stinsford Hill roundabout undertaken by Highways England in 2013 to all councillors by email earlier in the day.
- 6.4 Further to minute 159.8, it was noted that the brambles encroaching onto the pavement along Stinsford Hill had now been cut down.

7. Finance

Expenditure

- 7.1 The following items of expenditure were **resolved**:-

- HMRC (PAYE) – 1–31 October 2015 - £34.40
- HMRC (PAYE) – 1–30 November 2015 - £34.60
- HMRC (PAYE) – 1–31 December 2015 - £34.40
- Clerk’s salary (Quarter 3 2015/16) (£413.38) plus website domain hosting expenses (£68.39) - £481.77

Budget and Precept

- 7.2 The Parish Council considered a report by the Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, setting out a proposed draft budget for 2016/17 and recommended a precept of £5,000. This equated to a Council Tax charge of £35.54 for a Band D property.
- 7.3 It was **resolved** that:
- (i) the proposed draft budget estimates for 2016/17 be approved;
 - (ii) a precept of £5,000 for 2016/17 be approved; and
 - (iii) a request be submitted to West Dorset District Council to claim £105 in Local Council Tax Support Grant.

8. Planning Matters

- 8.1 WD/D/15/002822 – Home and Away Cattery, Frome Whitfield Farm, Frome Whitfield Farm Access Road, Frome Whitfield – Remove existing office/reception shed and replace with new reception/staff facility
(The Chairman declared a personal interest in this application as a customer of the Home and Away Cattery.)

It was **resolved** to SUPPORT to this application.

- 8.2 WD/D/15/002840 – Former HM Prison Site, North Square, Dorchester - Change of use of the Main Cell blocks and Gatehouse to residential accommodation (use class C3) (60 units) with an Interpretation space in the Gatehouse 48 sq m. Construction of new residential blocks and residential terrace (use class C3) (130 units) and associated landscaping and car parking. Construction of new ground floor commercial units (use

classes A1, A2, A3, D1) of 311 sq m fronting onto North Square. Demolition of a number of non-Listed buildings. (Full)

Whilst this application was within the neighbouring parish of Dorchester, the Chairman informed the Parish Council that the developers had made a statement in respect of the application for the development of housing on the former HM Prison site that this would not be viable should an affordable housing contribution be required from the 190 units which he considered to be surprising and extremely disappointing. A viability study to evidence this had apparently been produced but was not available for public inspection.

The Parish Council discussed the fact that any major development within the town would have an impact upon Stinsford and, if this development was approved without an affordable housing contribution, it would further exacerbate the lack of affordable accommodation for local people in the area.

The Parish Council also noted that in addition to not providing much needed affordable housing, the proposed development of 190 units on this site in the town centre will place further pressure on the increasingly frail infrastructure of the town, particularly the road network and school provision, which is already operating above capacity to the detriment of the residents of the town and the neighbouring parishes.

It was **resolved** to OBJECT to this application on these grounds and to inform the other parish councils surrounding Dorchester of this.

8.3 Affordable Housing

As the issue of affordable housing had been raised at several recent meetings, the Clerk reminded the Parish Council that the District Council's Rural Housing Enabling Officer had previously offered to attend a meeting to discuss the issue and explain about affordable housing needs surveys. It was **resolved** that the Officer be invited to attend the next meeting in February.

Action: Clerk to extend invitation.

8.4 Slyer's Lane Wind Farm

The Parish Council noted that this would be considered by the District Council's Development Control Committee on Thursday 28 January 2016 and **resolved** that Mr Richard Wheal should speak on behalf of the Parish Council at the meeting.

Action: Clerk to circulate officer's report when published and confirm Mr Wheal as Parish Council's representative to address the Committee.

9. **Superfast Broadband**

9.1 The Chairman reported that he had received an email from Oliver Letwin MP earlier in the day providing an update on his investigations into the possibility of an improved broadband service within the parish, particularly Lower Bockhampton. This had contained the response that he had received from the Project Lead for Superfast Dorset. This indicated that the only option for those who had the lowest speeds (below 2mbps) would be to apply for the satellite service.

9.2 The Parish Council expressed their disappointment at this outcome, particularly as a number of the properties in Lower Bockhampton were Listed Buildings and the installation of satellite dishes would be prohibited. It was also noted that the response focussed on Lower Bockhampton but did not mention Higher Bockhampton. The Chairman undertook to raise this with Dr Letwin.

- 9.3 It was noted that there remained the possibility of the community funding its own installation of the infrastructure required to enable superfast broadband but it was likely that the cost would be prohibitive. Mr Molland undertook to speak to a contact about this.

Action: Chairman to respond to Dr Letwin. Mr Molland to investigate cost of community installation options.

10. Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre

- 10.1 No matters were raised under this item. However, it was noted that in the latest information published by the National Trust, it was clearly stated that the car park and Visitor Centre were not run by the Trust.

11. Traffic Management and Road Safety

- 11.1 The Parish Council discussed their concerns about the safety of Cuckoo Lane which, whilst mostly a single track road, had a 60mph speed limit and was used as a 'rat run' when the A35 was busy.
- 11.2 The Chairman reported that no response had been received from the Head of Dorset Highways to his request for an update relating to road safety matters in the vicinity of Kingston Maurward College previously raised by the Parish Council with the Community Highway Team Leader. It was resolved to escalate this request to the Director for Environment and the Economy.

Action: Clerk to write to Director for Environment and the Economy, copied to Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes.

12. Kingston Maurward College

- 12.1 No matters were raised under this item.

13. Bad Weather Plan

- 13.1 Mr Armstrong reported that he and Mr Payne had met to discuss the existing Bad Weather Plan. It was confirmed that Kingston Maurward College would clear any snow up to the front and rear entrances of the campus and open the gate to allow access through the campus. He would submit an updated version of the Plan to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- 13.2 He expressed his concern that the residents of Knapwater could be vulnerable in the event of severe cold weather because whilst there was a grit bin installed, the bags of salt placed in there were often removed. He therefore proposed contacting Magna Housing to request that this be filled with loose salt and to also ask that support workers visiting residents in Knapwater be made aware of the contingency access arrangements through the College campus.
- 13.3 The Parish Council noted that Bockhampton Lane had flooded several times recently due to the excessive rainfall. Mr Armstrong suggested that future versions of the Bad Weather Plan should include a section specifically on flooding.

Action: Mr Armstrong to write to Magna Housing. Clerk to identify a community flood plan template.

14. Items for future Agenda

- 14.1 It was **resolved** that the following items be added to the agenda for the next meeting:
- affordable housing
 - Financial Reserves Policy

- Bad Weather Plan

15. Date of next meeting

15.1 It was **noted** that the next full meeting would be held on Monday 8 February 2016.

The meeting concluded at 9:10pm.

Chairman..... Date.....