West Stour Parish

Minutes of West Stour Parish meeting

Held on the 22nd of May 2024 at 7.30pm

at West Stour Village Hall

Present: Cllr J Watkins – Chairman Stours Parish Council, Cllr D Amlot and Cllr E Edwards, Cllr P Mitchell and 29 elected members of the Parish.

In attendance: Mrs N Phillips – Clerk. Representatives from Wessex internet

**1/24. Apologies for Absence**

Michelle Cox, John Parker, Colin & Ann Hazzard, John Jeffery

**2/24. Welcome by the Chairman of the Stours Parish Council**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and thanked Pat Sealy, Paul Gould and Mark Elsworth, previous Councillors for West Stour, for their hard work and commitment whilst serving as Councillors for West Stour.

The Chairman introduced the new Councillors for West Stour, Cllr D Amlot, Cllr P Mitchell and Cllr E Edwards.

**3/24.** To agree the Minutes of the meeting dated the 18th of October 2023

All agreed that the table minutes for 18th October 2023 are a true and accurate record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chairman

RESOLVED: that the minutes were approved and signed (3/24 no budgetary requirements)

4/24. Matters arising.

Update on National Policy Network (Sec9(8) of the planning act 2008) - National Policy network Section 9 of the Planning Act 2008: The Secretary of State must lay the proposed NPS that they intend to designate before Parliament. An NPS can be designated if the ‘consideration period’ of 21 sitting days passes without a vote or if the House of Commons votes to approve the NPS in that period.

Section 9 of the Planning Act 2008: The Secretary of State must lay the proposed NPS that they intend to designate before Parliament. An NPS can be designated if the ‘consideration period’ of 21 sitting days passes without a vote or if the House of Commons votes to approve the NPS in that period

Waiting for confirmation that the latest National Policy Statement is through. Details can be found on the website below. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-national-networks>

Process to be adopted for Parish Meetings – The Clerk tabled details of the procedure for Parish meetings as set out in Local Government guidelines. This matter had been clarified at the meeting of the 18th of October 2023, but it was requested to be explained again at the meeting. The following procedure for each Parish within the grouped Stours Parish Council will be adopted at the next Parish Council meeting.

*A Parish Meeting consists of Local government Electors registered with in the Parish. Where the Parish comes under grouped Parish Council or have their own Parish Council, its Chairman may attend (weather they are an elected member of the Parish or not)2 and if they are present they must preside 3. If the Chairman of the Parish Council/grouped Council does not wish to Chair the meeting, the electors may vote for a Chairman to chair the meeting for just that meeting. The Parish Meetings must assemble annually between 1st March and the 1st June. The Parish Meeting may be convened by the Chairman of the Parish Council or any two Parish Councillors, or in a parish without a parish council, by the chairman of the parish meeting or by any representative of the parish upon the principal council (DC) or in either case by 6 electors for the area. Only electors are permitted to vote at parish meetings. The purpose of a parish meeting is for electors to discuss parish affairs. The only person that has any authority is the Chairman, and that is just on managing the meeting. Councillors that are on the Parish Council representing the village, are also just electors. There are no standing orders, code of conduct as there would be at a Parish Council meeting.* After debate, this was agreed.

5/25. Representative from Wessex Interne - Christine O’Grady -Community Engagement Manager – Wessex Internet, introduced herself and gave the following information to the public:

* Wessex Internet is a local company based in Blandford Forum, who have been awarded the contract from Central Government to supply broadband services to rural areas. They will be having a stall at the Village Fete giving details of the benefits to local people.
* Works are under way, to lay fibre around the village using small trenches to lay the fibre to a connection point, which will be later linked to properties that sign up for Wessex Internet. This should be completed by August and if anyone is interested in a faster broadband connection, please put your name down, either at the events where Wessex Internet are or on their website. You are not committing to anything at that time, just confirming you are showing an interest.
* Wessex Internet will be providing broadband to the Village Club and the Church, as massively reduced cost as a gesture of goodwill for the village. Wessex Internet will also consider supporting small community benefit projects.
* Concerns were raised over any disruption to the village whiles the cables are being laid. Christine confirmed that if there are reasons to close parts of the road for any length of time, these will be applied to at Dorset Council and also leaflet will be dropped off through those residents that would be affected.

