

VALE OF ALLEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, held at 7.30 pm in Witchampton Village Hall on Tuesday 8 January 2019

Present:

Cllr J Campbell – Chairman
 Cllr S Wathen, Cllr Ms D White, Cllr Mrs M Cook, Cllr Mrs P Hill, Cllr R Hill, Cllr J Manson, County Cllr S Butler
Also present was the Parish Clerk Ian Hanstead

18.142 APOLOGIES

Cllr T Read, District Cllr S Tong. Cllr S Gilchrist had tendered her resignation.

18.143. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest to report.

18.144 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING

There were no requests for dispensations to report.

18.145. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

18.146 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON – Tuesday 11 December 2018

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11 December 2018 (pages 1302 - 1305) were approved and signed as a true record.

18.147. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

18.148. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report

18.149. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Butler advised that the new Dorset Council was now moving at a great pace. The officer reports to the Chief Executive were in post and the management structure below them was being finalised.

The budget for 2019/20 had almost been finalised, so council tax bills almost agreed too. Consistent charging across the council was happening, with some increases and some decreases depending upon the former district council area.

The Strategic Planning committee was sub divided into three geographical areas – East Dorset and Purbeck affecting Vale of Allen.

Local Area Boards were being deferred due to the current time available but should be worked on later in the calendar year.

Discussion then took place between members and Cllr Butler around the location of planning staff.

18.150 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT

- a. Website (future dates) – members were reminded to send details of events including artwork to the clerk via email
- b. DAPTC training – none
- c. Burial Ground update
(Cllr Manson left the room as the item concerned relatives of hers).

Further to the last committee meeting, the Parish Clerk had discovered that the two memorial stones in question (which were too large being over the standard terms and conditions for burials and internments) had been approved by the previous Parish Clerk in 2016 and the other in 2017. Both were not supported by the appropriate application form but rather one being a letter and drawing with sizes from the stonemason and the other on an old PCC church form that did not have any terms and conditions.

Members noted the administrative issues and agreed not to take any action in this matter, but confirmed the importance of maintaining the standard terms and conditions going forward.

(At this point Cllr Manson was readmitted to the room).

A further discussion took place regarding the future location of ashes, that being to a section on the right hand side.

Further, Savill's were dealing with the transfer of land to provide an extension for the burial ground. The Clerk was asked to chase progress.

18-151 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Application No:	Location	Proposal	Decision
3/18/3487	Gaunts Manor Farm, Hinton Martell	To convert an agricultural building to a dwelling under the Class Q Regulations	No Objection

18.152 DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING DECISIONS NOTED

Application No:	Location	Proposal	Decisions by EDDC
	None		

18.153 Other Planning Matters

Application No:	Location	Proposal	Decision
	None		

18.154. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) The following items were approved for payment – cheques signed by Cllrs J Campbell and R Hill

	Details	Amount (£)	V.A.T	Cheque Total	Cheque No:
1	Citizens Advice (East Dorset)	100.00	0.00	100.00	975
2	Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance	100.00	0.00	100.00	976
3	Ian Hanstead – Clerk’s salary Jan and qtr 3 expenses	813.65	0.00	813.65	977
4	James Campbell expenses	20.00	0.00	20.00	978
5	Savills (Manswood play area lease)	1.00	0.00	1.00	979
6	DAPTC	246.41	0.00	246.41	980
	Total	1281.06	0.00	1281.06	

b) Cheques received

	None
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c) Cheques over £100 issued:

	Details	Amount (£)	V.A.T	Cheque Total	Cheque No:
1	Chandler IT Services	170.00	0.00	170.00	967
2	Gussage Accounting services	250.00	0.00	250.00	969
3	Ian Hanstead – Clerk’s salary Dec	525.78	0.00	525.78	970
4	HMRC – PAYE (Oct – Dec)	394.20	0.00	394.20	971
5	Krystyna Bradbury Q1 & 2 expenses	682.74	0.00	682.74	973

