

**Charminster Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**at Charminster Community Hall at 7pm**

**Present:**

**South Ward Cllrs**

Mark Simons (MS) (Chair)  
Tim Yarker (TY)  
Keith Beeson (KB)  
Alan Rolls (AR)  
Richard East (RE)  
Peter Dangerfield (PD)

**North Ward Cllrs**

Carol Matthews (CM) Vice Chair  
Oliver Greenaway (OG)  
Louisa Swabey-Payne (LSP)  
Richard Wareham (RW)  
Sue Frazer (SF)  
Tony Murrell (TM)

**In attendance:**

Mrs Michele Harding (Clerk), Ward Cllr David Taylor and 5 members of the public.

- 23/12-1. Welcome and Chairman's address.** MS welcomed all and noted the very full agenda given the PC does not meet in January.
- 23/12-2. To receive apologies for absence-**Julie Jackson
- 23/12-3. To receive declarations of interest or consider any grants of dispensation** – none received.
- 23/12-4. To consider the co-option of a Councillor for the North Ward**  
The PC had received an application from a candidate for co-option, Mr Tony Murrell introduced himself and spoke on his previous experience as a Parish and District Councillor in Hampshire. Cllrs proposed to co-opt Mr Murrell as a Cllr for the North Ward.  
Proposed KB                      Seconded CM                      All agreed.  
TM signed the declaration of office and joined the meeting.
- 23/12-5. To approve the minutes of the PC meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and sign the same.**  
Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.  
Proposed CM      Seconded RE.                      For 9 - 2 abstentions
- 23/12-6. To receive matters arising from the above minutes (for information only).**
- i. The clerk reported the property signs are ready for collection.
  - ii. An update on the EV charging point information for Charlton Down had been received for the land at the front of the village hall as the land has been found to be owned by Dorset Council. They are looking at installing 2 charge points that can charge 2 vehicles at a time (4 cars can charge in total) in the area outside the village hall. One will be a rapid 50Kw charger and one is a 7kW charger. One charger is a lot quicker, and the other is cheaper so the residents of the area will get options of how to charge.
  - iii. The PC may look into solar panels on the roof of the Community Hall but have been waiting to see if there were any covenants preventing this from happening, a response from Wyatts states that there isn't at this time, but a full plan would need to be submitted. The Clerk has also contacted the solicitors for confirmation.
  - iv. The North Street Boundary hedge cutting has yet to be done, PC to organise a contractor.
  - v. The PC noted that following the decision to award a grant to the school association, proposed by LSP that a register of interest had not been declared, this was noted for the minutes.
  - vi. The Flood team at Dorset Council have been informed of the issues at York Close and run off from the fields via the footpath. DT is following this up.

Cllrs commented that the flooding in Mill Lane which has been worse than ever, Cllrs also commented on the supply of sandbags further stocks are required. Cllrs commented on the

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SSEN works with highways working collaboratively, MS suggested that he meets with DT to follow up on these issues.

LSP arrived at 7.13pm

TY commented on the state of the Cerne with the amount of sediment and erosion which is degrading the watercourse and this needs to be protected. CM commented on issues in CD with run off from fields, so now a part of the field is not cultivated in order to suppress the flood issues.

KB commented that flooding is occurring on the top of hills, and this is manmade from current farming practices.

### **23/12-7. Public Discussion Period-** MS suspended the formal part of the meeting for public participation.

A resident of York Close commented on the 20mph speed limit and how it is not effective with continuing speeding in the village also there is an issue with parking on the road within 10m of a junction which is an obstruction under the highway code. Also, the number of commercial vans parked. Cllrs agreed there are many areas where cars park on the road as they don't have enough dedicated parking spaces.

MS also commented that developers only need to meet government guidelines with parking spaces.

CM noted that the PC are working on solutions for transport issues with the Transport strategy so this can be looked into as part of this project. If drivers are causing an obstruction, then this can be reported to the police or contact the PCSO.

It was suggested that this could be placed in the Pilot to request that people park considerately.

