

# Stinsford Parish Council

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 January 2024  
at 7:00pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College**

**Present:** Mr George Armstrong (Chair), Mr Michael Clarke (Vice-Chair), Ms Susan Escott and Mrs Sarah Pattison

**Also in attendance:** Mr Luke Rake (Principal of Kingston Maurward College), Mr Edd Maynard and Mr Justin Morris (Prospective Parish Councillors) and Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk)

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Dorset Councillor David Taylor.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 Ms Escott declared a personal and pecuniary interest in planning application P/HOU/2024/00011 as the applicant and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

## **3. Public participation time**

- 3.1 No issues were raised under this item so the Chair moved to the next item.

## **4. Dorset Studio School Capital Project**

- 4.1 The Parish Council received a briefing from Ms Nicola Keynes (Project Director, Free Schools and FE Capital Transformation Fund, Department for Education), Mr Chris Hedges (Project Manager, Department for Education) and Ms Jane Lock-Smith, Cube Design and Technical Advisor to the project) about progress of the capital project to replace the existing Dorset Studio School (DSS) building on the Kingston Maurward campus. They explained that the work on the feasibility study had taken longer than anticipated and that feedback had not yet been received from the Local Planning Authority.
- 4.2 Ms Lock-Smith outlined the design principles which included the new building being set down into the landscape and below the height of the current Studio School, timber cladding and a green roof to blend in with the landscape and installation of photovoltaic cells. She confirmed that the proposed design complied with current guidelines and standards for school and educational provision and that sustainability was key to this. She added that biodiversity net gain was included within the survey.
- 4.3 Mr Hedges reported that timescales remained unchanged, with the procurement process anticipated to start in March and planning permission sought in 2024.
- 4.4 In response to questions from the Parish Council, it was clarified that:
  - (i) the proposed design met all equality and diversity required by the Department for Education, as well as Spec21 requirements for educational buildings and this would be further developed once a contractor was in place;
  - (ii) all of the Dorset Studio School students were originally accommodated at the Kingston Maurward site but had been split to alleviate overcrowding due to the current building being too small;
  - (iii) most of the Studio School students currently started and finished their day on the Kingston Maurward campus;
  - (iv) as part of the pre-application process there would be further input from Highways; and

(v) every effort would be made to not go over budget but there would inevitable be inflationary pressures as well as significant location costs such as private drainage and water supply.

- 4.5 The Parish Council also made the following observations:
- (i) there were some concerns about massing and urbanisation on the campus and the need to soften impacts through measures like sloping green roofs and less tarmac surfaces for car parks;
  - (ii) mature or evergreen planting was required to achieve a quicker screening impact, particularly in relation to glazing on the public aspect; and
  - (iii) the need for a speed limit on Hollow Hill to improve the safety of all road users but particularly the students attending the Studio School, as well as realistic management of parental traffic i.e. a travel plan that works.
- 4.6 The Chair thanked Ms Keynes, Mr Hedges and Ms Lock-Smith for their presentation and welcomed future updates on the project.

*Ms Keynes, Mr Hedges and Ms Lock-Smith left the meeting at 7:56pm.*

## **5. Community Land Trust**

- 5.1 The Chair reminded the Parish Council of previous discussion as to whether there a community land trust would provide a mechanism to build genuinely affordable housing within the parish for those who lived and/or worked in Stinsford.
- 5.2 Mr Rake added that employees of the College and Studio School required places to live and that the provision of housing was a mechanism for retaining staff in an area of high house prices. He explained that merger discussions were ongoing with Weymouth College and that this included an estate strategy, which could potentially include an opportunity for the community land trust concept.
- 5.3 The Chair explained that many community land trusts were moving to a rental model and that a housing needs survey would need to be progressed at an early stage. He suggested that it would be an advantage for the Parish Council to be a co-sponsor of this. It was therefore **resolved** that, in principle, the Parish Council was in support of activity to progress a community land trust in the parish.
- 5.4 Mr Rake also provided a brief update on the proposed merger of the two colleges. He confirmed that there would be a public consultation exercise in due course and hoped to provide a further update to the Parish Council in March.

