

# Charminster Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at Charminster Community Hall at 7pm

### Present:

Mark Simons (MS) (Chair)  
Carol Matthews (CM) Vice Chair  
Peter Dangerfield (PD)  
Julie Jackson (JJ)  
Alan Rolls (AR)

Louisa Swabey-Payne (LSP)  
Richard Wareham (RW)  
Tim Yarker (TY)  
Richard East (RE)  
Keith Beeson (KB)

**In attendance:** Michele Harding (Locum Clerk) Cllr David Taylor (Dorset Council Ward member) and 5 members of the public

**23/06-01. Welcome and Chairman's address.**

The Chair welcomed all the meeting including the Dorset Ward Councillor David Taylor.

**23/06-02. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Oliver Greenaway and Sue Frazer

**23/06-03. To receive declarations of interest or consider any grants of dispensation – none.**

**23/06-04. To approve the minutes of the Annual PC meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**

Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

Proposed RW      Seconded RE. Agreed by a majority.

**23/06-05. To receive matters arising from the above minutes (for information only).**

PD reported that following the approval for the tree works at Millers Orchard the contractor would wish to start on or around the 24<sup>th</sup> July, mindful of the bird nesting season.

**23/06-06. Public Discussion Period-** MS suspended the formal part of the meeting for public participation.

DT reported from Dorset Council on the planning proposals for the North of Dorchester which have been put back to 2026. Following the news of the Barge for asylum seekers, at Portland Port, DC will be carrying out a consultation of residents.

DT was asked about the road closure for the bridge repairs at Loders as this will have a negative impact on the village via Charminster as traffic will be diverted and a big impact on Charlton Down for access. DT was also asked to follow on speed issues on North Street as this has become very dangerous.

CM reported on the recent CSW sessions on the C12 with "True Cam" who caught 20 vehicles some doing over 50mph.

**23/06-07. To consider any Planning Matters**

- i. P/VOC/2023/02730 Proposal: Erect barn for indoor swimming pool and conversion of workshop to home office, home gym and changing room. (With variation of condition 2 of planning permission P/HOU/2022/07829 to amend approved plans to relocate building) Location: Leapgate Cottage, Old Sherborne Road-the conditions were made available on the screen in the meeting. Cllrs made no comments on this application.
- ii. P/HOU/2023/02806 Proposal: Move vehicle access 5 meters further North and 1 meter further into the property (East)Location: Ivy Cottage Old Sherborne Road- The PC made no objections to the proposal.  
Planning comments proposed CM Seconded KB- agreed by majority.

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## 23/06-08. Finance

### i. To consider the recommendations of the F & GP meeting

The report had been circulated to full council prior to the meeting. RW being chair of the working group reported on the following:

**Review of year end accounts and internal audit**-these were agreed, and date updated on the internal audit form prior to approval.

**Reserves:** as the PC hold large reserves and in order to satisfy the external auditor the reserves were updated; it was explained that this is not a commitment to spend this money as with PC approval a variation to the reserves can be agreed at a future meeting.

Project	Amount to reserve
Traffic survey outcomes	£20,000
Natural Pond	£10,000
Princes Plot	£3000
Storm Damage contingency	£20,000
Millers Orchard	£5000
Tennis Court reserve to be increased to	£30,000

**Accounting software-** F & GP recommended to the PC using the accounting software Scribe, a dedicated accounts package, a demonstration had been given to the F & GP meeting, this was agreed. Proposed RW Seconded CM agreed by a majority.

**Cemetery charges-** the review of this was deferred to next year as a full review had taken place last year.

**DAPTC membership-** the F & GP WG had considered becoming a member but needed more information on the benefits of membership so have asked the CEO of DAPTC to make a presentation to the full council at the July PC meeting.

**Policies-** a list of current policies will be gathered and those missing or require updating will be considered at a future meeting.

**Allotment** agreements are ongoing.

**Consider appointment of a new Clerk-** to be discussed further in the agenda.

**ROI- Register of interests-** all Cllrs now need to complete their ROI online; a link will be provided to Cllrs to complete, and these will then be listed on the Dorset Council website.

**Investment opportunities –** The group discussed potential projects which will be discussed further at the July meeting, these include:

Play equipment for younger people at the Charlton Down play area.

Solar panels on the Community Hall.

Broken Cross playground equipment.

Footpath and signage throughout the village.

The cycle track project from Charlton Down to Charminster.

**Dorset Council's capital leverage fund-** Some of the projects above would be funded from reserves but specifically the cycleway could possibly be funded from the DC fund this will be considered further when the projects are discussed.

**Review of contracts-**The PC to consider a monitoring system for current contractors to ensure the contracts are being met.

### ii. To approve the Annual Insurance 2023-24

The renewal had been received at a cost of £1404.45 this was approved; the clerk will clarify if this is a LTA figure. Proposed KB Seconded CM Agreed by all

### iii. To receive the Internal Audit report 2022-23- received and accepted.

### iv. To agree the PC does not have a conflict of interest with BDO LLP- external auditor.

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The new external auditor BDO LLP now requires the PC to complete this declaration – it was agreed that the PC does not have a conflict and the form was signed by the Chair and Clerk.

