

MINUTES OF THE CORFE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT CORFE VILLAGE HALL, TUESDAY 14th November 2023.

PRESENT: Cllr J Harrison, Cllr. B Lenthall, Cllr. C Brown, Cllr. D Bradbeer, Cllr. J Jackson, Cllr. A Butler, SCC Cllr. S Wakefield.

Seven members of the public.

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

72/10: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. – Cllr. G Alexander.

73/10: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Cllr. Harrison (Alms-house's Trust). Cllr. C Brown and Cllr. A Butler (Village Hall Committee).

74/10: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 12th SEPTEMBER 2022 - Discussed. The minutes have been circulated, published, and signed as accurate records.

75/10: MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES – Confirmation a new bin opposite the former White Hart Inn will be in place to receive grit from SCC was sought from Cllr B Lenthall (Highways Portfolio Holder). Cllr B Lenthall was hopeful the existing contents of the old bin could be saved prior to a new one being placed and was going to ask.

76/10: REPORTS OF COUNTY COUNCILLORS. – SCC Cllr S Wakefield of Somerset County Council highlighted to those present the serious financial issues now facing SCC which appear in a written report:

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Latest-SCC-Report.pdf>

She also reported Council Tax could not go up by more than the 5% under current rules which was a concern for the new Council due to many years of reduced capital being available. This is especially so for adult and childcare spiralling costs that must be met. A Section 114 bankruptcy code was a genuine possibility. Refuse collections would not be affected but other costs such as sandbag supply and the £600 grant normally forwarded to the Parish Council to maintain Queens Acre would probably be suspended and must be met by the Parish Council precept.

There was then a discussion on worrying speeds and dangerous driving by some motorists approaching Corfe from Taunton. It was asked why the new 40mph limit now being applied to the B3170 from Corfe southwards into the Backdown Hills done could not have been added to northern approach for consistency. Residents will be asked to support a proposed petition which will be sent to Highways for action to be considered to amend this continuing resident worry.

The Airband proposals regarding the erection of new telegraph posts and the lack of communication in replying to resident enquiries was also highlighted. A proposed community call to residents was proposed and noted for action to hopefully be arranged by the Parish Council in due course.

77/10: REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.

PLANNING: Cllr J Harrison – Reported we had a request from Somerset regards the Corfe application on which we had no comment.

HIGHWAYS: Cllr B. Lenthall – Reported that the 40mph limit south of Corfe had been extended and works completed. He also reported concerns regarding limbs of privately-owned trees causing traffic problems for motorists and was advising the residents concerned.

A discussion then took place regarding works being undertaken by Hi-Line in association with National Grid to clear trees and foliage on the B3170 that impacts residents' electricity cables and the increases power failures in our area. Residents have reported that despite several surveys of their properties being done by National Grid the proposed works are now some years behind, with surveys overlapping with the works required. It was agreed the only way of progressing this work might be for residents to personally contact the relevant authorities – National Grid and Hi-Line – if they have outstanding works still to be completed so that this can be progressed correctly.

RIGHTS OF WAY: Cllr D. Bradbeer – Nothing to report other than paths are very muddy and waterlogged in places.

WEBSITE: Cllr J Jackson – The website remains well used. We also now have 71 listed on the Keep Corfe Healthy WhatsApp group and a further 110 also receiving the email newsletter. If residents want to be added, please contact Cllr. J Jackson. Nothing further to report.

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

The latest Village Hall Committee meeting minutes are now being displayed on the Village Hall noticeboards and the Parish website. Mr Keith Gosling provided us with a brief update on some of these for those present. Pilates for women and men has been introduced to village activities, as well as a mature mover's group. Because of this activity future Parish Council meetings will now occur on Wednesday and not Tuesday to accommodate the busy work schedule of the instructor. Parish Councillor's present discussed this request and had few objections to the change of day which will help with Village Hall income from increased bookings. This was appreciated by the Committee.

Free broadband internet has now been installed at the hall which should prove popular with all users.

Mrs Emma Bowers talked about the first of hopefully many Community Café days taking place on Wednesday 15th November. All residents are asked to support this great community effort as a lot of hard work and effort has been put in by volunteers within the community. We hope many residents and their friends will benefit in many ways by having a venue in which to meet up and get to know your neighbours. This was a high scoring request from a survey sent out, so we are pleased to provide it.

Nigel Furniss then explained to those present the current position regarding a proposed extension to the Village Hall which has had a further amendment proposal added to the planning permission application. Once approval is granted, he will work out full building costs by using three builder quotes. Building grants will also be applied for to assist with costs involved. A community meeting will then be called in the new year once full details are known to ensure that the community is

then fully aware of benefits and costs involved as it will be important to know what monies will be required should the project proceed.

GREEN PORTFOLIO – Cllr G Alexander – Was not present to report on the night and had sent her apologies.

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

78/10: FINANCES – Cllr J Harrison provided an update on finances as of 14th November 2023. Monies currently being held by the Parish Council include protected funds of £3,327.00 (reserved for the Corfe Gateway project) and £1,434.67 (held on behalf of the suspended Corfe Lifts group). This leaves us with total Parish Council Funds available of £21,746.77.

Payments made since last meeting on 12th September 2023 include Leisure Benches, (£374.40), Broadband Contribution (£34.72), Somerset Association of Local Councils (£87.75), Parsons Landscaper's (£150.96), Somerset Council Dog Bins empty (£57.17), Krystal Website Hosting (£84.00), Royal British Legion Wreath (£25.00), and Parsons Landscaping (£156.96). The total is £964.96.

Funds credited since last meeting: Broadband Village Hall payment (£16.80), Somerset Council (£605), HMRC (£299.66), 3D Cleaning Advertising (£10). The total is £931.46.

79/10: CORRESPONDENCE – Cllr J Harrison had nothing new to report.

80/10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Cllr. A Butler requested if he could be considered as the new tree warden for Corfe and will approach the current warden who had expressed an interest to step down.

The Parish Council does require a play area warden to occasionally inspect the play park and equipment visually and report back any defects or concerns so that appropriate remedial action could be considered. Could any volunteer please contact Cllr. J Harrison. Please be aware this is a role to assist the Parish Council in preventing any future accidents. No technical skills are required but would be appreciated. We are aware that fresh bark for the play surface is required, and this is being sorted. The role should not be too arduous, but it would assist greatly in the maintenance of our lovely park.

A request was made from the Community Café Volunteers to allow well behaved dogs on leads on to the patio when the Community Café was open. It was accepted as an exception to the usual rule banning dogs on Queens Acre. Those present agreed this was an acceptable request that will be monitored.

Cllr. J Harrison wished all those present a Merry Christmas, this being the last meeting of 2023.

PLEASE NOTE FROM THE NEXT MEETING ALL MEETINGS WILL BE ON A WEDNESDAY.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 17th January 2024 at 6.00pm