

**Clerk to the Council:**

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**Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7.30pm in the Thorncombe Village Hall**

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

**In Attendance:-**The Clerk (Mr J Vanderwolfe), Cllr S Christopher and six members of the public.

Draft until Approved

<b>512</b>	<b>Apologies</b> No apologies had been received
<b>513</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Cllr A Hiscock declared a pecuniary interest in planning application P/Ful/2022/01971 as he was employed by the owners of the site. He would leave the meeting prior to any discussions taking place on this matter.
<b>514</b>	<b>Minutes</b> The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2022, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true record.
<b>515</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b> Further to comments made at the previous meeting Cllr Marsh confirmed that the solar panels on his property were due to be installed on the 20 <sup>th</sup> April and were predicted to make a saving of approximately £20 a month.
<b>516</b>	<b>Monthly Surgery</b> Cllr Basham reported that a member of the public had reported that a number of stiles were in a poor condition. It was requested that the bin by the bus stop be provided with a lid as it tends to smell on occasions. Concerns expressed regarding the fact that with the new changes being introduced by BT emergency calls would not be able to be made if the battery was flat.  Cllr Marsh would host the next surgery which would be held in the shop on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> May

<b>517</b>	<b>Democratic Period</b> A member voiced concerns in respect of the planning application for Hodge Ditch Quarry stating that it could have an adverse effect on the River Axe water levels and would disturb wild life. The parishioner felt that the application was not environmentally accepted.
<b>518</b>	<b>Dorset Council Report</b> Cllr Christopher had forwarded a report to members prior to the meeting for which he was thanked. He expressed his disappointment that Dorset was not successful in receiving additional funding for bus service. The Dorset Council Annual Meeting was scheduled to take place on the 14 <sup>th</sup> May and would be a face to face meeting. He however reminded the meeting that Covid-19 was still very much with us; with a high level of people being off sick with it at present.
<b>519</b>	<b>Accounts for Payment</b> Resolved to ratify the following payments: J Vanderwolfe £63.00, C Pyman £470.00 and the Information Commissioner £35.00
<b>520</b>	<b>Financial Update</b> The finance update was approved. Financial assets as of the 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022 were £18,378.84.
<b>521</b>	<b>Closed Churchyard</b> The Secretary of St Mary's Parochial Church Council had given formal notice to the council of their proposal to contact the Ministry of Justice and request that the churchyard be closed and that the responsibility for maintenance be transferred to the local authority. The clerk had circulated a document produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which outlined the procedure. He explained that the council had three month's to either accept responsibility or pass over the responsibility to Dorset Council. It was agreed that details of expenditure over the last few years needed to be provided to the council by the PCC and that a site visit needed to happen. Agreed that the chairman and the clerk would meet with the secretary of the PCC prior to the next meeting.
<b>522</b>	<b>Playfield</b> Cllr Marsh reported that there had been a successful clean-up day on the 20 <sup>th</sup> March, however he was saddened to report that there had been another spate of vandalism on the site recently. There will be a concert on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> April in aid of funds for the playfield.
<b>523</b>	<b>Bus Services</b> Cllr Marsh voiced his disappointment that Dorset were not to receive any Government additional funding for bus services. He stated that Devon, Somerset and Cornwall had been awarded some funding, and wondered why Dorset had lost out. On a more positive note our local bus service are experiencing good loadings. He had received correspondence from Tesco that they were changing their funding scheme, and that details would be produced shortly.
<b>524</b>	<b>Community Shop</b> Cllr Hiscock informed the meeting that a new IT system had been introduced which should improve things.

<b>525</b>	<b>Allotments</b> No update
<b>526</b>	<b>Former Telephone Box</b> Cllr Hiscock reported that he had applied a coat of primer on the door of the former phone box.
<b>527</b>	<b>DAPTC</b> No update
<b>528</b>	<b>Rights of Way</b> Nigel Higgins had produced a very detailed report of the 107 rights of way in the parish which cover a distance of about 44 miles. A number of paths are not correctly aligned with the Definitive Map and two paths have been closed since 2019, and another since 2000. A path at New House Farm, although the route was confirmed in 2015, remains unwalkable. Whilst the Rights of Way team do deal with some minor repairs they remain very difficult to contact and often do not respond to emails. The clerk asked the Dorset Councillor why Dorset could not adopt the same system that Devon has where local parish and town councils are provided with funding to deal with local problems. Agreed that this item would be on the agenda for the next meeting.
<b>529</b>	<b>School</b> A full report will be made for the May meeting.
<b>530</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Watch</b> It was understood that a vehicle had been broken into at Stony Knapp.
<b>531</b>	<b>Community Car Service</b> Service continues to operate in an effective manner.
<b>532</b>	<p><b>Planning Applications</b></p> <p><b>a). P/FUL/2022/00109 Chard Junction Quarry, Westford Park, Thorncombe: Temporary planning permission for an extension to Chard Junction Quarry at Westford Park Farm for the winning and working of approximately 830,000 tonnes of sand and gravel with progressive restoration to agriculture and nature conservation, inclusive of a new internal haul road and the retention of the existing mineral processing facilities for a period of seven years</b></p> <p>It was agreed to not support this application. Cllr Hiscock would produce the wording of the report for the clerk to forward to the planning authority. This appears at the end of the minutes.</p> <p><b>b) P/FUL/2022/01971 Hodge Ditch, Chard Junction Quarry</b> Deepening of a 1.4 Ha area of the previously worked area known as Hodge Ditch to release approximately 50000 tonnes of previously unreachable sand and gravel</p>

	Cllr Hiscock left the meeting for this item. It was agreed that a response would be given later.
<b>533</b>	<b>Annual Parish Meeting</b>  The Annual Parish Meeting would be held at the Thorncombe Sports Club on Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> May, commencing at 7.30pm. It was agreed that a buffet would be provided at a cost of £50. There would be a speaker on Environment issues.
<b>534</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>  The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2022 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. This will be the Annual Council Meeting.

Thorncombe Parish Council does not accept that exceptional circumstances (NPPF) are met by this proposal. Post extraction restoration for surface water and landscape impact seems difficult to achieve given the significant impact of the work. The argument that the extraction is crucial to meeting demand (and therefore AONB NPPF criteria should be disregarded) is not borne out by the fact that the site is not included in Dorset's sand and gravel extraction draft minerals site plan (2017). The argument that GHG impact is lessened by its geographical location to Somerset, Devon and Cornwall would be valid except for the fact that end point distribution will not be limited to those Counties only and therefore that advantage is largely lost. Air Quality Dust mitigation Regular Plant servicing, speed controls, sheeted lorries, highway inspections, water spraying, bunding, weather monitoring are all self-policing activities which are open to unintentional or intentional waver. They seem largely inadequate for those most impacted by the proposal in any case. The proposed improvements to screening bunds designed to reduce impact on properties closest to the proposal do not in my opinion provide sufficient protection from noise or air pollution. Air pollution will not exceed impact caused by ploughing. This may be true, but the frequency of the activity make this argument misleading at best. Flood Risk Wet working may take place up to 6m below the water table. The Council is not convinced the impact of this on the surrounding area for surface water and the River Axe silt impact and other impacts is understood. In particular we are concerned by the following statements 1. Westford Park Farm and Westford Park cottages are under control of the land owner and need special investigation. 2. Westford Park Well will need to be monitored and an alternative supply provided.

Signed ----- Chairman

Date -----