

# Charminster Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at Charminster Community Hall at 7pm

### Present:

Mark Simons (MS) (Chair)  
Carol Matthews (CM) Vice Chair  
Peter Dangerfield (PD)  
Alan Rolls (AR)  
Oliver Greenaway (OG)  
Sue Frazer (SF)

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

**In attendance:** Michele Harding (Clerk) Caroline Elliman (Assistant Clerk) Cllr David Taylor (Dorset Council Ward member) and 7 members of the public.

**23/09-01. Welcome and Chairman's address.**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting including the Dorset Ward Councillor David Taylor, MS noted that the room is rather hot, and have a very full agenda.

**23/09-02. To receive apologies for absence- None.**

**23/09-03. To receive declarations of interest or consider any grants of dispensation – none.**

**23/09-04. To approve the minutes of the PC meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and sign the same.**

Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.  
Proposed PD      Seconded TY. All agreed that were in attendance.

**23/09-05. To receive matters arising from the above minutes (for information only).**

KB asked about the goalposts for North Street Play area, MS reported that the goals have been purchased and are awaiting the contractor to complete installation. It was suggested that volunteers could do this, CM and MS had offered but more volunteers are needed.

**23/09-06. Public Discussion Period- MS suspended the formal part of the meeting for public participation.**

A resident of the Charminster Farm development reported on the management company Blenheim's which has been taken over by First Point, the property manager is still Katie Mack. Some of the roads have still not been adopted, although it was noted that some have been adopted but have not been added to the Dorset Council mapping system. A resident complained about the verge cutting in the development, it was noted that DC have their own cutting regime which is restrictive.

A resident commented on the installation and funding of the defib for the Community Hall, she explained following posts on Facebook, all the funds have been gathered with Wyatt Homes paying half of this cost, there are some surplus funds which can then be used for the purchase of pads and a battery in the future, she would like to know now how to proceed with the installation on the outside of the Community Hall as the Defib has been delivered. This is an agenda item.

Residents from Charlton Down attended to give support to the Pond Project.

MS commenced the formal meeting again.

**23/09-07. To consider any Planning Matters**

- a. P/HOU/2023/04296 Proposal: Demolish existing rear extension and conservatory. Erect single storey rear extension. Location:41 Cocklands- No objections were raised  
Proposed PD      Seconded TY      All agreed.

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- b. P/HOU/2023/04354 Proposal: Erect Garden annexe, (demolish existing shed). Location: 9 Pound Close- No objections were raised  
Proposed PD                      Seconded LSB                      All Agreed.

The chairman brought forward the next item given the length of the financial matters to be considered.

### 23/09-08. To receive an update on the Charminster movement strategy survey

TY commented that the traffic project has gone on too long and was expecting the company to provide a report from the completed survey ranking the options for the PC and highways to consider. MS explained he had spoken to the New Master Planning who explained that they have been waiting on feedback from the PC on the Aims and Objectives as there had been a change of clerk this has been delayed. A list of these had been circulated but it was felt that this needed more in-depth discussion to respond, a working group will be set up to look into this TY, CM, SF, LSP, RE, MS and Ward Cllr DT volunteered to be on the group. Clerk to arrange a meeting.

### 23/09-09. Finance

#### i. To consider the recommendations from the F & GP

The F & GP met on the 8<sup>th</sup> August and discussed DAPTC membership, play area updates, solar panels, the update of the Financial Regulations and standing orders, investments to be made and a co-option policy the following recommendations were made to the PC:

1. **To confirm DAPTC membership for up to 2 years**- The costs for the remainder of the year were approx. £450, the annual cost being approx. £800. It was felt this will be a benefit for the PC for the elections in May 2024, training is available, and they provide support for the Council, and this was recommended by the Clerk. Proposed PD    Seconded CM- agreed by a majority.
2. **To agree the new Financial regs as recommended**- The current NALC version was agreed with some changes, the F & GPWG will look at the finer details and update accordingly as a working document for the next meeting- Proposed RW    Seconded CM- agreed by a majority.
3. **To agree the new Standing orders as recommended**. The current NALC version was agreed with some changes, the F & GPWG will look at the finer details and update accordingly as a working document for the next meeting- Proposed RW    Seconded CM- agreed by a majority.
4. **To agree the new signage for all play areas noting site location and emergency information**. Cllrs agreed this is necessary, the Clerk will order the notices. Proposed CM                      Seconded JJ.
5. **To agree to the purchase of a laptop for the Community Hall and Assistant Clerk**. In order to manage the bookings, and admin for the hall it is necessary for a separate laptop for the hall, this also covers her for data protection purposes. This was agreed by all to purchase a laptop up to the value of £500. Proposed PD                      Seconded LSP- All agreed
6. **To agree setting up of debit cards for purchases**. Currently many items are purchased by the Clerk and Assistant using their own cards and being reimbursed. The F & GP recommend that debit cards of up to £500 would be arranged, the first year is free but then there is an annual charge of £32 if this continued. Proposed CM                      Seconded RW – agreed by a majority.
7. **To approve the Co-option policy** – the draft had been circulated some typos had been noted, KB felt it was rather an official document and might put people off, but this is the NALC template. Cllrs agreed to the policy for the future. Proposed CM Seconded TY                      Agreed by a majority.

