West Stour Parish

Minutes of West Stour Parish meeting

Held on the 18th of October 2023 at 7.30pm

at West Stour Village Hall

Present: Cllr J Watkins – Chairman Stours Parish Council, Cllr P Sealy and Cllr M Elsworth and 16 elected members of the Parish

Cllr J Watkins welcomed everyone to the Parish Meeting.

1. Before the meeting commenced, the Clerk clarified the rules for Chairing the Parish Meetings. A Parish meeting consisted of local government electors registered for the area. Where the Parish comes under a grouped parish as a Parish Council, its Chairman may attend (weather they are an elector or not)[[1]](#footnote-1) and if they are present, they must preside[[2]](#footnote-2)

In attendance: Mrs N Phillips - Clerk

**1/23. Apologies for Absence**

Dorset Council B Ridout, Cllr P Bowe, Michelle Cox, Diana West

**2/23. Declaration of interest and dispensations**

There were none.

3/23. To agree the Minutes of the meeting dated the 12th of April 2023

With an amendment to add to the heading AGM minutes were then proposed by Cllr Sealy and seconded by Cllr Elsworth, all agreed they are a true and accurate record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chairman

RESOLVED: that the minutes were approved and signed (3/23 no budgetary requirements)

4/23. Matters arising.

20MPH Scheme for the Village – The Clerk confirmed that Central Government have now changed their support for 20MPH schemes at this time. This was discussed and it was agreed not apply for a 20MPH limit within the village now. This was due to the costs that would be required to have a speed survey completed, how this would be policed and the lack of support from Central Government. How to improve the existing 30MPH speed limit in the village was discussed. It was suggested that 30MPH is painted on the entrances to the Village, as the 30MPH road signs on the verges are not always visible. It was also noted that the 30MPH sing at the top of the village near the Lynch has been damaged. The Clerk will contact Dorset Council Highways team to request the painting of the 30MPH and for them to replace the broken 30MPH sign as soon as possible. Action – Clerk

Dog Bins – There had been a proposal for an additional dog bin at the top of the Village. After debate, it was agreed not to progress this proposal at this time, due to the cost involved and it was noted that there does not seem to be a problem with dog fouling in the village. DOG OWNERS CAN TAKE THEIR DOG WASTE HOME WITH THEM AND DISPOSE OF IT THEIR LANDFILL BIN.

5/23.Officers report:

Rights of way – Mr Andrew Marshall reported whilst there is still a backlog of 8 reported issues logged with the Dorset Council Footpath team within the Parish, this has reduced from a higher number since the last Parish meeting. If anyone has any rights of way issues, please report them to Mr Marshall or the Clerk.

Representative to Village Hall – Mr J Parker – Chairman for Village Hall Committee reported the following:

Improvements - The ‘National Lottery Awards for All’ approved a grant to fund the levelling and re-surfacing of the car park, which is now completed. Planters were also obtained, planted up and placed outside the annexe wall on the lead up to the car park. The committee approved the installation of Wi-Fi which is now in operation. This is an important facility and should make events more convenient and the hall more attractive to hirers.

Away from the hall the committee arranged for bespoke signs (Map; Defibrillator; and Book Exchange) together with a repair and re-paint of, the telephone box. Thanks to Andrew Marshall for undertaking the work.

A number of maintenance jobs were undertaken by committee members throughout the year and thanks go to John Jeffery (not a committee member) who also ‘pitched in’.

Usage - The Railway Society continues its weekly Monday meetings; the village book group has met on a number of occasions; and an Arts & Crafts group meet regularly. Amongst other things, there has been the church bazaar; the village meal (at The Ship) organised by Diana West; a coffee morning with a speaker from the charity ‘School in a bag’ (more coffee mornings with speakers are planned); a ‘soup and sandwich’ lunch; the church plant sale; and a ‘Fish & Chip Quiz Night’. The highlight event was a celebratory lunch on Sunday 07 May in the Village Hall to mark the Coronation of King Charles III followed the next day by an exhibition of local groups looking for volunteers in line with the ‘big help out’ theme of the coronation.

Financial - The village hall is in a healthy financial situation including a ring-fenced reserve of just over £10k as a contingency fund. Apart from the contingency reserve and some other designated funds, at end of December 2022 we had unrestricted funds of £11,202.was it this much???

It was also noted that a local resident has come forward to take on the responsibility of maintaining the Defibrillator. Details will be sent to the Clerk.

Planning Applications – the following planning applications had been received for West Stour parish from April 2023 to October 2023.



A member of the public asked for information on the sustainability for the village that can be taking into consideration for planning. After discussing this matter in more detail, it was agreed for the Clerk to look into providing a detailed plan for a policy for the Village that can be asked to be considered when any planning applications are received. It was also noted that it has been proposed that Dorset Council National Planning Policy will include more protection for smaller villages for development. Until Dorset Council produce their draft plan this will not be confirmed. Action - Clerk

6/23. Finance

To consider budget and precept for 2024/2025 – the Clerk had circulated a detailed proposal for setting the precept for 2024/2025. After debate it was proposed to set the precept at £2020.00. This was seconded and all agreed. This will be proposed at the Parish Council meeting in November for resolution. Action – Clerk

7/23. Agenda items to be agreed for the next Parish meeting on Wednesday 22nd May 2023 at 7.30pm

Update on National Policy Network - AGM

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.15pm

Signed…………………………………………………………………………………………

Website address http//: www.stours-pc.gov.uk

Should you wish to contact any Councillor please us the address

clerk@stours-pc.gov.uk

1. LGA 1972, Sch12, Para16 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. LGA 1972, Sch12, para 17 (1) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)