

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st October 2024, 7pm at Herrison Hall, Charlton Down

Present:

South Ward:

Mark Simons (MS) Chair
Alan Rolls (AR)
Keith Beeson (KB)
Tim Yarker (TY)
Julie Jackson (JJ)
Oliver Greenaway (OG)
Peter Dangerfield (PD)

North Ward:

Carol Matthews (CM)
Andrew Harris (AH)
Peter Mauger (PM)
Tony Murrell (TM)
Sue Frazer (SF)

In attendance: Michele Harding (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

- 24/10-1. Welcome and Chairman's-** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
24/10-2. To receive and accept apologies of absence. Cllr David Taylor.
24/10-3. To receive declarations of Interest or consider grants of dispensation. None
24/10-4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2024
Proposed PD Seconded by AR
24/10-5. Matters arising from the above minutes (for information only).

The maintenance of the vacant allotments at Charminster farm is underway, with strimming scheduled, although instructions regarding the raised beds are still pending. The contractor plans to use Gallop Brigade 360, a glyphosate-based herbicide for controlling annual and perennial grasses and broadleaf weeds. While some council members raised concerns about the use of chemical sprays, it was agreed that, in this instance, a one-time application to control the weeds on the raised bed paths would be acceptable. The motion was proposed by TY, seconded by TM, with nine votes in favour, two against, and one abstention, this was carried.

PD also noted the successful apple picking in the community orchards, following a recent announcement on Facebook informing residents that apples were available.

- 24/10-6. Public Discussion Period-** the meeting was suspended for this section.

Nature Area Update (Volunteer Report)

A volunteer presented updates on the ongoing work in the nature and wildlife area. They reported that habitat diversification efforts have led to an increase in habitat size by 30%, and 380 species have been identified. Public awareness has been raised through the Facebook group and a website, which is helping to engage the community.

Recent efforts include reintroducing certain species, repairing and installing bird and bat boxes, and conducting bird and aquatic life surveys with audio recordings. This autumn, local native wildflowers were sown in cleared patches to further enhance biodiversity. The wildlife area is now part of the Nature Recovery Dorset network, allowing the team to share best practices with similar sites. Looking forward, the team is developing a 5–10-year management plan and aiming for Local Nature Reserve status, which would offer protection under planning law.

The newly appointed Chair of the Charlton Down Allotment Association attended the meeting for the first time. He raised concerns about the use of weed killers, noting that they have been banned at the Charlton Down allotments, and suggested alternative methods such as steaming, detergent, or salt. He also reported that 12 months ago, water troughs were stolen, and there were sections of the hedge and fence that had been cut. TM confirmed that this issue is being addressed, with the

CHARMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council planning to replace the fence and potentially add more hedging. Additionally, the Chair highlighted that the gravel path at the entrance requires attention, and TM, as the Allotments Association representative, agreed to look into these matters.

24/10-7. Finance and General Purposes

i. To consider the purchase of mobile goal posts during the work on the CD goal mouths.

TM explained that during the period while the goal posts and mouths at Olympic Park are being repaired (approximately 6 weeks), it was suggested to purchase a set of mobile goal posts and nets. These could be used at the Olympic Park and moved around various play areas in the parish as needed. When not in use, they could be stored in the community hall's bin store or used on other sites in the parishes where needed. The estimated cost for the mobile goal posts is £250. TY suggested that instead of purchasing mobile goal posts, the Parish Council should update the goal posts at Broken Cross.

TM had already gathered a quote for the refurbishment of the goal posts at a cost of £200, as was requested at the last meeting, and it was noted that new nets had already been agreed for both Olympic Park and Broken Cross.

It was proposed to accept the quote of £200 for the refurbishment at Broken Cross plus rust treatment (Proposed by CM, seconded by TM), and all were in agreement.

It was also proposed to purchase the mobile goal posts at a cost of £250 (Proposed by CM, seconded by AH). The vote result: 10 in favour, 1 abstention, and 1 objection

ii. To consider engaging with professional advice regarding a boundary review

There is an ongoing issue where the pub landlords created their own access point from the pub garden into the play area at North Street, which is owned by the Parish Council. This was done without permission, and the landlords have been using the access whenever they see fit, without informing the council, although this had been a request from the PC. Recently, the gate was left open on a Sunday morning after a contractor entered to collect items following an event at the pub. This raised concerns over the safety of the play area, prompting the Parish Council to lock the external gate, with the condition that the landlords request access from the council when needed so the gate can be unlocked.

