

**MINUTES OF THE CORFE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD AT CORFE VILLAGE HALL, TUESDAY 12th September 2023.**

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Harrison, Cllr. B Lenthall, Cllr. C Brown, Cllr. D Bradbeer, Cllr. G Alexander, SCC Cllr. S Wakefield and SCC Cllr. R Henley.

Six members of the public.

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

**61/10: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** – Cllr. A Butler. Cllr. J Jackson

**62/10: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** Cllr. Harrison (Almshouse's Trust). Cllr. C Brown (Village Hall Committee).

**63/10: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 11TH July 2023** - Discussed. The minutes have been circulated, published, and signed as accurate records.

**64/10: MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES** – Nothing was commented on.

**65/10: REPORTS OF COUNTY COUNCILLORS.**

SCC Cllr S Wakefield of Somerset County Council highlighted several issues that appear in her written report:

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Latest-SCC-Report.pdf>

A discussion took place concerning speeding in many parishes and how our SIDS were being hailed as a successful way of reminding motorists of the speed they were doing. A question from the floor then prompted a debate over the current 30mph and 40mph zones within the village and the need for these to be extended in both the southern and northern directions out of Corfe to help with deceleration. It was asked whether we could approach Highways for assistance in achieving this goal now that a proposal for a 40mph extension to the south of the village was gathering pace.

**66/10: REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

**PLANNING: Cllr J Harrison** – Reported he had one application which had been accepted with no objections.

**HIGHWAYS: Cllr B. Lenthall** – Reported surface dressing of Corfe Hill had now been completed. Verge trimming had been a bit 'hit and miss' within our area and white lining had also been completed. SCC would decide how much grit will be placed in our bins this year. A new bin is awaiting installation opposite the former White Hart Inn once we become aware of the filling dates.

**RIGHTS OF WAY: Cllr D. Bradbeer** – Nothing to report.

**WEBSITE: Cllr J Jackson** – Reported in his absence that the website remains well used and nothing further to report.

**VILLAGE HALL: Cllr C Brown/Mr K Gosling/Mrs E Bowers/Mr N Furniss** – Addressed those present on current Village Hall matters.

Cllr C Brown once again reminded those present that the minutes of the latest Village Hall Committee meetings are displayed on the village noticeboards and website.

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/VHall-Minutes-Aug-2023-1.pdf>

He then handed over to Mrs Emma Bowers who provided us with a brief update on the proposals from questionnaire recently sent to residents.

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Village-Hall-2023-Questionnaire-Analysis-.pdf>

Nigel Furniss then updated on planning permission for an extension being approved in principle subject to the usual planning procedures. He also highlighted that an amendment to this plan to help reduce proposed costs has now been made and we are awaiting feedback from the authorities. We will then contact all interested parties within the village for a meeting to seek out what residents want from their Village Hall in the future.

Cllr. C Brown also highlighted that solar panel proposals were underway to help reduce energy costs of the hall. Our thanks go out to Mr Neil Bailey for his efforts on our behalf. We are currently awaiting estimates from companies before proceeding with any proposals, but cost reduction compared to outlay is looking very promising. He also highlighted the hall now has Wi-Fi and recently hosted a very successful SCC Parishes meeting.

Mr Keith Gosling reminded those present that we remain mindful the Village Hall is the only hospitality venue in Corfe now the White Hart is closed.

**GREEN PORTFOLIO** – Cllr G Alexander – Had nothing to report on this occasion but highlighted she has signed up to this newsletter:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/climate-and-ecological-emergency/newsletter-sign-up/>

**ALMSHOUSE CHARITY SELICKS GREEN REPORT** – Cllr J Harrison – Had nothing new to report.

**67/10: WHITE HART INN - UPDATE** – Cllr J Harrison reminded those present that the Asset of Community Value (ACV) on the White Hart Inn had now been restored after appearing to have been removed. He also reported a telephone conversation with the owner following our concerns over the neglect of the property – a threat was made by the owner that he would remove the roof to avoid business rates. He said the plan was purely a residential project. Cllr J Harrison invited the owner to our meeting and asked for plans of the proposals but neither happened.

The owner has now placed the property up for sale and is looking for the ‘right offer’. However, he has made it clear he has no intention to run it as a pub himself despite the ACV being in force.

He currently plans to continue advertising it for sale for the next two months and will then approach the council to see what can be done. For details on the sale see: <https://www.fleurets.com/search.html>

A discussion then took place on how sad it was to see our pub so neglected and could we not do something to improve its appearance or put pressure on the owner to show duty of care. This concern centred around the pub appearance and in restoration of the asset as a public house or similar. The consensus was that what is urgently needed is a large financial injection with energy and drive from a willing person or group prepared to make it work. The success of the Queens Arms at Pitminster and other nearby establishments, plus other village resident run projects near our area, were again highlighted as success stories in the hope that someone might try to make a go of things. We can only hope that something or someone will give it a go. Government grants to support such an enterprise especially in rural areas that are lacking amenities and in danger of losing a village asset do exist and are available for anyone to apply for once a business plan is in place.

**68/10: GATEWAY DISCUSSION** – Cllr J Harrison opened the floor to a discussion on the proposed Village Gateway at the north end of the village. Land in this area is not SCC or Corfe PC owned and is subject to landowner governance. The conclusion was that the area of land in question is an eyesore in its current state and a compromise beneficial to all would need to be found. This might prove difficult unless viewpoints held on maintaining the area could be changed.

**69/10: FINANCES** – Cllr J Harrison provided an update on finances as of 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Monies currently being held by the Parish Council include protected funds of £3,327.00 (reserved for the Corfe Gateway project) and £1434.67 (held on behalf of the suspended Corfe Lifts group). This leaves total Parish Council Funds available of £21,843.48. Payments made since the last meeting on 11th July 2023 include Parsons (£226.44) and Parsons not cashed (£150.96).

**70/10: CORRESPONDANCE** – The next Local Community Network (LCN) meeting has been proposed but a date and place has yet to be decided. The telegraph pole that sits in the pathway opposite Mount Pleasant residence has again been highlighted as a danger to residents. BT however remain adamant that no action will be taken unless the SCC Council or Corfe PC are prepared to pay for it.

**71/10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – Abandoned signage now overgrown by vegetation was highlighted. Cllr. B Lenthall said he would seek to resolve the situation but that the signs were not those used by Highways. The new LGA Model Code of Conduct has been adopted by Corfe PC following advice from Cllr. J Harrison that its content was not contentious and was similar in many ways to the current Code we follow. No objections were made on the night to this proposal.

**Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 6.00pm**