- d) Bank update – The Clerk reported that, with regards to the current account, Cllr Wathen should now be a cheque signatory and the bank statements should, from January be sent to an amended address. With regards the on-line banking, Cllrs R Hill and S Gilchrist had received their letters for access and passwords, Cllrs Wathen and Campbell had received the access but had to set up their passwords. However, TSB had sent yet another form, different to the original one, for the Clerk to complete to be a delegated user on the account. Another form had been down-loaded to remove Cllr S Gilchrist from ebanking. All forms were signed appropriately for return to TSB.
- e) Burial site fees – discussion took place as to whether to retain or increase the fees charged for the burial ground. The 2019 fees had not yet been advised by the National Parochial Council, so the 2018 fees were discussed as a basis. Members were made aware of the income and expenditure on the site for the last 5 years. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Witchampton burial site fees would be increased by 10% over the National Parochial Church Council fees to allow the raising of funds to deal with on-going expenditure in maintaining the burial ground. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting with the local vicar and Church Warden for a liaison meeting that was long overdue.
- f) Internal Audit action plan update – of the items outstanding:

- a. Members to review finances quarterly, this was on the current agenda for the third quarter
 - b. VAT reclaim – awaiting bank statement to be in current Clerk’s address – expected with a week
 - c. HMRC statement proof – Envizage had applied (delayed due to death in his family) to HMRC for access. The Clerk had received an access code which had been forwarded, so this was likely to be resolved by next meeting
 - d. Assets review – not due until April, but as unlikely to be any changes, it was agreed to reviewed at the February meeting
- g) Parish Clerk’s annual salary review – members received the NALC annual update on salaries. The new scales and spinal points were noted and it was agreed to award an annual increment to the Parish Clerk. The Clerk advised members that he did not have a contract of employment. A draft had been prepared and shared with the Chairman. The Chairman agreed for this and an Expenses Policy draft to be circulated to members, in advance of the next meeting. The employment contract will be issued once members had approved.
- h) Quarter 3 2018/19 finances - The Clerk ran through the current year’s position that members noted. Focus centred on the ‘earmarked funds’ budget. Explanations were noted following last year’s Finance Working Group on the redistribution of some funds. Cllr Wathen raised a query on the ‘precept 2019/20’ column as it looked incorrect. The Clerk agreed to review this and circulate an update to members as soon as possible.
- i) 2019/20 precept – confirmation was given by the Clerk that this had been applied for on 20 December, following agreement at their December meeting.
- j) External Auditor update – since the last meeting, the AGAR had been sent to the External Auditor. There had been several email exchanges requesting further documents and confirmation of items of income and expenditure, as they exceeded 15% movement. Further, despite the accounts being placed on the website for public scrutiny for four weeks, the Auditor was insistent that the requisite ‘Notice’ should accompany the accounts and as such, the consultation period had to be started again, finishing on 8 February. No official determination would be made until then, although it was advised that there would be two notes of this AGAR being:
 - i. Failure to complete and submit the annual return on time
 - ii. Failure to carry out a six monthly audit
However, on appeal, the Auditor agreed to add a note that the new Clerk was working on correcting issues.
- k) VAT reclaim update – as mentioned above, submission can’t take place until a bank statement is received in the new Clerk’s address

18.155 CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Shaping Dorset Council newsletters – circulated prior to meeting for information. An article requested feedback on how the new Dorset Council should work with Parish Councils. Members discussed and suggested:
- i. Business as usual
 - ii. On-going liaison
 - iii. Continue as now but with more interaction
 - iv. Lots of input from new councillors
 - v. Proper representation
 - vi. Less paperwork
- The Clerk will respond on behalf of members.

- b. Self-Assessment – The NALC had issued a self-assessment tool – a series of questions under headings, for Parish and Town Councils to assess themselves against, with a view to improvement and development.

Members discussed the pros and cons of completing such a questionnaire, the validity of the questions (whether they were appropriate to this Parish Council) and the answers (these were too vague and no 'not applicable' box). Offers were made to rewrite the questions and scoring method, however, the Clerk said that was not the point and would not provide a consistent approach if monitoring with other councils took place.

Members were concerned that achieving some of the items would be too onerous or not appropriate, but the Clerk suggested that that was the members' decision at the end of the day as to what they did with the scoring not appearing in 'A'.

The Clerk offered to carry out an assessment and add comments to 'B, C and Ds'. Members could consider this further at their next meeting.

18.156 MATTERS OF INFORMATION

- a) Cllr Wathen – advised members that the new home behind Penny Cottage would be called 'The Farthings'.
- b) Cllr Cook – advised that the Witchampton club's flagpole had broken. The club committee was discussing this tonight. If they needed funding, it would be a good gesture of this committee to offer a contribution to the overall cost. Members were supportive of this if an application was made by the club for the next committee meeting, as grant funds budget had funds available.

Meeting closed at 9.03 pm

Signed.....

Date 5 February 2019

Chairman