

Charminster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th March 2024
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)
Sue Frazer (SF)
Julie Jackson (JJ)
Tony Murrell (TM)

In attendance: Mrs Michele Harding (Clerk), Ward Cllr David Taylor and 10 members of the public.

24/3-1. Welcome and Chairman's address. MS welcomed all to the meeting.

24/3-2. To receive apologies for absence- Richard Wareham was not in attendance as he had resigned as a Councillor prior to the meeting.

24/3-3. To receive declarations of interest or consider any grants of dispensation – none received.

24/3-4. To approve the minutes of the PC meeting held on 6th February 2024 and sign the same.

The minutes of the meeting were presented for approval and were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings. Motion to approve the minutes was proposed by PD and seconded by CM. The motion was unanimously supported by all members present.

The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

24/3-5. To receive matters arising from the above minutes (for information only).

During the meeting, PD raised concerns regarding the ongoing flood issues on Mill Lane and requested an update from DT.

DT provided an update, stating that the field continues to pose a problem as the agent for the landowner has not been communicating with Dorset Council's flood team. Additionally, it was noted that the pollution in the Cerne River is now affecting Poole Harbour. The Environment Agency has been contacted and is actively pursuing communication with the landowners and Dorset Council's flood team. DT also informed the Council that SSE (Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks) has encountered significant access issues, expressing gratitude to the residents of Mill Lane for their cooperation. The works are expected to conclude in the week commencing March 24th. KB noted the absence of media coverage on this topic.

In response to LSP's inquiry about a previous request to reposition the drain, DT stated that this matter is still under consideration.

MS provided an update on the repair of the Zip wire, indicating that a new spring has been sourced at a cost of £10. The repair has been completed and inspected by the play inspector, rendering it ready for public use. Appreciation was expressed to the Chair for their assistance in this matter.

24/3-6. Public Discussion Period- MS suspended the formal part of the meeting for public participation.

During the meeting, a resident addressed the issue of salt bins for Charminster Farm. It was noted that these bins have now been installed, albeit funded by the management company. Additionally, concern was raised regarding the significant blockage of drains in the area, prompting a request for inclusion in a maintenance program. MS clarified that the Dorset County highways department no longer conducts planned maintenance programs. Despite this, the issue of blocked drains in York Close persists, and residents were encouraged to report such instances online or to contact the Clerk with relevant information.

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The Fete committee approached the Parish Council seeking support for their upcoming event. LSP highlighted the popularity of the free bouncy castle attraction at the event in previous years. This will be considered in April.

Another resident urged the Council to raise awareness about the Norchester development, suggesting the installation of a display in the hall for public viewing. The resident emphasised the historical context of the proposals and their potential impact on Charminster. Furthermore, they advocated for strengthening connections with Stinsford, noting the absence of Charminster representation at a recent event hosted by the Stinsford Parish Council.

In consideration of future actions, LSP proposed the idea of initiating a Neighbourhood Plan, which could be deliberated upon by the incoming Council.

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

24/3-7. To receive the draft Transport Strategy, consider a date for a special meeting to adopt the paper, also agree to gather rough costings for the schemes.

TY provided an update on the progress of the final plan from New Master Planning. The working group has meticulously reviewed the report, incorporating suggested changes. Moving forward, it is imperative to convene a special Parish Council meeting with a single agenda item: the adoption of the report. Additionally, preliminary drop-in sessions will be organised before the meeting to facilitate community engagement. The report will be accessible online prior to the meeting for public scrutiny.

Furthermore, the Council will deliberate on the subsequent steps, including the exploration of the various schemes and costs and discussions with Dorset Council.

It was unanimously decided to schedule the meeting for 26th March at 7 pm in the main hall.

LSP and JJ will coordinate the drop-in sessions, complete with refreshments.

Motion proposed by TY, seconded by PD, and unanimously supported by all members.

24/3-8. Council Property

a. To discuss allowing dogs on some Parish Council property.

During the council meeting, members deliberated on the issue of allowing dogs on council property. It was acknowledged that official property signs have recently been installed across all sites to improve accessibility and provide contact information for the Council. Concerns were raised regarding incidents of dog fouling within these areas.

PD highlighted resident complaints, noting that many families own dogs, yet emphasised the importance of maintaining hygiene standards, particularly in play areas designated for children's safety. It was unanimously agreed that dogs should be prohibited from entering play areas. In the context of Charlton Down sports field, where controlling dog access proves challenging, it was deemed necessary to encourage dog walkers to keep their pets on leads. Following thorough discussion, the decision was reached to permit dogs on leads in Millers Orchard.

Motion proposed by PD, seconded by RE, with one abstention.

b. To consider the Charminster Farm Allotment rent given the outstanding issues

MS provided an update on the Allotments following the Parish Council's assumption of ownership. Several challenges have arisen, including issues with waterlogging on various plots due to recent wet weather and disparities in soil composition across different areas.

Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the placement and relocation of the water meter. TM, acting as the representative for the Charminster Farm Allotment (CFA), will oversee the resolution of these matters.