The Parish Council has a duty of care to ensure the safety of the play area users and must manage access accordingly. While the landlords have expressed frustration with this new arrangement, the council stressed that formal permission was never granted for the access, and the pub has been using it at their discretion.

The council discussed whether to seek professional advice but agreed to first hold an informal meeting with the landlords to openly discuss the situation and attempt to reach a resolution before any advice is sought. The council reiterated that it fully supports local businesses, but the safety and proper management of access to the play area remain the priority. A meeting will be arranged to address the issue.

iii. To discuss the Cllr contact details, email and/or telephone for publication.

To ensure uniformity in the publication of contact details, both on the parish website and in the Pilot magazine, it was agreed to publish parish council email addresses and only the telephone numbers of Councillors who wish to have them shared. There have been incidents, both in this

parish and in other areas, where publishing private addresses and telephone numbers led to issues, such as uninvited visits to councillors' homes and unwanted emails. The motion was proposed by CM and seconded by TY. One Councillor voted against it, but the motion was carried.

iv. To consider a monthly newsletter/Pilot.

A discussion was held regarding the information published by the Parish Council in the *Pilot* magazine and on the back page. It was agreed that a summary of the meeting would be published in the *Pilot*, and the clerk will prepare this and send it to the editor. The back page will be reserved for current issues and contact details. It was also suggested that a report on the Nature Area could be included in the magazine, and PD will take action on this.

v. To consider a policy for environment and climate change

As there a number if differing views on this potential policy so a working group will be set up, member will be PM,KB,MS,CM,JJ,SF and AH the clerk will arrange a meeting date and Cllrs will prepare a draft for a future meeting. This was proposed by PM and seconded by CM. all agreed.

vi. To receive the finance reports and carry out bank reconciliation checks.

SF carried out the bank reconciliation checks. An F & GP meeting will be arranged in November to look at the budget for consideration at the Dec meeting.

vii. To approve all payments due and those paid since the last meeting.

A list of payments and receipts were provided prior to the meeting. These were proposed by CM and seconded by TM and agreed by all.

24/10-8. Council Property

i. To update on providing water bowers for CD

Costs in the region of £1000-£1500. Decision deferred to a future meeting.

ii. To update on the Jubilee stones project and costs

SF reported that the main stone has been identified at a cost of £222 plus VAT. A quote for the engraving has also been obtained, estimated at around £878 plus VAT, with additional transport costs to be added. The Duchy has been contacted out of politeness for permission to use the crown symbol in the engraving. There is still more work information to be collected, so this matter will be brought forward at a future meeting. Not all Cllrs fully supported this project but will be discussed further. As the project is not currently within the budget, it will be discussed by the Finance and General Purposes (FGP) committee in November.

iii. To receive a report from the Community Hall

A comprehensive report was prepared and circulated by the Hall Manager/Assistant Clerk, with some actions being considered from the report, including the installation of a porch at the front of the hall, as it is currently exposed to the elements. Special thanks were given to the hall manager for all her efforts in preparing the report.

Councillors noted the need for increased advertising to boost the hall's usage. The clerk reported that both the clerk and the Hall Manager are working together on regular social

media advertising. Additionally, the Hall Manager is exploring advertising options in village hall forums and other relevant sources.

AR commented on the success of the recent McMillan event held at the hall, which received a great deal of positive feedback on the hall, particularly regarding the cleanliness and overall quality of the hall's facilities.

iv. **To consider a report on the potential for Solar panels for the Community Hall.**

KB and CM met with the Green Energy Officer from Dorset Council, after which KB provided a report with suggestions for installing solar panels on the hall. A grant is available if applied for before Christmas for this, 3 quotes are required. This was discussed at length, and while the grant could be an option, councillors felt it was too soon to proceed with specifications at this stage as this would be for between 50 and 60 panels on the hall. The PC also considered applying for a grant from SSE. More information is needed before the council can make a decision. For now, no applications or tenders will be pursued. A proposal was made that the Parish Council contact SSE to inquire about the grant criteria and proceed from there. This proposal was put forward by CM and seconded by JJ, with one objection. The motion was agreed upon.

24/10-9. Planning Matters - to consider any planning applications in circulation.

