**HILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of Hilton Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd May 2022**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Justine McGuiness (JMcG) (Chairman) Catherine Langham (CL) (Vice Chairman) Shulla Jaques (SJ) Rodney Northover (RN) Marion Walbridge (MW); (JH), Clive Jones (CJ) George Sotiriadis (GS) Unitary Councillor Jill Haynes (JH)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Justine McGuinness offered tocontinue as PC Chairman for a final period of 12 months. This was seconded by Cllr Jaques and unanimously supported by all Cllrs. Cllr McGuinness signed the Chairman’s Acceptance of Office
2. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Langham offered to continue as PC Vice Chairman for another 12 months. This was agreed & supported by all Cllrs.
3. **APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO VARIOUS POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

These were agreed as follows –

1. **Trees** – Cllr Jones
2. **Highways** – Cllr Northover
3. **Footpaths** – Cllrs Langham & McGuiness
4. **Planning applications** – Cllrs Jaques & Sotiriadis
5. **Defibrillator** - Cllr Sotiriadis
6. **Ancient Monuments** – Cllr Walbridge

In addition, non-councillor Adrian Simmonds was appointed as Floods Officer.

1. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT, CERTIFICATE of EXEMPTION, ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT and STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS** - were all approved and duly signed by the Chairrman.

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1. **CHAIRMANS REPORT:**

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his work during the year and reported that the year had featured noteworthy progress in several respects despite the Covid pandemic and had successfully worked towards the restoration a degree of normal life after two very difficult years.

The re-purposing of the telephone box as a tourist Information Centre had been a great achievement and this will be formally opened during the Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend on the 2nd June at 4 p.m. The Chairman thanked Marc for all his work in relation to this.

Cllr Jones was thanked for recording and reporting incidences of ash-die back throughout the Parish.

Cllr Northover and Cllr Jaques were thanked for dealing with Highways and Footpaths issues during the year.

The Chairman also thanked Cllr Jaques for assisting in the preparation of the exhibition for the Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend and thanked all involved in organising events.

The Chairman noted that the Council now had rigour in financial accountability with a formal grant policy in place and was much more business-like in its approach to awarding a grants, for example to All Saints Church, Hilton. The Chairman thanked Cllr Langham for her work in connection with the Church.

The Chairman noted that the PC had dealt with planning applications very effectively and noted that the Parish Council was still an important part of Local Government, being between two parliamentary constituencies, and always holding contested elections.

1. **OBJECTIVES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR:**

The Chairman noted that digital communications will be become and increasing part of everyday life and the PC will play its part in this.

The PC will continue to deal with issues such as ash die-back, highways concerns, footpaths issues and planning applications.

The replacement of the bench seat at Hilton will be a project for the year as will the possible installation of a new bench in the Ansty/Melcombe Bingham area.

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**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. David Green, Clerk (DG)

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on the 1st March 2022 were agreed and signed the Chairman.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

**4.1 Telephone Box** – The work on the conversion of the telephone box is virtually complete.

The Chairman has ordered a map which will be laminated before being installed, and as noted above, it will be opened as a Tourist Information Centre at the Jubilee weekend.

Advertising for local businesses will reviewed by JMCG before being promoted on the Information board.

**4.2 Litter pick** – The PC agreed to reimburse CL £ 75 towards the true cost of the litter pick

**4.3 Signage at the Knapp** – JH had discussed wording of the signage with the Highways Officer and is has been agreed that this should be restricted to ‘Unsuitable for HGV’s’.

The PC agreed that Dorset Council should be asked to provide the signs.

**4.4 Ash Die back** – CJ asked CL & RN to keep an eye on several trees at roadside on their land.

**4.5 Signage at the Ford –** CL brought the new corex signs to the meeting which all agreed were very good. These will be put up shortly.

1. **UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**:

Cllr Jill Haynes had conducted a tour of her parishes with Council Leader Spencer Flower, and has explained the particular issues concerning Hilton and it’s neighbouring parishes.

Dorset Councils ‘Transformation’ programme had produced savings of £ 7.6 million in the first year, involving some 19 projects, and the Council is on track to deliver total savings of

£ 27 million by 2024.

The Council has reviewed what the actual costs of providing services are and as a consequence has allocated a further £ 10 million to the ‘Place’ function (Highways, Footpaths & the Environment).

The Council will be holding an ‘Away Day’ at the ‘Battle Lab’ at Winfrith

for the Senior Leadership Team to develop ideas of where the authority wants to be in 5/10 years’ time.

JH acknowledged that some planning decisions in the Poole basin area have been held up because of concerns relating to phosphorous in the water supply. The Environment Agency and DEFRA have been making farm visits to test supplies although the delay really only concerns large scale developments of new properties, rather than extensions or alterations.