*Mr Rake left the meeting at 8:11pm.*

## **6. Dorset Council matters**

- 6.1 In Councillor Taylor's absence, the Parish Council noted his written update, particularly in relation to the blocked bridleway and Stinsford Bridge.

## **7. Road Safety, Traffic Management and Rights of Way**

- 7.1 In relation to the update in respect of traffic safety on Slyer's Lane, it was noted that two yellow lines had now been painted on the road by Dorset Council to 'highlight' the slow signs. However, the issues relating to the use of this stretch of road by heavy traffic, the speed of the traffic and the blind bends had not been addressed. It was noted that the industrial developments further up the road continued to increase, adding to the traffic flow, and there had been no response from the Portfolio Holder to the most recent correspondence from local residents about this.

- 7.2 It was **resolved** to ask Cllr Taylor to take forward these ongoing concerns and to seek solutions to actively address the concerns of the Parish Council and local residents about road safety arising from the blind bend, speed of users and volume of traffic.

## 8. Minutes

- 8.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes meeting held on 13 November 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true record.
- 8.2 Further to minute 111.4, the Chair reported that the safety inspections and maintenance works to the play area were ongoing. He anticipated bringing the draft article for inclusion about The Pilot to consult on the future of the play area to the next meeting for consideration.
- 8.3 Further to minute 112.3, Mr Clarke reported that he had emailed Mr Stuart Holland about the bus shelter but had not yet received a response.
- 8.4 Further to minute 114.2, the Chair reported that there had been little interest from the Dorset Echo in a possible article about the 'North Dorchester Residents Survey'.

## 9. Finance

### Expenditure

- 9.1 The following items of expenditure were **resolved**:
- HMRC (PAYE) (Quarter 3 2023/24) – £284.80
  - Clerk's salary (Quarter 3 2023/24) + expenses + operational expenses for 2023/24 - £609.39
- 9.2 The following payments made by Direct Debit were **noted**:
- HugoFox – Website – November 2023 – £11.99
  - HSBC – Bank Charges – November 2023 - £9.00
  - HugoFox – Website – December 2023 – £11.99
  - HSBC – Bank Charges – December 2023 - £8.00

### 9.3 Budget and Precept

The Parish Council considered a report by the Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, setting out a proposed draft budget for 2024/25 and recommending a precept of £5,500. This was the same as for the current year and equated to a Council Tax charge of £38.17 for a Band D property. In the current year this was £38.76 due to the slight smaller taxbase.

- 9.4 It was **resolved** that:
- (i) the proposed draft budget estimates for 2024/25 be approved; and
  - (ii) a precept of £5,500 for 2024/25 be approved.

## 10. Planning Matters

- 10.1 P/PAAC/2023/07353 – Land and buildings North East of Cuckoo Lane, Higher Bockhampton – Change of use and conversion of agricultural building into 1 No. dwelling (Class C3)

It was **resolved** to object to this application on the grounds of a lack of safe access onto the public road from the site, as it did for the previous iteration of this proposal.

Leaving the site, visibility to the right is not good, particularly in regard of the speed at which some vehicles may be travelling. The view to the left is better. There is however an obstruction for vehicles coming down the hill and turning right into the site, and those leaving the site and turning right, especially large vehicles. This is a trailing 'tongue' from the traffic island at the junction of Cookham Lane and the A35.

Similarly, the view of traffic leaving the A35 is not ideal, and to some extent depends on whether the tall grass and other vegetation on the verge has been cut to enable visibility.

Having regard to the Highways Statement:

- (i) The 'typical' traffic movements set out do not include movements that would take place during daylight and not in the dark, unlike those associated with a dwelling when movements could take place at any time.
- (ii) The larger vehicles associated with construction and deliveries to service this will find access to the site more difficult than cars and will impact upon safety for all road users.
- (iii) It is assumed that leaving the A35 will slow the speed of vehicles down; from local residents' experience this is not always the case.
- (iv) Vehicles traversing Cuckoo Lane towards the westbound carriageway of the A35 often travel at speeds that cause them to cross into the other lane due to the bend.
- (v) The traffic survey was undertaken during the Autumn, however during the summer months – particularly July – September – there is a great deal of traffic build-up on the A35 westbound which also reduces air quality close to the proposed site.