- ii. **To consider the quote for the top of the bin store at the Community Hall**- Quotes had been requested but only one had been provided by the time of the meeting, this was at a cost of £1096.60 plus vat. It was agreed that the Clerk will gather further quotes and confirm the works up to the value of this initial quote. Proposed CM Seconded PD    agreed by a majority.

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- iii. **To consider the costs of fencing at the Community Hall to remove unhindered side access.** As part of the ongoing security at the hall to stop people using the back of the hall for ball games where in the past there have been issues with broken windows, also to give hall hirers a safe and private area outside for their events, quotes had been gathered to fence the area from the bin store to the side of the hall and install a lockable gate, also to raise the height of the fence on the far side of the hall and install gates at the top of the steps at the back of the hall. LSP supported having this safe area outside especially whilst holding holiday events for children, being able to have the doors open in hot weather was necessary. So far 2 quotes had been gathered and another pending, these ranged between £1675 to £1825. Cllrs agreed to accept a quote up to £1825 for the works and the Clerk will confirm this when the 3rd quote is received and arrange the works with the assistant clerk. Proposed LSP Seconded OG agreed by a majority.

MS suspended standing orders in order to consider the Pond Project only given the amounts concerned.

- iv. **To consider the pond project quote in Charlton Down Nature Reserve due to the increase of materials.**

The contractor who had been awarded the project had contacted the Council and apologised that the material costs for the pond project had risen considerably and had provided updated quotes. The increase is £3214. The PC asked for a breakdown of the materials as much of this is vatable and if the PC placed the orders and paid direct to the suppliers then this could be reclaimed. The updated quote would be an additional £2188 if this was agreed. So, the total cost of the project would then be £11688 plus vat on materials only. A deposit has already been paid of £6200.00. CM explained that a lot of work has been done to ensure there is water available and the fire service will provide support to fill up the pond as they did before and expressed her support for the project to proceed. LSP also expressed her wish that the project is agreed for the benefit of the community and as the site so needs improvement. Proposed PD Seconded CM, Cllrs took a vote to accept this updated quote. 9 votes FOR 1 vote Against and 1 abstention-motion carried.

- v. **To consider the cost to gather quotes for a standpipe in the Charlton Down Nature Reserve from Wessex Water.**

As part of the Charlton Down Nature reserve project the PC have been looking into a permanent water supply but until a survey has been completed by Wessex Water this cannot be considered, the application for this survey is £140.40. Proposed CM Seconded TY agreed by all.

- vi. **To consider the request for siting and funding towards a Defibrillator on the side of the Community Hall.** Following the announcement that funds have been raised for the purchase and Wyatt Homes will carry out the installation Cllrs considered the siting of the Defib, it was agreed to place this on the side of the hall where the path is and near the electricity supply. A direction sign will also be placed on the bin store, so it is obvious where it is located. KB asked about a Defib reserve, RW commented that this can be considered when the F & GP meets again. Proposed CM seconded KB agreed by a majority. Cllrs thanked the resident for all her efforts in securing a new Defib for the village.

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**vii. To consider the quote for a sunken trampoline at the North Street Play area**

Following the removal of the roundabout and the fencing still around the area, it was suggested that a sunken trampoline could be installed. An initial quote had been gathered of £10000 plus installation. Further investigation is required if Cllrs agreed. LSP commented on the safety factor of the trampoline, it was noted that this is a sunken trampoline so there is no fall height, it was also suggested that the insurers are contacted for any advice. Cllr Taylor commented that there are trampolines in Dorchester TC so he will also make enquiries. Cllrs also commented on a Zip line for this area. The Clerk was asked to gather further quotes and advice for the next meeting.

