

Clerk to the Council:

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Minutes of the Virtual Council Meeting held on the 3rd November 2020, commencing at 7pm

Present: Cllr's J Higgs (Chairman), A Hiscock, D Marsh, M Stead and P Basham

In Attendance:-The Clerk (Mr J Vanderwolfe) and Cllr S Christopher (Dorset Council)

235	<p>Apologies No apologies had been received.</p>
236	<p>Democratic Period A parishioner had voiced concerns about the speed of some vehicles passing through the village. It was agreed that Cllr Hiscock would email Cllr Christopher requesting that this item be forwarded to the Highway Safety Officer.</p> <p>The clerk reported that he had been contacted by the Conservative candidate for the position of Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner which will be elected in May 2021. It was agreed that he could speak if he wished to at the January Council meeting in the Democratic Period.</p>
237	<p>Declarations of Interest Cllr P Basham declared an interest in an expense claim being paid under item 241.</p>
238	<p>Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd November 2020 were accepted as a true record, and were signed by the chairman.</p>
239	<p>Matters Arising No matters arising</p>
240	<p>Dorset Councillors Report A difficult year in which we have seen so many people rally around to help vulnerable people.</p> <p>The council has risen to the task of helping the elderly, the infirm and has acted positively to help with the provision of meals to vulnerable children over holiday times. There has of course been financial consequences and the council has had to utilise reserves.</p>

I am concerned about the lack of money for buses in Thorncombe and share the concerns of Councillor Marsh in his report.

Councillors Jill Haynes and Councillor Tony Ferrari as portfolio holders have written to all Town and Parish Council clerks re the Dorset Council area. The communication is in respect of the Dorset Council Asset review Process, which was presented to Cabinet on 3rd November 2020.

Extracts include ‘There are a number of (property) holdings which we need to consider in order to rationalize the estate and reduce cash’

‘The desire is to

1. Create economic growth by creating new homes and jobs
2. Delivering a more integrated customer focused service, through joint provision with partner organisations
3. Generate efficiencies through capital receipts and running costs’.

Please contact me if you have not seen the aforementioned email or wish to discuss the matter.

Councillors are currently discussing the budget setting process, primarily:

Children’s Directorate

Place Directorate- including property’s, highways and Dorset Waste

Adults Directorate

Corporate Directorate

There is to be a concentrated effort to achieve savings in contract arrangement without a reduction in service.

I will be pleased to receive your thoughts on Dorset Council car parking charges.

You may have noticed that Dorset Council car parks will be free on Saturday 5th, 12th, and 19th December 2020. (In Sherborne I understand this will be on Mondays)

The mailbag of a Dorset Councillor in a rural ward appears to show continued concern about speeding motorists and I pass on these concerns to the relevant highway’s officers and other agencies.

Rachel Baker, senior communications officer Digital and Change Dorset Council has been publicising the Gigabit Voucher Scheme. An email has come out to John and myself, which has been further circulated and you have comments on this.

Yesterday, 30th November 2020 the Government has unveiled its path to sustainable farming.

The reason I draw your attention to this is :

1. The mere fact that even in the heart of your village you are but yards away from a field managed by members of the farming community.
2. This will impact on the County Farms Estate of some 46 farms.

The Government states that it plans to deliver a better fairer farming system in England with the objective of changing the way the Government supports farmers.

The roadmap has outlined changes that will come in over a seven-year period.

‘The changes will be designed to ensure that by 2028 farmers in England can sustainably produce healthy food profitably without subsidy, whilst taking steps to improve the environment, improve animal health and welfare and reduce carbon emissions.

Next year marks the start of the transition where we will begin to move away from the Basic Payment Scheme(BPS) towards new policies that will be co-designed and tested together with farmers, land managers and experts, to ensure that the new systems work for them.

The ‘Path to Sustainable Farming’ document sets out more detail on the changes we are going to make, and what they will mean to farmers.

