The Stours Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE STOURS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

on the 7th of March 2024 **7.30pm at East Stour Village Hall**

Present: Cllr J Watkins – Chairman, Cllr P Bowe – Vice Chairman, Cllr P Sealy, Cllr P Gould, Cllr M Elsworth, Cllr R McConnell, Cllr H Wakeford, Cllr J Pitman, Cllr P Stride, Cllr M Kirkham, Cllr A Stagg, Cllr P Patrick, Cllr R King, Cllr P Matcham

In attendance: Mrs N Phillips (Parish Clerk), Dorset Council Cllr J Somper and Cllr V Pothecary. There were no members of the public.

**Public Consultation:** None

23/60. To receive and accept apologies of absence.

Cllr J Uden, Cllr C Wilkins, Cllr J Morisetti and Dorset Councillor Cllr Ridout

23/61. Receive declaration of interest.

There were none.

23/62. To approve the minutes dated the 4th of January 2024

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Bowe and seconded by Cllr Pitman all agreed that the minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman (23/62 – no budgetary provision.

required)

Matters arising from the said meeting:

Election – The Clerk reminded everyone to ensure their nomination papers are sent to the Clerk before the 20th of March. If anyone is interested in standing for Councillor for the Stour Parish Council, full details can be found at Dorset Council <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-council-elections-on-2-may-2024-information-for-candidates>

Environment team – No report given due to Cllr Morisetti sending her apologies.

To do list for works, circulated by the Clerk – the Chairman tabled the to do list and the following was noted:

All Parishes – a representative from Wessex internet is coming along to each Parish Meetings in May. Stour Row/Provost - Maintenance for graveyard in Stour Row – The Chairman reported that a trench has been dug out around the graveyard, so this will prevent planting hedges. It was agreed to discuss the possibility of erecting a new fence at the Parish meeting in May. Action – Clerk

Cricket Pavilion – Volunteers from the Cricket Club have agreed to paint the Pavilion, if the Parish Council supply the paint. The Clerk will liaise with the Cricket Club. The electric smart meter has been installed. The Clerk will look for quotes for a new front door. Action – Clerk

East stour - Go alone Parish – East Stour Parish are holding a public meeting on the 28th of March 2024 to see if the residents of the parish would like a standalone Parish Council.

Play Area – toddler swing has been installed. The road safety officers have agreed to re-paint any badly worn road markings through the village.

Todber - 30MPH roundels have been request at the entrances to the village, Dorset Council have agreed to do this in the better weather.

Millennium Green - Works will continue on the millennium green/wooded area.

Church – Councillor Bowe will continue to work on applying for the Church to be able to be used as a village hub as well as a church. The proposal for the church to house a defibrillator was refused by the Church. It was agreed to discuss other projects for the village to ask Wessex Internet to fund at the Parish Meeting in May. Action - Clerk

West Stour - Conservation area –Martin is working on producing a new map, this has been chased up.

Road Safety - The Clerk has requested that Dorset Council paint 30MPH roundels on the road at the entrances of the village.

23/63. Reports from Dorset Councillors.

Dorset Councillor Jane Somper had circulated her report, which can be found on the Parish Councils website. The Following are bullet points from the report:

Air Show – on the 10th and 11th of August 2024, there will be a Spitfire Air Show at Compton Abbas, which may pull in up to 10,000 people over the two days.

Revenue Support Fund - Dorset Council Organisational Revenue Support Fund for Culture has awarded £486,000 to 28 organisations over the next three years. A total of 41 applications were received from arts and heritage organisations and accredited museums. A total of £217,000 has been awarded to arts and heritage and £269,000 to accredited museums. This is a link to see what organisation have received this funding [Organisational Revenue Support Fund grants awarded - Dorset Council](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/your-community/support-for-voluntary-and-community-organisations/funding/awards-of-the-organisational-revenue-support-fund)

Winter Gritting - Highways had 70 staff during working hours, and 12 overnight alongside the gritting crews (additional 19 operatives). Tackling flood water and water on the roads while the temperatures drop requires care coordination by the teams to ensure gritting activity is done within early hours.

With the amount of call outs received in the short space of time, this did cause delays to highways response, but all reporting is now up-to-date and areas of priority concern in Beacon Ward are being addressed.

Dorset Council Named Best Unitary Council in the Country for Recycling - DEFRA has confirmed that Dorset Council is the #1 Unitary Council in the country for recycling. We recycle 59.1% of the waste we collect, against a 43.4% national average.

Dorset Council Named Best Unitary Council in the Country for Recycling - Nationally, the recycling rate for the country has gone down by 0.7% to 43.4%, so we are doing well with our work here in Dorset.

Community Asset Transfer - Dorset Council’s Community Asset Transfer Policy is being presented to Overview Committee and seeks to recognise and maximise the benefit of devolution of assets to local communities, particularly to Town and Parish Councils. This policy supports the delivery of this devolution by providing clear guidance and support for applicants.

Grants For Community Tree Planting - A new grant scheme aimed at supporting local communities to plant and care for trees in their area is now open for applications. Funded by Dorset Council and managed by the Dorset National Landscape team, the fund is open to community organisations in the Dorset Council area. This includes parish and town councils, as well as schools and other established community groups interested in planting and caring for trees in their patch. [Dorset Community Tree Fund | Dorset National Landscape (dorset-nl.org.uk)](https://dorset-nl.org.uk/resource/dorset-community-tree-fund/)

Council Tax Premium on Second homes in Dorset - Dorset Councillors have approved proposals for a council tax premium on second homes and an amendment to agree an earlier commencement date for the existing Long Term Empty Homes premium, under the new flexibilities for councils provided in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which received Royal Assent in October 2023. For those properties classified as Long-Term Empty and Unoccupied a 100% premium will, from 1 April 2024, be applied after one year rather than the existing 2 years.