- i- P/TRC/2024/05106: T1 Fern Leaf Alder- Remove, T2 Fern Leaf Alder - Reduce in height by up to 3 metres and shape in-Highfield House 26 Birch Way- *No objections*
- ii- ii-P/TRC/2024/05105: T3 Prunus - Reduce entirely by up to 1.5m & shape T4 Himalayan Birch - Reduce in height by up to 2.5m, reduce sides by up to 1.5m & shape T5 Fire Bush - Reduce in height by approximately 1.5m leaving at the level of the gutter for screening T6 Purple Hazel - Reduce in height by up to 1.5m & shape in T7 Self Set Sycamore - Fell: 28 Birch Way Charlton Down- *No objections*
- iii- P/TRC/2024/05228: T1 Copper Beech - Reduce back over the road by up to 2.5m T2 Ornamental Prunus - Remove T3 Prunus - Remove dead limbs & reduce the remainder of the tree entirely by up to 2.5m back to previous points & shape T4 Bay - Remove T5 Ornamental Prunus - Remove T6 Prunus - Remove deadwood & thin by 10% T7 Ash - Remove: 8 East Hill Charminster- *No objections*
- iv- P/TRC/2024/05259: T1 Bay - Reduce entirely by up to 3m & shape T2 Prunus - Reduce entirely by up to 1m & shape H1 Mixed Hedge - Reduce in height by up to 1m H2 Beech Hedge - Reduce in height by up to 0.5m & reduce side by up to 0.5m H3 Laurel and Western Red Cedar Hedge - Reduce in height by up to 2.5m & trim sides to remove regrowth H4 Laurel and Mixed Hedge - Reduce in height by up to 2m & trim side by up to 0.5m H5 Laurel Hedge :3 Greenacre Charminster- *no objections*
- v- P/TRC/2024/05373: T1 & T2 Cypress - Fell Location: 1 Brook Close Charminster. *No objections*
- vi- P/HOU/2024/05473: Erect single-storey front extension. Extend the main entrance roof slope: 28 Birch Way- *no objections*
- vii- P/TRC/2024/05490: T1 & T2 Field Maple - Reduce entirely by up to 1.5m back to previous points & shape T3, T4 & T5 Ornamental: Redwood House- *no objections*

CHARMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

- viii-** P/NMA/2024/05516: Non-material amendment to Planning permission P/HOU/2024/02899 (Erect entrance porch, two-storey front and rear extensions, single-storey rear lean to, new front bay window and external alterations) - pitched roof covering changed to slate. 9 Mill Lane- *no comments*
- It was noted that planning application for land at Wanchard Lane, WD/D/20/003259 was being considered by the planning committee.

24/10-10. Matters of correspondence for information or interest

As part of the correspondence noted, a complaint was received regarding traffic speed on Herrison Road. CM will respond directly to the resident.

TY mentioned that he recently spoke with Police and Crime Commissioner David Sidwick, who is conducting initial trials on Auto Speed Watch cameras. He expressed interest in attending a Parish Council meeting, and it was suggested that he be invited to the November or a future meeting. The clerk will follow up on this.

Wessex Water Works were doing a review of the sewerage system in the village to ensure it is fit for purpose following flooding issues. This was started over a year ago so it is necessary to ascertain if this work is complete and what it has shown.

KB commented on the DAPTC AGM in November and items for consideration this will be added to the November agenda so KB can vote accordingly at the AGM.

Charminster Transport Strategy feasibility study should be completed late Oct as per email from the highways officer.

PD raised concerns about the unsatisfactory bus services.

AR noted that the fence on the C-12 has still not been repaired by Magna, the Parish Council will follow up on this issue.

24/10-11. To confirm items for the next Parish Council meeting on 5th November 2024 at Charminster Community Hall. TBA

There being no further business MS closed the meeting at 20.30

24/10-12. To consider moving to closed session to consider staffing matters

The Clerk left and public left the meeting.

- CM and TM conducted the Clerk's appraisal, while the Clerk carried out the Assistant Clerk/Hall Manager's appraisal.
- The Parish Council commended both members of staff and supported all requests and actions agreed upon during the appraisals.
- A work-based pension will be investigated for the November meeting.
- Additionally, the cost of a new laptop for the Clerk will be gathered, and the job description for the Assistant Clerk/Hall Manager will be updated.