The key changes include:

- Introducing the Environmental Land Management scheme to incentivise sustainable practices, create habitats for nature recovery and establish new woodland to help tackle climate change.
- Investing in improving animal health and welfare as part of our sustainable farming approach. This will initially focus on controlling or eradicating endemic diseases amongst cattle, pigs and sheep.
- Direct payments will be reduced fairly, starting from the 2021 Basic Payment Scheme year, with the money released being used to fund new grants and schemes to boost farmer’s productivity and reward environmental improvements.
- Launching a Farming Investment Fund, which will support innovation and productivity. This will open for applications next year and will be used to offer grants for equipment, technology and infrastructure for the future.
- Simplifying and improving existing schemes and their application processes further from January 2021 to reduce the burden on farmers, and we will take a modern approach to regulation, cutting unnecessary red tape for farmers and working together with industry to design a more targeted regulatory system.

Many of you will have noticed that there will be consultations in respect of The Dorset Local Plan. The timetable will approximate to:

1st December 2020 - Details will be published on the Dorset Council website for discussion at Dorset Council Cabinet

8th December 2020 – Discussion at Dorset Council Cabinet

Mid January 2021 – Consultation period opens for a period expected to be for 8 weeks.

In the event the Cabinet agenda was published yesterday evening and I will be pleased to discuss initial thoughts with you at the meeting this evening.

Dorset Council has published the Dorset Highways Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan 2020/21. This document has been made available to all Parish Council clerks.

	Cllr Marsh informed Cllr Christopher of his concerns for the lack of funding for bus services in the area. Cllr Christopher asked that forward an email to him so that he could discuss it further with the appropriate portfolio holder responsible for public transport.
241	Account for Payment: The following accounts were agreed for payment: Dial a Grass Cut £85, P Basham £79.40 and RBL £25.
242	Financial Update The finance update was approved. The financial assets of the council on the 25 th November were £18,871.79.
243	Former Telephone Box Item deferred to the new year.
244	Bus Service Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lock down has decreased all passenger numbers across the board, now at around 5-6 per journey, so between 65% and 75% of allowed capacity. Very few passengers on the fortnightly PlusBuses. ● We need to start preparation for our £2000 contribution to the no. 14, which will be due by the end of December 2020. Contact will be made to Dorset Community Transport for provision of the usual invoice. <p>It's all uphill from here, as we only have approximately £270 left in the bus funds, with new applications for funding to be made in the New Year to Tesco Bags of Help again and for the first time to Chard Town Council. Unless we are able to start fund raising events again, it could be a struggle.</p>
245	Playfield Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is the intention of the TPFA to open the playground, when HM Government Covid-19 guidelines ease enough to allow them to do so. ● A short statement will be posted from the TPFA, on the Thorncombe Village Facebook Page, detailing the above guidelines and other relevant points, regarding the playground. ● The TPFA are planning their AGM, with face to face format being recommended by the Charities Commission. Again this will be as and when HM Government Covid-19 Guidelines allow face to face meetings of more than 6 people. ● Mark Atyeo will ensure all invoices for grass cutting are made out to Thorncombe Parish Council. He will inspect the strip of land between the Old Vicarage and the Graveyard, within the next week or so and decide if it needs another cut.
246	BAVLAP Report of Special Meeting 20th November 2020 Statement to help open the discussions, by Joanna Keates/Jacqui Sewell

	<p>“Beaminster and Local Area Partnership is holding an emergency meeting this Friday at 7pm. The reason for this is that we want to speak to all parish members of BAVLAP about the future. Dorset Council is changing the way it funds groups and much of the money that West Dorset had been used to will now be spread across the County and the amount overall has been reduced.</p> <p>The Local Area Partnership (LAP) has been in existence since 2008. The general feeling is that the LAP will not be funded again. What is clear though, is that lots of voices are louder than one. We would like to discuss how we can create a campaigning group which would also make sure information is given out to the local parishes and groups. There are many partner organisations involved within the LAP too who communicate the difficulties in the LAP area such as food poverty and fuel poverty for example. Below are some of the focuses that we think need our voices:</p> <p>Sustainable Lifestyles, Employment Services, Broadband, Community Resilience Plans”</p> <p>Notes from meeting (By DM, minutes to follow at a later date)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAP’s not generally liked by DC ● BPC has a bigger voice and more clout for funding/infrastructure projects ● Difficult for BAVLAP alone to influence decisions on funding, needs a bigger voice ● New name suggestion; “West Dorset Rural Alliance” ● Suggestions to re-engage with all BAVLAP area PC’s, plus BLAP and Lyme Forward ● Funding from WDDC was for Voluntary Community Sector Grants and was £600K total ● Now total funding for this sector is cut to £270K, from next year. ● Suggestion was also to forget about applying for the above funding, build a bigger voice, decide on a new role and remain as BAVLAP within this bigger group
247	<p>Dorset CPRE Annual General Meeting 2020</p> <p>The meeting was held virtually using Teams due to the restrictions caused by Covid-19. Normally this meeting is held at Cerne Abbas and is followed, they stated, by a nice lunch!</p> <p>They reported that they have 1,173 members, some of which are organisations like town and parish councils, and some are individual members. There needed to be a membership drive in the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch area.</p>

