

MINUTES OF THE 2022 AGM OF CORFE PARISH COUNCIL AND CORFE SOCIETIES
HELD AT CORFE VILLAGE HALL, TUESDAY 10th May 2022.

Present: Cllr J Harrison, Cllr B Lenthall, Cllr C Brown, Cllr D Bradbeer, Cllr J Jackson, Cllr G Alexander, Cllr A Butler, SCC Cllr S Wakefield, and Cllr R Henley
Five members of the public.

Chairman Cllr J Harrison opened the meeting at 6.00pm, welcoming all.

72/09: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. – Keith Gosling (Corfe Village Hall and Corfe Community Trust), Sue Ford (Corfe Quilters).

73/09: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr Harrison: Almshouse Trust. Cllr C Brown: Village Hall Committee.

74/09: CHAIRMAN. Cllr J Harrison was re-elected as Chairman.

75/09: ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN. Cllr B Lenthall was re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

76/09: MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD 7th May AGM 2019 (the last AGM prior to Covid) and Parish Council Meeting held 8th March 2022 were discussed briefly.
The Minutes have been circulated, published, and signed as accurate records.

77/09: MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES - Nothing was commented on.

78/09: CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW.
This was approved and signed.

79/09: APPROVAL OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22.
This was approved and signed.

80/09: APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTING STATEMENT 2021/22.
This was approved and signed.

81/09: REPORTS OF COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

Reports were submitted by:

- Cllr S Wakefield TDBC – See Appendix 1 below
- Cllr J Thorne, SCC (no longer in post following Council elections) – See Appendix 2 below

82/09: REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.

PLANNING: Cllr J Harrison – Reported one application for improvements to the Golf Club storage shed was approved. Nothing further to report.

HIGHWAYS: Cllr B. Lenthall – Reported on the recently completed patching process of the main road through Corfe and addressed resident concerns from the floor relating to the exercise. This mainly focused on residents' access and the closing of associated minor roads around the area causing confusion at the time. He also pre-warned those present that a top-dressing exercise of the road would commence in the summer months once sufficient good weather allowed.

RIGHTS OF WAYS: Cllr D. Bradbeer - Reported that he would shortly commence work on clearing vegetation growth from stiles within our area and had nothing further to report.

WEBSITE: Cllr J Jackson – The website has been maintained in a timely manner and continues to provide residents with up-to-information. We currently have four paid-up advertisers on the website. An email newsletter continues to be sent out to the distribution list of around 100 people. This provides a commentary on what has been going on in the village and compliments the bi-monthly Community Matters magazine.

VILLAGE HALL: Cllr. C. Brown – Presented the Village Hall report for 2021/22 (See attached) he also made references to a recently held Village Hall Meeting on Wednesday 4th May 2022. These minutes and the report are now available for public viewing on the Corfe Village Website and on the Village Hall Notice Boards.

GREEN PORTFOLIO – Cllr. G Alexander – Cllr Grace Alexander shared that Savills had been in touch to suggest some potential plots of land for a community growing area. This is being followed up. Another bulk buy was undertaken for several village residents.

ALMSHOUSE CHARITY SELICKS GREEN REPORT – Cllr J Harrison – Reported that he was pleased to say all residents are well and none suffered from Covid. We have had solar panels installed and have had difficulty with electric suppliers to connect to the Grid but hopefully now this has been resolved. The exterior walls to the houses are currently being decorated. As three of the residents, despite repeated requests, do not tend the gardens, so we are arranging for contractors to tidy and maintain periodically. The finances are very healthy currently standing at £57k.

83/09: WHITE HART INN CORFE UPDATE – The White Hart Inn in Corfe has now been sold subject to contract. No further information on the potential buyer was available. Once the purchase is complete, it is hoped further information will become available.

84/09: FINANCES AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS SUMMARY 2021/22 – Cllr J Harrison provided an update on finances. Our current cash position is a bank balance of £32,047.56 with cheques to be cashed totalling £5,958.62, leaving us a total of £26088.94. Monies currently being held within this total that are protected include: £3,327.00 reserved for the Corfe Gateway project and £1434.67 held on behalf of the suspended Corfe Lifts group. We therefore have a true Parish Council Balance of £21,327.27 as of 10/05/2022.