It should also be noted that the route is used to access a major tourist attraction, Hardy's Birthplace.

- 10.2 P/VOL/2023/07167 – 6 Stinsford House, Church Lane, Stinsford DT2 8PT – Attic conversion with dormer windows and rooflights. Move modern wall on ground floor. Add timber shutters to windows (with variation of condition 2 of listed building consent P/LBC/2021/00775 to amend approved plans

It was resolved to support this application subject to the approval of Dorset Council's Conservation Officer.

- 10.3 P/HOU/2024/00011 – Greenwood, Higher Bockhampton, Dorchester DT2 8QJ – Demolish existing conservatory and erect new conservatory

*Ms Sue Escott declared a personal and pecuniary interest in this application as the joint applicant and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.*

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

## **11. Consultation - Dorset Council Active Travel Infrastructure Plan**

- 11.1 It was resolved to respond to this consultation highlighting the following key requirements:

- (i) the need for safe travel infrastructure to be in place between Dorchester and Kingston Maurward College;

- (ii) the need for safe travel infrastructure to connect with the Piddle Valley; and
- (iii) the need for higher levels of maintenance.

## **12. Parish Council Assets**

- 12.1 The Chair reported that the maintenance of the noticeboards was ongoing; he hoped that they would be in situ by the end of January. There was no further update in relation to the telephone kiosk.
- 12.2 The Parish Council discussed the proposal to install a defibrillator at Higher Bockhampton. It was felt that this would be valuable in view of the number of visitors and holiday accommodation units in the area as well as the close proximity to the two business parks. Whilst the cost of installation had been investigated previously, it was noted that there was a unit installed in West Stafford and Knightsford Parish Council might have some advice as to how best to go about this. It was **resolved** to approach them on their experience of installation.

## **13. Dorset Community Tree Project**

- 13.1 Mrs Pattison provided feedback from the recent webinar on the Dorset Community Tree Project. This was encouraging the take up of free tree planting to address the quite low tree coverage in Dorset. The Parish Council could submit a bid for planting if there was land identified for this within the parish.
- 13.2 It was noted that Mellstock Farm had a field identified for tree planting. Ms Escott agreed to speak to the proprietors about this to seek their agreement that this field be identified in any bid submitted by the Parish Council.

## **14. North of Dorchester Garden Community**

- 14.1 It was noted that there had been a recent article in the Blackmore Vale Magazine.

## **15. Delegation of Powers**

- 15.1 The Parish Council reviewed the decision initially made on 24 May 2021, that
- (i) authority be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure to protect the interests of the community and ensure council business continuity, informed by consultation with members of the Parish Council; and
  - (ii) the scheme of delegation be reviewed no later than September 2021.
- 15.2 This had been extended a number of times and the last review date of July 2023 passed.
- 15.3 It was considered that it was sensible to retain the option to operate via delegation to the Clerk if it was felt that in-person meetings were not appropriate or urgent decisions were required. It was **resolved** that the scheme of delegation should remain unchanged and be retained on a permanent basis.

## **16. Correspondence**

- 16.1 The Parish Council noted the recent correspondence received in relation to planned power outages in the Lower Bockhampton area and concerns raised about the duty of care of Magna Housing to the residents of Knapwater during such works.

## **17. Items for next meeting**

- Consideration of the Dorset Studio School development update

- Potential bid for community tree planting

**18. Co-option**

18.1 The Parish Council considered expressions of interest in co-option received from residents of the parish to fill two of the current casual vacancies.

18.2 It was **resolved** that Mr Edd Maynard and Mr Justin Morris be co-opted onto the Parish Council for the remainder of the current term of office.

18.3 Mr Maynard and Mr Morris signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

**19. Date of future meetings**

19.1 It was noted that the future meetings were scheduled to be held on Monday 12 February (reserve date) and Monday 11 March 2023.

The meeting concluded at 8:56pm.

**Chairman..... Date.....**