The Stours Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE STOURS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

on the 4th of September 2025 **at 7.00pm at East Stour Village Hall, East Stour**

Present: Cllr J Watkins – Chairman, Cllr A Stagg, Cllr P Matcham, Cllr P Patrick, Cllr Judy Uden, Cllr R McConnell, Cllr P Stride, Cllr R King, Cllr P Mitchell and Cllr E Edwards

In attendance: Mrs N Phillips (Parish Clerk), Dorset Councillors, Cllr V Pothecary, Cllr B Ridout and Cllr Carl Woode, 5 members of the public.

**Public Consultation: The following matters were discussed and actions agreed.**

A member of the public reported that the solar Slow Down indicator sign on the main road as you approach West Stour from the west is not working and that she has reported it to Dorset Council, but it has still not been mended. The Clerk will speak to the road safety officer to ensure it is on their work schedule. Action - Clerk

It was noted that due to the grass cutting contractor cutting back the daffodils on the Pleck too early in 2024, there were not a lot of flowering daffodils this spring. It was noted that the daffodils will be feed, to try and help with their recovery for next spring by the volunteers. The Clerk confirmed that the contractors had been informed, and they did not cut the daffodils back until they had gone yellow this spring. The Clerk stated that if any additional bulbs are required that she can obtain some free of charge. The Clerk also confirmed that Dorset Council have given permission for the damaged saplings to be replace, but it was suggested that larger saplings are planted, as this summer has proved that a lot of small saplings died due to the lack of water and the larger saplings may have more of a chance. The Clerk will liaise with the volunteer to find out what trees are more suitable to be planted on the Pleck and will obtain some at no cost to the volunteers. It was also agreed to give over the grass cutting contractors details to just one of the volunteers so that they can discuss the management of the Pleck and the Wild Meadows in more detail. Action – Clerk

A representative from East Stour Valley News, asked the Council to consider financially supporting the publication by donating £379.36 for two additions. The Clerk explained that grants will need to be give for this purpose and will send the grant application to the representative, so that it can be considered by the East Stour Councillors. Action - Clerk

25/26. To receive and accept apologies of absence.

Cllr B Bowe, Cllr C Wilkins, Cllr David Amlot MBE, on military duties, and Dorset Councillor J Somper sent their apologies.

25/27. Receive declaration of interest and dispensations

There were none.

25/28. Co-option for new Councillors for East Stour

Mr Underwood sent his apologies for not being able to attend this meeting, he is interested in joining East Stour Councillors.

25/29. To approve the minutes dated the 3rd of July 2025

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Uden and seconded by Cllr Patrick, 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 (25/29 – no budgetary provision.

required)

Matters arising

SID operators for West Stour and East Stour – Cllr Mitchell reported that a meeting had taken place with himself, Dorset Council SID team and Cllr Uden to discuss the SID’s for West Stour and East Stour. The SID team have taken the SIDs away to have them cleaned and inspected. Dorset Council SID team will send through an estimate for the Parish Council for installation, removal and maintenance of the SIDs, this estimate will be for West Stour and East Stour, and another estimate to include Todber for consideration. It was also noted that the Stour Parish Council public liability must cover all Parishes and individuals installing/removing the SIDs and that these people are adequately trained. If individuals are not sufficiently trained that the Section 72 licence could be removed. The Clerk will check with the Insurance company regarding the public liability cover and Councillors need to ensure that they have been trained by Dorset Council to manage the SIDs. West Stour had sent a letter out to local organisations asking for them to consider donating funds towards replacing the SIDs. One out of five companies have offered to give a donation, one has declined, and nothing has been received from the three other companies to date.

To consider: Action for footpath adjacent to Longbarn Todber- removal of trees/bushes – after debating this matter, it was agreed for the Clerk to arrange a site visit with Councillors from Todber and Graham Stanley from Dorset Council. Action - Clerk

Pavillion at Stour Provost renovation- Dorset Council grant was not awarded for the renovation of the pavilion, due to not having received a quote for the works. Once the Clerk has received detailed quotes from the Cricket Club, she will look at other grants for funding. Action - Clerk

Play area design for Stour Provost – A design and quote had been circulated. After debate it was agreed for Cllr Patrick to circulate the details of design to the Village for approval. If the Village support his project, the Clerk will go out for grants to cover the cost.

