

**Clerk to the Council:**

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**Minutes of the Virtual Council Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, commencing at 7pm**

**Present:** Cllr's J Higgs (Chairman), A Hiscock, D Marsh, M Stead and P Basham

**In Attendance:-**The Clerk (Mr J Vanderwolfe) and Cllr S Christopher (Dorset Council).

Draft until Approved

<b>190</b>	<b>Apologies</b> No apologies had been received.
<b>191</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct were made at this stage of the meeting.
<b>192</b>	<b>Minutes</b> The minutes of the meeting held on the 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 were accepted as a true record, and were signed by the chairman.
<b>193</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b> No matters arising
<b>194</b>	<b>Democratic Period.</b> A parishioner had approached a councillor requesting the provision of more litter and dog bins within the parish. The chairman responded by stating that this had been requested in the past, but that a reply had been received stating that the company that emptied the bins would not accept any more bins for emptying in the parish.  A parishioner had asked if a round robin email system could be introduced to keep parishioners informed on agenda items. Members felt that the notice of the meeting is displayed on two notice boards, is listed on the website and also on Facebook, therefore it is felt that this is adequate communication coverage. In addition to this members of the public can use the link to enter the meeting either using their computer or tablet; or on an android phone.

	<p>A parishioner had made enquiries about the possibility of having their lane resurfaced. Unfortunately it was discovered that the lane in question was not adopted, and therefore was private. That being the case public funds could not be used for repairs.</p>
<b>195</b>	<p><b>Dorset Councillors Report ( Written Report Received)</b></p> <p>Since we last met we have seen an influx of visitors, though this has made the roads etc very busy, it has boosted the economy and given time for holidays for NHS key workers and others to enjoy relaxation in our wonderful county.</p> <p>We have seen enforcement issues raised in the Ward from Chideock residents up to Littlewindsor and from Holditch across to Stoke Abbott. I spoke as Ward Member in favour of the Drimpton Affordable Housing Scheme at the recent planning meeting.</p> <p>It is my understanding that the current arrangement for low numbers of council staff to work in offices will continue until March 2021.</p> <p>Most pressingly, we see the challenges this Autumn of schools reopening, pressures on our retail and leisure businesses. I fear that as the days shorten we will not see any improvement in the attitude of some drivers and I will continue to work with the council's highway safety officers.</p> <p>I will continue to assist with the dialogue between the Thorncombe Shop and the Finance Portfolio Holder.</p> <p>We will have a greater focus on the budget for 2021/22 and how the commitments of Dorset Council will be paid for and how much the Government will support the Council.</p> <p>Finally, with respect to development, there will be continuing debate on where substantial housing developments should be built primarily adjacent to our large towns and you should expect more media coverage around this issue as the summer disappears into the memory.</p>
<b>196</b>	<p><b>Account for Payment:</b> The following accounts were agreed for payment: Dorset Community £279, CPRE £36, ROSPA £103.20, Dial Grass Cut £340, Covid Grant payments £120.37, DAPTC £251.69, HMRC PAYE £201.80, Salaries £538.80. A payment for Darren Strawbridge for £250 was queried and would be investigated by the clerk</p>
<b>197</b>	<p><b>Financial Update</b></p> <p>The income/expenditure against budget was in line with the position of the financial year. The present financial assets on the 24<sup>th</sup> August stood at £14,959.53</p>
<b>198</b>	<p><b>Allotments</b></p> <p>The clerk reported that he had not received any responses from his article in the magazine regarding the provision of additional allotment gardens. Councillor Hiscock stated that he would like to have a plot, and that another person was also interested. The chairman stated that the village hall were willing to let a small piece of land be used for this purpose, and it was suggested that he contacted Mrs Holt regarding that.</p> <p>The chairman reported that the estimate for the provision of a tap and water supply on the present allotment site was £8,143, which included the requirement to close</p>

	the road whilst the water supply was being installed. It was agreed that this was far too high a price to provide only five plot users with this facility. <b>Agreed no further Action</b>
199	<p><b>Parish Lengthsman</b></p> <p>The chairman informed the meeting that no work had been undertaken as it was proving very difficult getting hold of Mr Strawbridge, despite numerous emails and phone calls. Councillor Stead also agreed that this was proving a problem. It was agreed that if this was the case the council might need to look for a new person. The clerk informed the meeting that Hawkchurch were using an Axminster company for their footpaths and agreed to pass on the contact details. <b>Action: Clerk to provide information and members to think of possible other interested and qualified people to undertake this position.</b></p>
200	<p><b>Councillors and Representatives Reports ( Report Received)</b></p> <p><b><u>1. Thorncombe’s bus services:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The PlusBus services, because everyone is registered and the drivers know who they are, DCT can share this information, should it be necessary to track and trace. Wearing face coverings on these buses is considered “advisory”, but is “encouraged”.</li> <li>● <b>*We are still trying to get further clarification from Tim Christian, GM of DCT on this point, as this bus is “Public Transport”. Axe Valley Ring and Ride, with a similar bookable service operate with mandatory face coverings, the same as “Public Transport”.</b></li> <li>● Passenger numbers on the Fortnightly Wednesday Bridport A and B PlusBus’s have improved again over the July and August period. Now the average is around 4-5 passengers on the A and now 4-5 passengers on the B.</li> <li>● The No 14, (Thorncombe to Chard) continues to be very well used. This service is averaging 13 passenger journeys each week (over the July and August period), with 16 passenger journeys being the maximum, i.e. 8 in 8 back.</li> <li>● The No. 688; (Thorncombe to Axminster) has again improved, now averaging 11 passenger journeys each week, (over the July and August period), with again 16 passenger journeys being the maximum, i.e. 8 in 8 back.</li> <li>● Tatworth and Forton PC application for another £400 grant towards the annual costs of running Service No. 14 (Thorncombe to Chard); the Chairman of their Finance Committee has been in touch by phone and wanted clarification on how social distancing, hygiene regimes and adapted Covid-19 time tables worked on the DCT buses.</li> <li>● As a regular traveler, I was able to give her full details of this and she confirmed that our application is moving on and it is hoped that the Clerk of Tatworth and Forton PC will be in contact soon.</li> </ul>