JH was asked about DC’s preparedness for nuclear war and advised that whilst there was an ‘emergency hub’ of partners there had not been any specific instructions as such. It had been observed that there had been a lot of military activity in the local area. It was noted that a number of Ukrainian refugees had arrived, were now living locally and had been welcomed by the community.

In relation to planning policy, JH agreed to take up the decision of the Planning Policy Team not notify Hilton PC of proposed developments in neighbouring parishes which may significantly impact on Hilton Parish in terms of transport and possible flooding issues.

1. **OPEN FORUM:**

There were no issues raised.

1. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS & ISSUES**

**7.1 New Applications**

There were no new applications.

**7.2 Application ref P/HOU/2022/01967 - 5 Hillside Hilton Blandford Forum DT11 0DB**

Erect single storey side extension. Remove existing timber lean to outbuilding

SJ had spoken to near neighbours and there were no objections. Suitable comments had been posted on the planning portal before the deadline of 2nd May 2022.

**7.3 Hawkes Field**

There were no further updates in relation to the outstanding CLUED application relating to the parking of heavy goods vehicles.

1. **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

The Chairman noted that the Hilton Parish meeting had supported the recommendation to form a Grouped Parish Council; the Melcombe Horsey Parish meeting had voted against the proposal. The parish meeting of Stoke Wake had not been well attended and the recommendation was only supported by two votes to one, with two abstentions; those present did not feel as though they could make a decision for the rest of the community.

The Parish Council agreed by a majority that there was insufficient support to justify taking the proposal forward. The Clerk will make suitable comments to Dorset Council.

1. **COMMUNITY SANDBAG STORE**

The Chairman noted the suggestion by the Floods Officer that the PC considers setting up a sandbag store. The Chairman had taken local soundings and had received comments that these were very difficult to manage and would be largely impractical given the geographical nature of Hilton Parish. The PC agreed that actions should be limited to asking residents to understand the particular risks in their own neighbourhood and prepare accordingly.

1. **H. M. THE QUEEEN’S PLATINUM JUBILEE WEEKEND UPDATE**

The Chairman noted that total costs for printing and other items would now be circa £ 500. The PC agreed to set aside funding from the reserves for this purpose, to include bunting and printing/lamination costs.

**10.1** **Exhibition stand funding request** – a request for funding assistance in relation the exhibition boards had been received but the PC felt that at £ 500 to £ 700 these were too expensive; SJ had located a second-hand exhibition board which may suitable for around £ 150.

* 1. **Flower Festival donation request** – The PC agreed to provide a £ 100 donation towards the flower festival to be held at All Saints Church.

1. **PARISH BENCH SEATS**

**11.1** **Hilton - Queens Golden Jubilee bench seat – replacement**

The Chairman noted that the existing seat in Hilton had disintegrated, and a replacement should be obtained. It was agreed that would ideally be or oak or larch, or possible another hardwood. CJ agreed to research suitable examples.

**11.2** **Melcombe Bingham – new seat**

The Chairman proposed that the PC considers obtaining a new seat for either the Village Hall, the Green at Melcombe Bingham or for near the phone box. It was agreed that suitable examples and quotes should be obtained for the next meeting.

1. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

**12.1 Finance report:**

The Clerk’s report showed that the financial position was very positive, with both the precept and VAT repayment having been received, the bank balance at 30th April stood at £ 12,514.07 and the general reserve was £ 10,176.00.

**10.2 Retrospective payments authorised:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Amount** | **Payee** | **Reason** |
| 02/03/2022 | £ 18.00 | David Green | Expenses |
| 02/03/2022 | £ 258.07 | Hilton PCC | Balance of Grant |
| 03/03/2022 | £ 89.40 | Flags & Bunting | Platinum Jubilee |
| 04/03/2022 | £ 70.00 | The Old Bewery Hall | Hall Hire 5/4 (inc deposit) |
| 16/03/2022 | £ 60.00 | The Old Brewery Hall | Hall Hire 20/4 (inc deposit) |
| 28/03/2022 | £ 45.00 | SPD UK Ltd | Cork tiles for Tel Box |
| 30/03/2022 | £ 284.00 | David Green | March 2022 pay |
| 08/04/2022 | £ 181.60 | HMRC (PAYE) | PAYE |
| 20/04/2022 | £ 230.40 | Justine McGuiness (re Wix) | Reimburse Wix cost |
| 25/04/2022 | £ 78.00 | Dorset Council | Salt dumpy bag (from 2021) |
| 29/04/2022 | £ 43.20 | 4D Signs | Ford signage |

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**12.2** Clerk’s expenses of £ 36.46 were approved.