Proposed KB                      Seconded RE                      All agreed.

**v. To approve the AGAR section 1**

The Annual governance statement 2022-23 was completed and approved having been circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed CM                      Seconded LSP                      All agreed.

**vi. To approve the AGAR section 2**

The Accounting Statements 2022-23 were approved having been circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed CM                      Seconded RW                      All agreed.

**vii. To approve all payments due and those paid since the last meeting.**

A report of payments due and paid in line with internal controls was circulated including additional payments presented just prior to the meeting.

Proposed CM    Seconded KB -                      All agreed.

**viii. To receive the Financial Statement**

The statement was checked against bank statements and signed by MS- all agreed.

Bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 £361,354.76.

It was noted that the Fixed term bond with Lloyds matures in July.

KB suggested the PC considers setting up Fixed term bonds on a regular basis in order to maximise interest potential, the Clerk explained that the PC may need to consider other banks so monies invested are protected by FSC guidelines. This will be added to the July agenda.

**ix. To consider the purchase of 2 picnic benches for Princes Plot**

MS reported on the poor state of the benches and the duty that the PC has to keep these facilities in good order. Noting that in future if there are issues raised on the reports that there is an action to maintain them at the time.

The Clerk had circulated some suggested recycled benches from several companies used by other parishes for consideration. It was agreed to purchase 2 picnic benches for Prince's plot and an additional 2 picnic benches for Millers Orchard as previously agreed up to the value of £2083 as noted from the website quotes depending on delivery and if they arrived built ready to install.

Proposed CM                      Seconded LSP                      Agreed by majority, 1 abstention.

### 23/06-09.Administration

- i. To consider the Co-option of a Councillors for the North ward-** CM will follow up on this as no candidates at present.
- ii. Discuss efforts to raise the profile of Charminster Parish Council and how to increase public interest and attract potential candidates (bearing in mind council elections in 2024)**

Councillors discussed raising the profile of the PC, as many in the village do not know what the PC does or who their Cllrs are. LSP noted that when carrying out inspections reports it would be good to have a lanyard or tabard in order to identify Cllrs when taking pictures of issues, yellow tabards would be costed. It was also suggested that Cllrs profile pics could be added to the website. Sessions offering refreshments could be held at evenings or weekends in both wards. MS noted that generally the PC are contacted by the public if there is a problem. A member of the public spoke and suggested a youth Council and speaking to the local school about this, LSP offered to speak to the new Head teacher. KB suggested writing a piece on the various projects in the village each month in the Pilot explaining what the PC does and how to get involved. This would be further discussed at the July meeting when

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topics will be considered for the Pilot and Cllrs assigned to these topics. This could also be placed on the website and Facebook.

- iii. **To agree an interim panel to interview for a new Clerk/RFO for consideration at the July meeting.** CM, MS and LSP agreed to be on the panel and will aim to interview candidates in the coming weeks ready for the July PC meeting.
- iv. **To review/reinstate 'Matters Arising' Spreadsheet and progress reporting.** The Clerk had updated the latest version and circulated; some updates required for the older items.

### **23/06-010. To receive Highways Issues**

LSP commented on the state of the fingerposts as some need repair. It was noted that the footpath signs are repaired by DC but fingerposts are the responsibility of the parishes. Grants from AONB are available if they are maintained to the original materials. The PC will gather a quote for the repair of fingerposts, Cllrs will provide photos of the signs for repair. CM reminded Cllrs of the link to report road and rights of way reports online directly from the PC website, this was demonstrated at the meeting.

TY asked if the PC could have a report on the progress of the traffic report for the July meeting.

CM suggested that whilst the road is closed at Lodgers there is a litter pick, this was agreed CM and MS to organise. Proposed CM Seconded MS

### **23/06-011. To receive any Rights of way issues-**

There have been reports of a number of paths that need maintaining Clerk to contact the contractor, who was asked to stop cutting during no mow May by residents.

### **23/06-012. Matters for information and Interest-**

KB raised an issue with the Pond project as he believes it will end up being dry in the summer, he was unable to attend the May meeting to raise his objections. KB also commented that he believes that the PC did not meet the financial regulations by agreeing to the one quote obtained. This was debated by Cllrs and the vote taken at the May meeting was democratic. The PC was satisfied that the financial regulations had been met. KB asked for the minutes to note he wishes to disassociate himself from the pond project. RW also noted he abstained from the vote at the May meeting so this would disassociate him from the project in that case.

LSP congratulated those who organised the Fete this year.

AR commented on damage to fencing at Broken Cross on Magna property which was reported to them, this has now been repaired as well as a streetlight.

A member of the public thanked the PC for the commemorative items, Benches, Stones and Flagpole the PC had invested in to celebrate the Jubilee and coronation. Also thanking Councillors for all that they do.

### **23/06-013. To confirm the date and items for the next meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Charlton Down** Items from the meeting will be added to the agenda.

There being no further business MS closed the meeting at 20.13.