

## **The Group Parish Council for East and West Orchard with Margaret Marsh**

The minutes of the 161<sup>st</sup> meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.26pm following the Annual Parish Meeting and the Parish Council AGM.

**These minutes do not constitute a true record until ratified at the next meeting of the Parish Council**

**Present:** Cllr T. Cox, Cllr T. Craven, (Chairman), Cllr Mrs V. Stokes, two members of the public.

**In attendance:**), R. Jacques (Clerk), County Cllr J. Somper.

**Apologies:** Mr E. Dimarino (Dorset Highways), Cllr M Bone, Cllr B. Dawe-Lane.

**80. Declarations of Interests:** None declared.

**81. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (by video conference):** Cllr T. Cox proposed “that the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 should be approved as a correct record of that meeting”. Cllr Mrs V Stokes seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

**82. Matters Arising:** The Chairman asked Cllr T Cox if he had met with Mr Dimarino. Cllr T Cox, reported that he has had telephone conversations with Mr Dimarino with regard to the flooding and had met previously with Roger Bell. All agreed that the road needs to be made up on both sides but there is no confirmed time frame for it to take place.

The Chairman asked Cllr Mrs V Stokes to update the meeting on the flooding situation at Margaret Marsh. She confirmed that the situation is the same and the remedial works have not taken place. The Chairman agreed to contact Mr Dimarino to enquire about the works.

Referring to the Digital Connectivity meeting attended by the Chairman, an issue was raised about the provision of full fibre broadband to the area. The provider has installed full fibre broadband to parts of East Orchard but not all of the residents who have signed up for it have been connected. In some cases, the delay has been almost a year. The Chairman agreed to pursue Wessex Internet on this matter.

**83. To receive County Councillor’s report from Cllr Jane Somper:** The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr J Somper provided the following updates:

- The Dorset Council figures reflect the circumstances and high cost of the last year.
- Dorset Waste is changing refuse collection days - the Council has invested in more vehicles with improved efficiency and the collection areas have been reconfigured – there are now no districts. Affected residents have been sent individual letters.
- Planning applications have more than doubled which is proving to be huge task and leading to delays. The Council is looking to recruit but finding that planning officers are in short supply.
- A new Police and Crime Commissioner has been elected – David Sidwick. He is very concerned about rural crime. Cllr J Somper is hoping to invite him to attend a joint ward meeting to discuss local issues.
- The purchase of St Mary’s School, Shaftesbury has now been finalised and is to become a school for 280 children and young adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Chairman asked if the school could be used by Dorset residents as it is in Wiltshire. Cllr J Somper replied that as it is on the Wiltshire/Dorset boundary

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it will be used by Dorset, currently the cost of out of county provision for the education of children and young adults with special educational needs is very high. The school will open in January with 60 pupils and it is hoped to become a leading national centre of excellence.

- The Services Director of PLACE will be visiting the ward in the near future. Chairs of the parish councils will be asked for any strategic issues that they feel should be raised during the visit.

Cllr J Somper concluded by saying that it was good to meet in person. This sentiment was agreed by all at the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Cllr J Somper for her detailed report which had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. From the report he highlighted that the Dorset Council had supported 18,000 vulnerable people and over 36,000 households from March 2020 to May 2021. He congratulated Cllr. J Somper on becoming the Lead Member for Children's Safeguarding.

- 84. Highways:** Mr Enrico Dimarino was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a report. The Chairman read the main points of the report to the meeting.

*The sign (name plate) at Church Lane, Margaret Marsh is something we no longer do at the moment due to financial constraints, and have advised for the PC to look at paying for this to be done by our sign shop team.*

The Chairman updated that he has received quotes from the Dorset Council sign shop (£440) for the sign and the placing of it. A second quote from an alternative supplier was considerably less (£148) but would need to be erected. Cllr V Stokes advised the meeting that the local residents had requested the sign because delivery drivers are experiencing problems finding properties. The name plate would provide a reference point for any directions that have been given. The Councillors agreed that £440 is a considerable sum from the Precept or reserves. The Chairman asked if there is a suitable site on which to place the name plate. Cllr V Stokes provided a description of the site. The Chairman will contact Mr Dimarino to ask for guidance on the placing of the sign. Cllr Mrs V Stokes added that she will ask the local church to contribute to the cost. Cllr T Cox expressed concern that if the sign is purchased it should not be seen as setting a precedent. The Chairman's response was that the residents contribute to the Precept and as such their request is not unreasonable and, exceptionally, he would recommend for purchase. Agenda item for the next meeting.