6/24. Reports from representative from local organisations and Councillors

Cllr Amlot confirmed the procedure for local planning matters which are as follows:

* The Councillors for West Stour will be producing an email list for those who wish to request to join, to enable information on Planning and other matters in the village to be circulated.
* When the village receive a planning application, the information of the application will be put up on the notice board and on through the email list to enable residents to have their say. There are guidelines on the Dorset Council planning portal of what you can and what you cannot take into consideration when making a comment on an application. Residents of the village are able to either comment directly to the Councillors or to the Clerk or directly on the Dorset Council planning portal.
* After considering any comments from local residents, the Councillors will forward their comments/decision on to the Clerk for her to submit to Dorset Council.
* Dorset Council no longer send letters to direct neighbours of the applicants. Anyone is able to register with Dorset Council for alerts for applications that are relevant to the Parish.

Mr Andrew Marshall had met with Graham Stanley – Dorset Council, Senior Ranger for rights of way to discuss footpath maintenance. The following was discussed and proposed:

* For a service legal agreement to be put in place for Dorset Council to strim and maintain popular footpaths more regularly. The footpaths that have been highlighted are Footpath N75/3 - Path from the road, up the steps to the stile. (~5metres) and Footpath N75/13 - Path from the road by Parsons Glebe, past the front of Ember Cottage, then continuing along the side of Steeplechase to the stile at the entrance of the field at GR ST7849 2323 (~500meters). The estimated cost for this to the Parish would be £120.00 a year.
* The stiles were also mentioned for consideration to be replaced with gates, which again the costs would have to be covered by the Parish. the proposed gates are Footpath N75/3 - Path from the road, up the steps to the stile. (~5metres), Footpath N75/13 - Path from the road by Parsons Glebe, past the front of Ember Cottage, then continuing along the side of Steeplechase to the stile at the entrance of the field at GR ST7849 2323 (~500meters). It was also noted that there are other funding available for replacing stiles to gates.

After debate, it was agreed for Mr Andrew Marshall to obtain more accurate quotes for the SLA and gates, then forward the proposal to West Stour Councillors, who can then request the proposal is agreed by the Stours Parish Council. All present agreed. Action – Mr Marshall

7/24. Dorset Councillors report.

There were no reports.

8/24. Update on planning for the year 2023/2024 – the following was tabled:



9/24. Finance

The Clerk tabled the end of year cash book for West Stour.



10/24. Matters of interest & information

Cllr Mitchell reiterated the thanks to Pat Sealy, Paul Gould and Mark Elsworth for all they have done for the village. Confirmed that Cllr June Wilkins had been re-elected as Chairman for the Stours Parish Council. Cllr Mitchell reported that at the recent Stours Parish Council meeting, East Stour reported that they are working with the resident at East Stour to see if they would like a standalone Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed that this would not affect West Stours precept if this was to go through.

Cllr Mitchell reported that a resident has asked a question about bus services for the Village. It was noted that years ago there was a bus service in the village and a bus stop. After debate it was agreed for Cllr Mitchell to speak to the relevant departments at Dorset Council to see if a bus service would be possible. Action – Cllr Mitchell

Cllr Amlot tabled the process for looking at a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. it was noted that the Councillors for West Stour will arrange a public consultation to give details to the residents of the Parish, of what a Neighbourhood Plan is and what benefit is has for the Parish. Representatives from Buckhorn and Western and Kington Magna Parish will be invited, as they have recently completed their Neighbourhood Plan. It is then planned to have a referendum at the Parish meeting in October, to see if the resident of the Parish agree to producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Information of the public meetings will be advertised on the notice boards and a leaflet drop and using the email group. Cllr Amlot reported that Dorset Local Plan is still in force from 2011-2031, until the new plan is completed.

Cllr Amlot thanked Mike Powell for looking after the defibrillator and Martin Hibbert who is working on updating the village map, to include new houses and the conservation area.

The Chairman reported that Guy, who manages the SID (speed indicator device) reported that it is not working correctly and needs to be fixed again or replaced. Arrangements for the SID to be collect from Guy will be done sorted.

Cllr Edwards reported that there are grants available from Dorset Council for Community Benefit funding and suggested that a replacement SID could be applied for. This was agreed. Action – Clerk

The chimney sweep – Keith Sansom will be in West Stour on 6th, 7th & 8th of August 2024. If you wish to have your name added to the sweep list, please email [the4.sealys@btinternet.com](mailto:the4.sealys@btinternet.com) List closes June the 30th.

The recent plant sales made £1100.00, which will be split between three charities.

11/24. Agenda items to be agreed for the next Parish meeting in October 2024 – Neighbourhood Plan

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.28pm

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