1. **HIGHWAYS & RIGHTS OF WAY REPORTS**

Cllr Northover noted the excellent work of Dorset Council in dealing with the road flooding issue at Aller Lane. A culvert had been dug under the road, a ditch deepened and the road re-surfaced which has alleviated the problem.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **From** | **Subject** | **Notes** |
| **03/03** | John Burridge (Dorset Council) | Oak fence at Hilton Duck St culvert. | Estate type fencing only approved. Clerk will write to Charles Tibbey |
| **07/03** | Dorset Deserves Better Campaign | Newsletter 5 | Noted |
| **11/03** | Dorset Deserves Better Campaign | Tipping Points for Change event 28/3 | Past event notification |
| **14/03** | Carol Byrom | Litter picking along Long Lane proposal | It was felt that this road was largely covered by existing litterpickers |
| **15/03** | Dick Rowe | Tree trunks left at Brightsmead | Reported to Sovereign HA and subsequently removed |
| **18/03** | Dorset Deserves Better Campaign | Letter to Spencer Flower | Campaign pressure letter - Noted |
| **18/03** | Corinne Holbrook | Replacement road sign - Brightsmead | Added to works list |
| **19/04** | Flood Wessex | SSEN Resilient Community Fund Grants | Noted, but not discussed |
| **22/04** | Dorset Deserves Better Campaign | Newsletter 6 | Noted |
| **29/04** | David Walsh - Dorset Planning | Planning update meeting 27th May | Event notification. JMcG may attend this if available |

1. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA:**

Bench seat proposals

1. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 5th July 2022 in the Fox’s Den room at the Fox Inn, Lower Ansty.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:25

Signed ………………………….…...…...……(Chairman) Date ……….………………………

**Report to the Parish Council April 2022**

**Jill Haynes, Chalk Valleys Ward**

**Budget**

April saw the final figures for the 21/22 budget and I am pleased to report that despite some significant challenges with Covid costs it was on target. We also reviewed the savings made in year one of our transformation programme and there was some slippage here. £7.1M savings were made against a target of £10M but much of this is being rolled into this year. In other words, the savings will be made but not a quickly as we had hoped. These will be rolled into this year’s programme which is anticipating £6.5M plus the delayed savings from last year. N all by making changes to the way we work and some invest to save the council is on track to have made £27M savings by 2024. This is desperately needed for us to balance the books. Dorset Council receives no Government grant, if we were treated in the same way as other shire counties our Grant would be about £6M, or as an urban authority somewhere closer to £50M. The formula for funding does not take into account the costs of our rurality or the fact that we have the highest population of over 85’s in the UK. As a council we are petitioning our MP’s and the Government to get us a fairer deal.

**Additional funding for high needs block**

We have finally managed to get an agreement with the Dept. of Education to put some funding into the education of special needs children in Dorset. This school’s budget has historically run as a deficit a bit like a credit card debt. In five years’ time the rules will change and the council will become responsible for the debt and I’m sure you know that we cannot have a deficit budget. The estimated debt at that time was some £68M. We have been negotiating for a little while to resolve this and have turned down initial offers but have now agreed on £47M over the five years and we will cover the rest under our savings programme. This is a great result, and we appear to have done much better than many other councils, the first tranche of £17 M was paid this week.

**Dorset Integrated Care System**

This is to go live 1st July. The newly appointed CE is Patricia Miller. Patricia was until recently the CE of Dorset County Hospital and it’s great to have someone with both passion and local knowledge to be at the helm. The Clinical Commissioning Group will be disbanded, and all future decisions about health services will be made by the ICS board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. There is an independent Chair who is Jenni Douglas-Todd and just appointed as the new chief medical officer Dr Paul Johnson. Hopefully, this will bring Health and Adult Social Care much closer together and working together to achieve health outcomes for people in Dorset.

Further info on ourdorset.org.uk

**Pilot Project**

A pilot project in Weymouth and Portland looking to improve lives for children and families in one of our most deprived areas. Called safeguarding families together. Particular focus is on families where there are parents with substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health issues. This will be done through multi-disciplinary professionals that are able wrap around support for the whole family.

**Harbour works**

Harbour dredging work due to start in May and June in both West Bay and Lyme Regis this may cause some congestion in these areas.

**Last full council**

There was a disruption at the last full council when Climate Change protesters entered the Chamber and super glued their hands to the central table. They continued to shout and disrupt the meeting which was adjourned, and the chamber cleared while the police were called to remove the protestors. The meeting resumed in public in another part of county hall and the days business was concluded. Unfortunately, we now find the Extinction Rebellion are calling others to join in a big protest outside county Hall for the councils AGM next week. This will mean addition security will be needed and unfortunately that is at a cost to the tax payer.

As further information on this issue Dorset Council is in the top 10 performing councils in the UK on Climate issues. The UK accounts for less than 1% of climate change emissions and so in my view protest should be about other countries with poor records and few legislative restrictions in place.

**Agreement on access to Dorset council land for digital infrastructure**

Agreement to allow communications companies to access Dorset Council land to get broad band connections to hard-to-reach place shas been agreed. A normal way-leave is charged for access to the land but in the case of providing connectivity to rural premises it has been agreed to provide that at a peppercorn lease. Hopefully this will encourage some of the providers to work out solutions for those difficult to access properties