*The flooding issue on the B3091 near Margaret Marsh. I have had a meeting with the engineer, Phil Nelson to see what we can do to sort this out. My idea at one point was to raise the road, but we took levels and it was not viable to lift the road as it would require to be elevated by 1 metre. What he has suggested was to look at lowering the gullies and crowning the highway to allow water to get to the newly positioned gullies. We are having another meeting next week with the chargehand to discuss.*

*Unfortunately, the ditches were not dug at Margaret Marsh because the ditching team had completed their quota under the cost scheme that was put in place. I am waiting for the new cost scheme to be raised so that I can put these works on the list.*

- 85. Footpaths:** The Chairman reported that any footpath issues have been reported to the relevant portal by Paul Goldman and Sally Nutbeem.

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**86. Planning Applications Received: The following planning application was received and circulated by email to all Councillors for consideration. Councillors' comments/objections (if raised) were forwarded to the Dorset Council Planning Office:**

Church Farm Cottage, Marnhull Rd., MM P/HOU/2021/00334 closing date 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (dist. 08.04.21). Erection of rear/side single storey extension. No objections were raised.

The following planning application was received after the agenda was published, it was circulated by email to all Councillors for consideration prior to the meeting:

Lakesbrook Farm Barn Church Lane, EO, P/FUL/2021/01006 closing date 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. Erection of 1 No. dwelling, garage, landscaping and associated works (demolition of existing agricultural barn). Erection of field shelter and installation of a land-mounted solar array. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the previous owners had received permission from Dorset Council to build a pair of semi-detached houses on the site under Q planning. The site was then sold and the new owners have submitted this new full planning application. He outlined the application details and suggested that the Councillors review the application documents on the Planning portal. The Councillors discussed the application and no objections were raised at the meeting.

**87. Finance:**

a. Financial Regulations Compliance:

(i) Arrangements for the Internal Audit for the FY 2020-2021 and the Internal Audit Report.

The Clerk reported that Mr Robin Smith had advised that (after many years as the Internal Auditor) he will be retiring this year. In view of this the Clerk had requested that he conduct the audit before his retirement. Cllr T Cox proposed **“that Mr Robin Smith of Gillingham should be appointed as the Internal Auditor for the FY 2020 –2021 annual accounts”**. Cllr Mrs V Stokes seconded and the vote was unanimous. The Chairman thanked Robin for his studious attention in auditing the accounts.

**Internal Auditor's report for the financial year 2020/2021:** Had been circulated to the Councillors and no matters of concern raised by the internal auditor.

(ii) The items listed in Section 1 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor were considered individually by members, with the Chairman obtaining members consent prior to continuing compliance by answering yes in the appropriate boxes.

Cllr T Cox proposed **“that the Chairman should complete and sign section 1 of the Annual Return to declare that the Council's financial affairs have been dealt with in a proper manner during the previous financial year”**. Cllr Mrs V Stokes seconded and the vote was unanimous.

(iii) Accounting Statement- Section 2 of the Annual Return

Cllr T Cox proposed **“that the Chairman should sign the Accounting Statement, Section 2 of the Annual Return”**. Cllr Mrs V Stokes seconded and the vote was unanimous.

(iv) Certificate of Exemption

Cllr T Cox proposed **“that the Chairman should sign the Certificate of Exemption from**

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**a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015**". Cllr Mrs V Stokes seconded and the vote was unanimous.

b. To approve the following payments:

- (i) Insurance Premium for the FY 2021-2022 £178.67
- (ii) DAPTC Subscription £85.29
- (iii) Manston Village Hall £14
- (iv) Payroll Administration £90
- (v) Mr R Smith, Internal Auditor £100

Cllr Mrs V Stokes proposed **“that the items listed above should be approved for payment”** Cllr T Cox seconded and the vote was unanimous.

**88. Correspondence:** The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had received a letter of thanks for the grant award from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance.

**89. Matters Pertinent**

The Chairman reminded the Councillors of the notification they had been sent referring to the correspondence from Dorset Council Spatial Planning Department of an Application for a Definitive Map Modification Order. The modification application relates to Church Lane, Hartgrove/East Orchard, which is currently used as a footpath and an access road for farm vehicles. He reported that he had conducted some research into the application and discovered that Church Lane, is an unregistered road. The organisation making the application wishes it to be classified as a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). He contacted the Spatial Planning Department asking for clarification. The response confirmed that, if it is registered, nothing very much would change but that the road would be maintained as a footpath and as such remain open to the public. If it is not registered as a BOAT it may be closed to the public. He concluded by saying that although some local residents had expressed concerns about the modification, they have been reassured that nothing much will change.

Cllr T Cox informed the Council that he has moved and that it maybe more appropriate for West Orchard to be represented on the Parish Council by a resident from the village, but that he will continue in the meantime. The Chairman thanked Cllr T Cox for representing West Orchard on the Parish Council and for his commitment in taking a full part in all Parish affairs.

The Chairman thank everyone for attending the meetings and to the Clerk for her work in preparing for the meetings.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Councillors for their work and improvements that have taken place in the parishes.

**Date of next meeting - Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021 t.b.c.**

**The meeting closed at 8.15 pm**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date\_\_\_\_\_