85/09: CORRESPONDENCE – Reports of the War Memorial wooden posts rotting have been received. It has been agreed that remedial work by the Parish Council will now be commissioned to restore this important village feature.

86/09: ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Cllr J Harrison reported that he had investigated various Village Hall insurance companies and had concluded that Zurich, at £856.19, represented the best value for money. A three-year fixed price premium was also available, and councilors agreed that this would be a good option in the present climate. Cllr C Brown asked if this insurance policy could also include the newly installed SIDS within any new premium as they were Parish Council property for insurance purposes. He believed that Blagdon Hill SID had already been included under their insurance by Pitminster Parish Council.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 19 July 2022 at 6.30pm

Appendix 1 – Report from Cllr. Sarah Wakefield (SWT Ward Councillor for Trull, Pitminster, and Corfe).

Dawn Johnson, Ross Henley, and I have been very tied up with the election for the past few weeks and little of note has happened at SWT on which I can report. Covid cases are declining but people are advised to get their booster jabs as soon as they become eligible.

Election Results

The results of the Somerset County Council elections are as follows in terms of the number of councillors elected: Liberal Democrat (61); Conservative (36); Green Party (5); Labour (5); Independent (3).

In this parish, which forms part of the Blackdown and Neroche Ward, Ross Henley and myself were elected for a term which ends in 2027.

Full details of the results for individual divisions and candidates can be found on the elections results page on the SCC website. The results mean that the Liberal Democrats take overall control of Somerset County council with immediate effect.

More than 430,000 people were eligible to vote for the 337 candidates standing for the 110 seats. The turnout at the election by district was Mendip – 39.3%; Sedgemoor – 30%; Somerset West and Taunton – 38.73%; South Somerset – 38.15.

For their first year, the councillors will take responsibility for all current County Council services and oversee the local government reorganisation to establish the single unitary Somerset Council on 1 April 2023. District councils will remain until 31 March 2023 and the councillors serving on them will continue in their roles until that date.

Somerset Community Foundation

Grants from the Somerset Fund available for local charities

Grants up to £2,500 are now available for smaller charities, community groups, sports clubs and social enterprises based in Somerset.

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) manages The Somerset Fund and is encouraging groups that run on less than £100,000 a year to apply now for funding.

The grants from The Somerset Fund can be used to pay for essential running costs, like rent, utilities, insurance, or staff time – sometimes known as core costs. The money can also be used for the costs of delivering a project or service in or for your community.

Applications to the fund must be made by 5.00pm, Friday 3 June 2022.

Council Tax Rebate

SWT is now in the process of paying out the £150 Council Tax rebate via people's bank accounts with those on direct debit being the first to receive it. It applies only to those in Bands A-D.

Dawn, Ross, and I will be available to help with any issues that arise for residents at District or County level over the next 11 months and after that Ross and I will be your representatives. We intend to keep up the pressure to prevent any allocation or development of the Orchard Portman Farm land and to retain an interest in the A358 dualling project.

Appendix 2 – John Thorne (SCC)

Dear Parish Clerks,

This briefing covers one topic: Local Government Elections 2022

Election of councillors to SCC/new Somerset Council

I have today learned that I have not been re-elected to the county council division of Blackdown and Neroche, and so this will be my last IBM briefing for you.

The county council will continue 'as is' until next April 1st when the unitary Somerset Council will be vested (i.e., become a legal entity).

During the time between now and then, there will continue to be much detailed planning for how the new council will work, much of it around the Local Community Networks which are intended to be set up. Personally, I continue to have my doubts as to whether the LCNs will be formed in time and if they will actually work in practice. That is not a political point, it is a view I have expressed over many weeks now.

However, I will not be a part of that process and will not have any influence over it. I will, though, see it develop from the same perspective as yourselves because I remain a town councillor in Wellington.

You will now be served by two county/unitary councillors until the next elections in 2027, who are Ross Henley and Sarah Wakefield, whom I am sure will already be known to many of you as SWT Council members for parts of the division.

So, it remains for me to thank you all for everything you do for your parish councils (I do know from personal experience just how hard it is to do the job you do) and to say how much of a privilege it has been for me to represent your communities on the county council and the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Partnership these past five years.