DT commented that he attended a meeting at DC as many drivers are ignoring parking fines so as from next year the fees will be increased or even doubled.

Another resident noted that some of the new developments have covenants on them to say no commercial vehicles parking overnight.

Residents were thanked for their comments and the meeting was reopened.

### **23/12-8. Council Property**

#### **a. To consider the costs of a new hedge to be placed at Broken Cross.**

Quotes had been gathered based on the spec drawn up by KB and PD for a hedge at Broken Cross to provide a shield against omissions. Cllrs proposed a beech hedge at a cost of £1620 plus vat this was awarded to Toller Tree Care. On top of this there would be some fencing to protect the new hedge at a cost of approx. £400.

Proposed TY      Seconded RW      Agreed by majority      10 votes for      2 abstentions.

#### **b. To consider the costs to carry out repairs to the Viking swing at CD.**

The repairs were advisory, but quotes had been requested to replace the complete rope assembly and suspension ropes. The costs are in the region of £3365 and £3422 plus vat. Cllrs discussed the need for the repair at this time and agreed to put off the repair for another year and look at covering the frayed areas if possible.

Proposed TY      Seconded SF      All agreed.

#### **c. To consider the costs for a replacement noticeboard at Meech Way**

Online quotes had been gathered for an aluminium noticeboard; quotes are over £1000. It was agreed that this is deferred until the Feb meeting.

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### **d. To consider the cost of a replacement gate for the Community Orchard (CD)**

Online quotes had been gathered to replace the gate and posts this cost is in the region of £1000 to £1500 plus vat. Cllrs proposed to install a gate and posts up the £1500 in total.

Proposed CM      Secoded LSP      10 votes for and 2 abstentions      Agreed

### **e. To consider the purchase of 2 new sand storage bins**

Quotes gathered for 2 x 400l bins for sandbags in green at a cost of £199.65 plus vat. 1 for Millers Orchard the other for Lower Burton (location to be confirmed).

Proposed RW      Secoded CM      11 voted for 1 abstention      Agreed

### **f. To consider a specification of works for Princes Plot for 2024**

The current contract is due to finish at the end of this year, so a new contract is required, a spec needs to be prepared. KB will prepare the spec for a one-year contract with the Clerk and quotes will be considered in February.

Proposed CM      Secoded KB      all agreed.

## **23/12-9. Finance and General Purposes**

### **a. To consider the purchase of an A3 printer for the Community Hall office.**

A quote for a new printer was gathered at a cost of £214. This was agreed.

Proposed CM      Secoded RE      all agreed.

### **b. To consider the new Tennis court booking system, membership for the LTA and the court fees going forward.**

The booking system with Skedda is no longer free and the monthly costs are too expensive. The LTA is an annual fee of £130 this includes the use of the ClubSpark booking system. This system also takes online payments and charges are currently at 2.9%. The booking system is for court hire rather than per person. The proposal is to charge £4 per court per hour.

Cllrs agreed to the membership, new booking system and court fees.

Proposed CM      Secoded RW      all agreed.

### **c. To ratify the deposit payment for the contractor for the Community Hall fence installation.**

The initial contractor had pulled out of the job, so the second contractor was offered the work, MS met them on site with assistant clerk to go over the quote and some adjustments were made so a slightly higher quote was agreed, the deposit was required to purchase the materials in order to commence the work on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec, this was agreed by the F & GP.

Proposed TY      Secoded RW      All agreed.

### **d. To consider a donation to the Cricket Club for recycled benches**

An application had been received for the purchase of new recycled benches and gift the wooden ones to the PC at a cost of £3600 to £3900. Cllrs had received at the meeting a hard copy of last years accounts to March 2022. No up-to-date account info was provided, so insufficient information had been supplied. Cllrs also noted that they do not require further wooden benches as PC benches are being replaced with recycled as and when necessary. It was noted that the Cricket Club is not a charity, but a commercial enterprise, all be it for the community. The PC were not minded to support the request at this time but are keen to continue working with the Cricket Club in the future for the benefit of the community.