Considering the difficulties faced, the Council reached a consensus to defer the rent payment from the transfer date in July 2024 to January 2025, aiming to alleviate the financial impact of these delays.

Motion proposed by RE, seconded by KB, and unanimously supported by all members present.

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c. To discuss the recent theft of troughs at Charlton Down Allotments

During the discussion, it was noted that further information is needed regarding the costs associated with resolving the issues at the Allotments and whether an insurance claim can be pursued to mitigate expenses. Councillors proposed the consideration of using plastic troughs as a potential solution for future occurrences. Given the need for additional details and deliberation, it was agreed to defer the decision on this matter to the April meeting.

d. To consider the repair of the goal mouths at the Olympic Park Charlton Down.

This item was deferred pending further information.

24/3-9. Finance and General Purposes

a. To consider the quotes for compost bins at Charlton Down.

This item was deferred pending further information.

b. To consider the costs of 6 new fence posts at CD Community Orchard.

After gathering two quotes, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the replacement of the posts at a maximum cost of £300.

Motion proposed by TY, seconded by CM, with two abstentions. Action MS & TM

c. To consider the cost of the replacement gate at the Nature Area.

After gathering two quotes for the footway entrance to the Nature Area, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the replacement gate at a maximum cost of £200.

Motion proposed by TY, seconded by PD. Action MS & TM

d. To consider the purchase of pond plants for the Nature Area

CM provided an update on the progress of the Pond project and requested £100 to cover the cost of pond plants. KB expressed concern, stating that these expenses should have been accounted for within the original Pond project budget and suggested that the Council might have been misled regarding the financial requirements. Despite this, it was unanimously agreed to support the purchase of pond plants. The motion was proposed by CM and seconded by TM, with two abstentions.

e. To consider purchasing gravel for the paths at the Nature Area.

CM explained that improvements are needed to the current paths placing type 1 material was considered it was agreed to spend up to £200 for the dumpy bags.

Motion proposed CM, seconded TM, with two abstentions. Action TM & CM

f. To consider the purchase of Pickle Ball equipment for the Community Hall.

MS introduced Pickleball as an enjoyable sport amalgamating elements from badminton, tennis, and table tennis, playable both indoors and outdoors on a badminton-sized court with a slightly modified tennis net. Highlighting its rising popularity and low-impact nature, MS proposed purchasing a full set of Pickleball equipment for hall use, not exceeding £300.

This was unanimously supported by the Council, who agreed to allocate £300 for the purchase. MS and CE were tasked with actioning the acquisition.

g. To receive the monthly finance reports and check bank reconciliations

MS carried out the checks prior to the start of the meeting, CM signed off the supplier invoices.

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

A report of the payments was circulated and is available on the PC website.

Proposed by CM, seconded by TM, with unanimous agreement from all members present.

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24/3-10. To consider any Planning Matters-

- i. P/TRC/2024/01108 Proposal: T95 Horse Chestnut – Fell T96 Beech - Reduce in height by up to 2m, reduce the sides by up to 3m & remove deadwood.
All trees throughout the area - remove deadwood and hangers Location: Area 1 Land North of Selwood House Charlton Down
- ii. P/TRC/2024/01112 Proposal: T57 – 2 x Ash - Fell
T10 & T11 – Ash- Fell Location: Walnut Court Hawthorn Road Charlton Down Dorset DT2 9XE
- iii. P/TRC/2024/01113 Proposal: T76 Beech - Reduce in height by up to 2m, reduce the sides by up to 3m to bring in the overextended lateral and stems to shape and balance & remove deadwood T1 & T2 Ash – Fell All trees throughout the area remove deadwood and hangers Location: Area 2 Land Adjacent to Birch Way Charlton Down.
No objections raised on any of the tree works applications.

24/3-11. Matters for information and Interest-

a. To confirm the date of the Annual Litter pick.

It was tentatively agreed to set the date for April 14th, pending confirmation with the Pre-school, who expressed interest in collaborating. The plan includes utilizing the hall for volunteer refreshments, with LSP generously offering the services of the Book Club for this purpose. Dorset Waste Services will be approached to provide litter pick kits and arrange for rubbish collection.

KB proposed this plan, which was seconded by TM, and unanimously supported by all members present.

24/3-12. To make arrangements for the Annual Parish Assembly.

The Annual Parish Assembly is scheduled for April 2nd at 6:30 pm, rather than at the May meeting, considering the new Council's assumption of office in May. The Parish Council meeting will follow thereafter.

24/3-13. To confirm items for the next PC meeting on 2nd April 2024 at Charlton Down

Agenda items to be confirmed, it was also noted that the Annual Parish Council meeting will be held on 14th May 2024 at Charminster Community Hall.

With no additional business to discuss, MS adjourned the meeting at 20:15.

Topic: Litter Pick Date

In reference to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2024 an addendum is hereby added to provide further information regarding the litter pick date.

During the meeting, it was discussed to set a tentative date for the litter pick event. Following subsequent deliberations, a confirmed date has been agreed upon for the litter pick, which is scheduled for April 7th.

This addendum is included to ensure accuracy and completeness in documenting the decisions made during the meeting.