20MPH scheme for West Stour – Cllr Mitchell reported that West Stour have also considered extending the 30MPH on the A30 past the garages to the bridge in West Stour. Dorset Council have been instructed to commence their survey on the A30 for the 30MPH request and Church Street for the 20MPH request.

Dorset Council Local Plan – Dorset Councillor Val Pothecary tabled details of Dorset Councils Local Plan proposal which is out for consultation for anyone to comment on. The plan is very important for Dorset, as Central Government have requested that 50,000 homes need to be built in Dorset, 25,000 have already been allocated, so Dorset Council are required to produce a plan with proposed sites for another 25,000 homes. The main points raised were:

* There has not been any land within the Stours Parishes allocated for development.
* There has been two Gypsy sites proposed, one in Stour Provost and one in West Stour. Details can be seen on the plan and details of how to view the plan will follow.
* It was noted that in some areas land has been highlighted without owner’s permission. As this is a draft plan, those owners have a right to request their land be removed from the proposal without there being future restrictions on them requesting development on their land.
* There is also a local transport plan in the draft plan.
* It is very important that everyone should look at the plan and have their say as once the plan is adopted there can be no amendments.
* Dorset Councillors have arranged for drop in events to discuss the plan, the local ones are to be held in Shaftesbury on Tuesday the 16th of September from 2-6pm at the Town Hall and in Gillingham on Thursday the 25th of September from 2-7pm at the Town Hall.
* To view and comment on the plan, please use the link, <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-council-local-plan-options-consultation-2025>. You can also view the plan at local libraries.

Reports from each Parish – reports had been circulated to all Councillors for their information.

The Clerk confirmed that the recreation area in East Stour is now a dog free zone, no dogs are allowed to be let loose on the recreation area or play area. The Parish Council have adopted the Dorset Council dog order, so anyone seen with a dog in the recreation area could receive an on-spot fine. It was noted that this has been possible now that the recreation area is used for football and will be marked out appropriately. Stour Provost reported that the bus stop at Quarry Close has been repaired and requested that the Clerk obtain quotes for a new notice board for Stour Provost. Action – Clerk

West Stour reported that Dorset Council Rangers have been instructed to replace some of the stiles on the rights of way to gates. It was also noted that a questionaire will be sent to all residents in West Stour for public consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish.

25/30. Reports from Dorset Councillors.

Dorset Councillor reports had been circulated and can be seen on the Parish Council’s website, or a copy can be obtained by the Clerk

25/31. Planning: review of applications received (DC = Dorset Council)



Full details of planning decisions are available on the Parish Council’s website

25/32 Finance

To record: Payments paid between meetings – The Clerk had circulated payment schedule for July 2025 for the sum of £3466.23 which had been approved via email for payment.

To agree: Payment Schedule for August 25 - The Clerk had tabled the Payment Schedule for August 2025 for the sum of £4379.59. This was proposed by Cllr Patrick and seconded by Cllr McConnell all agreed for the payments on the payment schedule be paid, the schedule and bank reconciliation was duly signed.



RESOLVED: to ratify the July and agreed the August payments (25/32 – current account)

The bank reconciliation had been circulated and agreed.

25/33. Chairman’s report

The Chairman reported that she received an unpleasant phone call from two ladies expressing their concerns over an Ash Tree that had been felled on the verge at Terrace Lane, East Stour.

The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had no part in the felling the tree. The Clerk is investigating who owns the land and tree in question. As a result from the unpleasant behaviour of the two ladies, the Clerk has now removed Councillors’ phone numbers from the contact list on the Parish Councils website. The general public can still contact individual Councillors via email and details are on the Parish Council website. The Clerk’s phone number is still advertised on the Parish Council website.

25/34. Clerk Report- correspondence – all correspondence has been circulated.

An email from a resident requesting that Stour Provost recreation ground could be used for a parking area for residents was tabled. Whilst the Councillors sympathised with the resident regarding issues with parking in Stour Provost, it was noted that this is an open space for the public to use and there are a lot of legal, insurance and cost reasons of why the recreation area should not be used as a car park. The Clerk will forward these comments back to the resident.

25/35. Items for next agenda and date of next meeting. Update to do list – SIDS – Budget

The Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 6th of November 2025 at West Stour Village Hall at **7.00pm**.

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