Proposed TY      Secoded PD      9 Votes For 1 Vote against 2 abstention's motion carried.

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### e. To consider an Internal Auditor for 2023-24 onwards

The Clerk had gathered quotes with supporting statements from 3 internal auditors who are suitably qualified to carry out the audit. Cllrs discussed the scope of the internal audit and proposed Debbie Wiltshire to carry out the audit at a cost of £450. The previous auditor would be thanked for his service over the last few years.

Proposed TY                      Seconded CM                      9 votes For   1 abstention.

### f. To receive the report from the Charminster Community Hall

The assistant clerk had provided a report on the activities of the hall and some repairs needed; a huge thanks was given to the assistant clerk for all the work she put in at the hall. Some of the repairs will be considered in February. KB asked that the set-up committee should manage the hall. Cllrs felt that the hall is being run well under the management of assistant clerk and the PC. It was agreed to officially disband the working group set up to get the hall up and running now that it is being monitored by the PC.

### g. To receive the report from the Budget and Precept for 2024-25

The Budget had been looked into in depth by F & GP and a spreadsheet of the budget for the coming year and proposed precept was supplied.

Cllrs asked how much of the budget will be taken from reserves given there was budget deficit, it was explained that the tennis court costs, and transport survey costs have their own reserve the rest is taken from the precept and general reserves, which are high given the CIL payments received.

The Council are aware that they have a lot of funds, and this will be monitored, and consideration given to how this can be spent within the CIL rules.

The precept was proposed to be increased from £45496.00 to £50045.60 a rise of 10%. When the tax base is announced this will be circulated to Cllrs on the monetary effect on the precept collected with the Council tax so this can be explained to the electors.

Proposed CM                      Seconded RW                      All agreed.

### h. To receive the monthly finance reports and check bank reconciliations

MS carried out the checks prior to the start of the meeting.

### i. To approve all payments due and those paid since the last meeting.

Proposed CM                      Seconded KB                      1 abstention

### 23/12-10. To consider any Planning Matters-

a. P/TRC/2023/06883 Proposal: T1 Maple - Reduce lateral branches growing over the green house, shed and garden of 27 Herrison Road by up to 3m, remove lowest secondary branch that is very close to the greenhouses of number 27 and 26 Herrison Road. - *No objections* Proposed CM                      Seconded RW                      All agreed

b. Planning Application P/HOU/2023/06349 - 10 Herrison Road Charlton Down DT2 9RJ- committee meeting- *To be considered at committee, no further comment from the PC*

c. P/TRC/2023/06990 Proposal: Willow (T1) - Fell

Willow (T2) - Remove large lowest lateral which has failed over the river Location: 30A North Street- *no comments.*

### 23/12-11. Matters for information and Interest-

MS clarified the cutting of the boundary hedge at North Street, this should say in the minutes that the PC will carry out the work to the boundary hedge not MS himself.

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Also, he noted that the gate installed by the pub is not an official access and only available on request as there is no evidence of an agreement for right access to and from the pub garden via the play area entrance. The PC are concerned for the safety of the children so a lock and key will be placed on the gates to ensure that permission is sought prior to use.

KB asked if the goal posts have been placed in North Street play area yet, MS reported that the goal posts purchased are too large for the available pitch space so they will be used to replace the ones at the Olympic Park and smaller goal posts will be looked into in the Spring to replace the single large goal.

RW again raised the matter of the goal mouths at Olympic Park CD, that are in urgent need of in-filling, re-dressing and seeding.

AR commented on the poor parking at the Broken Cross play area entrance obstructing the path so a pushchair would not be able to access the site, signage will be considered, and Magna contacted.

SF commented that an additional stone is needed for the Jubilee stones at CD, and potentially a tree in the centre, this will be on the agenda for February.

KB asked as the PC does not meet until Feb 24, should the F & GP meeting in January, this was not supported.

**23/12-12. To confirm items for the next PC meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at Charminster Community Hall, unless a special meeting is required in January 2024**

There being no further business MS closed the meeting at 20.38.