	<p>During the year they handed out around £28k in grants. Some of that was funds towards legal costs for appeals and judicial reviews. They will provide a small grant of £200 to a parish/town council towards their finger post projects.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed at the lack of transparency in relation to the impending Dorset Local Plan which will replace the present district and borough plans. It was understood that this document is going to the Dorset Cabinet on the 8th December. There will of course be a consultation period, and they urged everyone to scrutinise the document when it becomes available.</p> <p>The group had spent considerable time fighting a proposed development in Bridport, and although they had been unable to get it stopped, they had had some success in getting some items altered.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed about the proposed harmonisation of car parking charges across the whole of Dorset now that they are a single authority.</p> <p>A legacy of £507K had been received from the will of a lady who had been living in Ireland, but had connections with Dorset. An article will appear in one of their newsletters about this lady. Their executive committee are looking at the best way of dealing with this wonderful donation.</p> <p>Concerns expressed about the proposed changes to planning rules that would seem to be in favour of more development of housing.</p> <p>There was a debate on incinerators, which in the past have been mainly opposed, however, it was agreed that there has been a great deal of technological improvements with these incinerators. There were however concerns that they need to be situated in the right places, and not in areas of outstanding beauty, or where narrow road access would create major problems. The proposed incinerator at Portland was being opposed because it would need to be accessed by narrow roads.</p> <p>Members were pleased to see that some progress was being made with the idea of a Dorset National Park</p> <p>The next AGM would take place on the 20th November 2021, hopefully in Cerne Abbas</p>
248	<p>Community Shop</p> <p>It was noted that the shop would feature on BBC Spotlight tomorrow evening. The Chair of the shop had asked if any progress had been made in relation to the request made some time ago for the interest rate on the loan to be reduced. Cllr Christopher explained that there had been a change of the portfolio councillor for</p>

	<p>finance, therefore he requested that the clerk sends him an email requesting that this item be followed up. The shop chairman had also informed the parish council chairman that at some stage in the near future they wished to put an awning up at the front of shop. This would require planning permission both from the parish council and the planning authority. The clerk stated that in the past parish and town councils had been given a discount on planning fees. Cllr Christopher asked the clerk to drop him an email on this question; and he would follow it up.</p>
249	<p>Community Car Service</p> <p>Had not been active recently due to lockdown restrictions.</p>
250	<p>Allotments</p> <p>It was hoped to get the hedge trimmed in the near future</p>
251	<p>Other Reports</p> <p>No reports in relation to the school or neighbourhood watch</p>
252	<p>Planning</p> <p>WD/D/20/002589 Stonelake Lodge, Fore Street. Erection of a storage and hobby building. Members were In favour, with one against, of supporting this application as it was felt that it could not be easily visible by other neighbours.</p>
253	<p>Determinations</p> <p>Concerns expressed in relation to a number of planning applications which seem to take a far greater time than the statutory time period for dealing with a planning application. Agreed that the clerk would email Cllr Christopher on this point, who agreed to then follow it up.</p>
254	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Nil</p>

255	<p>Items of Urgency</p> <p>Nil</p>
256	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 5th January 2021 at 7pm (Virtual)</p> <p>This meeting will deal with the budget and precept demand</p>

Signed Chairman

Date