## **2. Tree trimming for the double deck school buses on the A02 route:**

- Alice Kennard, of Forde Abbey had approached our Chairman about their reluctance to do any more of this work, as they had spent £4000 already and the A02 had remained a single deck bus since the start of “One School One Operator”, in September, 2017.
- Dorset Travel were contacted by DM and they stated that at the start of this new academic year, all schools transport in the West of the County will have been re-registered as “Closed School Services”, with no public access.
- This will allow greater than 50% capacity, which is the limit for Public Transport and that it was hoped that double deck buses would now finally be in operation.
- It was further stated that Dorset Travel/Highways now have their own tree trimming vehicle and the route of the A02 would be the first to have all overhanging trees trimmed back to a height of 16ft 8in. (This was in fact done w/c 17/8/20).
- The rate for the tree trimming by Dorset Travel/Highways was stated as “reasonable”. This was detailed in the letter that Forde Abbey and all other landowners had received, where tree trimming was required along the A02 route.
- DM contacted Forde Abbey ref this conversation, to be told in no uncertain terms that Forde Abbey would not “spend another penny” on tree trimming.
- It was further stated that their income has been so little since lock-down and they need to now try to re-coupe and also to reduce expenditure, wherever possible. Tree trimming was definitely not a priority.

## **Councillors’ Report for the playground for TPC meeting on September 1<sup>st</sup>/20**

### **The TPFa committee have voted twice on a motion in favour of the Playground remaining closed until the Corona Virus (Covid-19) Pandemic is officially over, as below:**

- Socially distanced meeting held on July 6<sup>th</sup>/20 in the Playground at 2000 hrs, when the committee voted 4 in favour of the motion stating that the Playground should remain closed, with 2 against the same motion. The committee decided that this was to be reviewed and voted on again at the next meeting.
- Socially distanced meeting held August 3<sup>rd</sup>/20 in the Playground at 1945 hrs, when the committee voted 6 in favour of the same motion stating that the Playground should remain closed, with 1 abstention. The committee again decided that this was to be reviewed and voted on again at the next meeting, on September 21<sup>st</sup>/20, to be held in the Playground.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In addition the Committee decided that notices would be posted in the village and on the Thorncombe Village Facebook Page, asking for interested Parents to form a Parent Body.</li> <li>● This Parent Body would take on the responsibility of enacting all the Government Guidelines and reporting this to the TPFA Committee for their approval prior to opening.</li> <li>● This would be in order to open the Playground and ensure the guidelines are adhered to at all times, with track and trace data for each visit to the Playground etc. etc.</li> <li>● The major reason this was suggested was purely lack of manpower on the committee, with only 2 members available full time, to police these guidelines with the other 5 members of the committee being unavailable due to work or other commitments.</li> <li>● To date, unfortunately there have been no Parents who have come forward to form the Parent Body.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council acknowledged the difficulties of operating the play area in a safe way during the pandemic, and agreed to endorse the actions taken by the playground committee.</p> <p><b>Community Shop:</b> There had been a re-organisation which had seen the departure of the shop manager.</p> <p><b>Community Car Service:</b> The service continues but at a lower level due to Covid-19 restrictions</p> <p><b>School:</b> Pupils are due to return to school next week, and it is hoped that there will be a report for the October meeting.</p> <p><b>BAVLAP:</b> There is a virtual meeting scheduled for Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p><b>Footpaths:</b> A stile at Witty Lane needs attention on a temporary basis as it is scheduled to be replaced by a kissing gate in the near future.</p>
201	<p><b>Planning Applications</b> There were no applications for discussion at this meeting.</p>
202	<p><b>Determinations and Withdrawals</b> The application for the new sewage works at Forde Abbey had been approved</p>
203	<p><b>Correspondence</b> A letter from Dorset Rights of Way regarding the appeal on footpaths 37 and 103 had been circulated. The Inspector will now make her decision on this appeal.</p>
204	<p>The meeting was closed at 8.10pm</p> <p><b>Next Meeting:</b> Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October (<b>virtual</b>) at 7pm</p>

Signed ----- Chairman

Date -----