The introduction of the 100% council tax premium on second homes will come into effect on 1 April 2025, making a total council tax charge of 200%. Unlike empty dwellings, there is no requirement for a property to have been used as a second home for a fixed period of time before the premium can apply so it becomes chargeable from day one that a property is considered a second home (or dwelling periodically occupied).

Council Approves A Balanced Budget - Dorset Council’s budget of £377 million for 2024-25 has been approved by councillors at the Full Council meeting on 13 February. This continues the council’s commitment to maintain frontline services, without the need for cuts to balance the budget.

Reporting Any Highways Related Problem - Highways problems can be reported on the link below. You will receive a reference number so the report can be tracked. You can also upload photographs of the issue concerned and pinpoint on the interactive map. Some of the reporting you can do as follows; pothole, blocked drain, flooding, abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping. [Report a problem on a road or pavement - Dorset Council](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement)

**Fontmell Magna Fete –** on the 20th of April 2024

Cllr J Somper contact details case ward work [CllrJane.Somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:CllrJane.Somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

23/64. Finance

To record: Payments paid between meetings – The Clerk had circulated payment schedule for January 2024 which had been approved via email for payment.

To agree: Payment Schedule for February 2024 - The Clerk had tabled the Payment Schedule for February 2024 for the sum of £2705.94. This was proposed by Cllr Bowe and seconded by Cllr Gould all agreed for the payments on the payment schedule be paid, the schedule was duly signed.



RESOLVED: to ratify the January payments and agreed the February payments (23/64 – current account)

The bank reconciliation had been circulated and agreed by Cllr Bowe.

To consider – Clerk annual wage increase – after debate Cllr King proposed that the Clerk has an increase of scale from 33 to 35, this was seconded by Cllr Kirkham, all in favour.

RESOVLED: to award the Clerk an increase in wages scale from 33 to 35 (as guidelines form NALC)

23/65. Planning: review of applications received (DC = Dorset Council)



There was one other application received since the agenda had been set.

P/FUL/2024/01175 – Land Northeast of Steeplechase, Church Street – erect 1 no dwelling. The Councillor will look at this application and email their comments to the Clerk.

23/66. Chairman’s report

The Chairman thanked her fellow Councillors for standing for their hard work and commitment as Councillors and for standing re-election for the Stours Parish Council.

23/67. Wards and officers’ reports

Stour Row/Stour Provost – The Clerk confirmed that the speed survey has been completed at Stour Provost Junction. The results have now been sent to Dorset Council road safety team where a request has also been made to use this evidence to request a 40MPH speed limit from the East Stour Junction all the way to Marnhull.

Todber – The Clerk has asked Dorset Council for a quote to provide a Todber sign to replace the existing one that is not very legible anymore. It was also suggested that at the Parish Meeting a proposal to extend the 30MPH limit in the village is discussed. Action – Clerk

Cllr King tabled the following report: -Damage Reports To Dorset Highways - 19th January ref: 1241378. Warning sign marking Shave Lane missing on southbound B3092, Todber. No action so far. 24th January ref: 1241773. Pole carrying the speed limit sign on the westbound Sherborne Road, West Stour had snapped off and was lying on the verge. This has been rectified.

Abandoned Car near Trill Bridge - Vauxhall Corsa was parked in contravention of traffic lighting law and was causing a slight obstruction. This was reported to the police, who referred to Dorset Council. An Assistant Enforcement Officer in Places Services referred the report back to the police and did explain how to find our Local Community Team. This turned out not to be possible as the information wasn't available or could not be easily found. Car has since been taken away.

Speed watch – hoping to recruit new members.

West Stour – There are missing/broken road signs around the village. The Clerk will have a drive around and take photos to report to Highways team. Action – Clerk

It was noted that Buckhorn and Western and Kington Magna Parish Council have noted in their minutes that they had invited the Stours Parish Council to attend a site meeting at the 5 Bridges, with Dorset Waste Partnership, to discuss removing debris from the area. The Clerk confirmed that she had not seen an invitation and will contact their Clerk to ensure they have the correct contact details for the Parish Council.

East Stour – Concerns were raised that the pavement around the recreation area, on the corner outside the Village Hall is still holding a lot of water. This will be monitored. The hedge being removed from outside 5 Witch Close has been reported to Dorset Council. At the present time nothing can be found to say this was a protected hedge, but the rights of way officer is looking into it in more detail.

23/68. Clerk Report- correspondence – all correspondence has been circulated.

Request for defibrillators to have contact numbers on the units. The Clerk will arrange this. Action–Clerk

East Stour Village Fate Committee asked for financial support for the fete. The Clerk will email the Councillor for East Stour will information of finances available and to obtain an agreement to release funds before ratifying the proposal at the next Parish Council meeting. Action -Clerk

23/69. Items for next agenda and date of next meeting. Update to do list – AGM - Elections

The Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 16th May 2024 at Stour Row Village Hall at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.38pm

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](mailto:clerk@stours-pc.gov.uk)