**viii. To consider the quote for fencing repairs to the Broken Cross Play area.**

The chain link fence is broken in several places on the left near the zip wire, a quote has been gathered and further quotes are being gathered. The cost to replace 3m of chain link fence but reuse the struts is £1872 plus vat. It was agreed to accept quotes up to £1872 and the clerk will endeavour to obtain further quotes. Proposed KB Seconded RE agreed by a majority.

**ix. To consider planting a Laurel Hedge at the back of BX play area to screen from the road.**

Following a visit from the play inspector who noted that a hedge would be good along the roadside in the play area for exhaust emissions and noise, it was suggested that a laurel hedge could be installed, Cllrs discussed the types of hedges, they could not be planted until later in the autumn, but it is hoped to have a quote for Oct/Nov meeting. PD and KB to look into suitable hedging, Dorset Council also to be contacted.

**x. To consider installing outdoor Gym equipment – there was not enough support for this at this time.**

**xi. To consider gathering quotes for the tree pruning at CD Orchard and replacing dead trees.**

This was agreed CM and the Clerk will gather quotes.

**xii. To consider gathering quotes for the tree works noted in the tree inspection specifically those required within in 6 to 12 months.**

This was agreed the Clerk will gather quotes based on the inspection report carried out for the October meeting.

**xiii. To consider moving to quarterly inspections with minor repairs and costings provided on works.** The PC currently use a company for their annual inspection and the Councillors carry out an inspection of the play areas on a rota system. The problem currently is that the actions are not always being carried out following the inspections and this needs to be addressed. The clerk recommended going to quarterly inspections with a qualified inspector as in other parishes, these also come with recommendations and costings. The Clerk then gathered a quote from the current play company for a like for like inspection programme.

The current cost of the annual inspection is £273, this company would charge £1038 to carry out quarterly inspections, a quote had been gathered from a contractor some other local parishes use who would charge £664 annually for the quarterly inspections. Cllrs agreed to move to

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quarterly inspections and continue with the visual inspections carried out but with updated forms. Proposed CM Seconded OG agreed by all.

**xiv. To consider the request for a grant for the Life Education Van for the school.**

Following the receipt of the request for funding some information was gathered. The life education van is a charity so assuming the PC agreed a donation could be made. LSP also gathered information on the school funding as this is her field of expertise. The school have booked the van, and this has been funded already. The charity requests funds in order to top up their funds to supply the services, but any funds the PC agree to won't go specifically to the local school but their funding pot. Also, it was noted that a lot of the children do not live in the parish of Charminster. Cllrs debated this item at length. RW fully supported the work that the charity does for the benefit of the health and wellbeing of young people and proposed to fund the charity for the full £450 requested but there was not seconder, TY proposed that the PC funds £200 and this was Seconded by LSP. Cllrs Voted 7 votes For and 2 votes against motion carried. KB commented that the PC should have a grant policy, this will be considered by F & GP.

**xv. To approve all payments due and those paid since the last meeting.** All agreed Proposed PD Seconded RE.

**xvi. To receive the monthly Finance reports** - these had been circulated and the Chair had carried out the checks of the bank rec to the statements.

**23/09-010. Matters for information and Interest-**

Cllrs noted that there is a new compound for Scottish and Southern electric being developed who are installing a large new cable across the village from Wanchard Lane to Puddletown, this is near the old barn on the Old Sherborne Road.

KB suggested that the Iron Man route is placed on the Facebook pages.

LSP commented on the Coronation seeds for young people in the village.

AR commented that he had cleaned the bus shelters and suggested that the PC needs to look at who carries this out going forward.

Cllr David Taylor reported on Dorset Council activities and that he will support the PC on the Traffic survey with highways.

**23/09-011. To confirm the date and items for the next meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 at Charminster**  
Bus shelter cleaning, Traffic Survey, Grant policy

There being no further business MS closed the meeting at 20.35.

The assistant clerk left the meeting.

**23/09-012. To consider moving to closed session to discuss staff matters.**

Following the appraisal of the Assistant Clerk and looking at the aims and objectives for the Community Hall management, the following steps are being put in place:

Purchase of a laptop for the Community Hall, a comments and suggestions book for hirers for the hall reception desk, a list of repairs and maintenance will be gathered and costings in line with the financial regs, a quarterly report will be supplied for PC meetings of hire and costs, a CCTV policy is to be prepared. Training will also be provided for the smooth running of the hall. The salary and hours were also considered and agreed but this is confidential information and noted in the assistant clerk's contract.

Cllrs commented on the excellent work that the assistant work carries out as an advocate of the Community Hall and commended her on her work over the last 18 months. Cllrs fully supported the report supplied and proposed to accept the recommendations.

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Proposed PD

Seconded CM

unanimously agreed.