

Toller Porcorum Parish Assembly
Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 12th April 2023
At Toller Porcorum Village Hall
6.45pm for 7pm

Refreshments were served at the meeting.

Present:

Cllr N Farmer (Chair)

Cllr C Wardle

Cllr P Crabbe (Vice Chair)

Cllr H Jones

Cllr J Miller

Cllr J Stavenhagen

Cllr D Ennals

Cllr Anthony Alford (Dorset Council)

Mrs M Harding (Clerk)

21 members of the public

1. Welcome by Chair of the Parish Council

NF welcomed all Councillors, members of public, ward Councillor Tony Alford and the speaker for the evening Chris Loder MP.

2. Speaker: Chris Loder MP

Chris is Dorset born and bred, not universally common amongst MP's, having been elected to parliament in 2019 having served on West Dorset District Council beforehand. One of his hobbies I understand is bell ringing.

Prior to meeting Chris Loder was sent a number of questions on topics and we would welcome his views on namely the discharge of sewerage 20mph speed limits, housing targets recruitment of doctors for rural practices and the installation of Solar panels on new developments.

He had also received a couple of advanced questions from a resident regarding climate change issues.

Chris Loder spoke on the key campaigns he is involved in one being the barge located at Portland, he is lobbying against this meeting the home office to look into this as this will hold up to 500 single males, there is a lot of pressure against this locally. Chris explained how this could affect the local health services, transport and the community.

Road safety in Dorset is an issue in West Dorset, A30, A3066 and A35, there is a focus on the highways agency and DC highways to update white lines, cats' eyes and signage. He is aware of the disparity of fuel costs between Bridport and Yeovil. There being a 20ppl difference. This is something that supermarkets control, as well as the price of milk and other staples which are not supporting our local famers.

CL spoke on the investigation by Ofgen into the statements by fuel and power companies over the increased costs of renewable energy.

There are environmental challenges and the perception that electric vehicles are ok for towns and urban areas. There are pros and cons for all forms of transport becoming electric. Electric vehicles are quieter, and the perception is they are greener, but they are heavier and therefore use more rubber and tyres, also the issues of the supply of minerals for the batteries so is not straight forward. Net Zero is good aspiration.

DE commented on the Net Zero aspiration and his feelings on this topic.

Environmental and water- A lot of water courses have been subject to spills and sewerage; this has an effect on bathing waters. In 2020 an environmental bill was put to parliament, and this was mandated in law that every spill/sewer discharge was recorded and monitored. As we need to fully understand what is going on. CL explained that if the bill was not supported and the sewerage was not a controlled release, then it would back up into sewers and back up into homes as there is not the capacity to store it all.

The closure of Maiden Newton surgery on one day of each week was noted.

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CL reported that during lockdown dentists did not do very much then many retired early or moved, part of this reason is the incentive arrangements up to a certain level.

There is a stark contrast with access to GP's, where the best and worst surgeries have been highlighted, many of the best are in West Dorset. It was noted that this is clearly not happening in the Ammonite surgeries and needs to be addressed. Lots of GPs don't like working with Ammonite as the culture is different so this has to be flagged with the relevant authorities.

CL explained some of the benefits of Brexit, the economy has grown 20%. The Common agricultural policy changes have meant that, farmers were paid on the land you had rather than what you did with it, so it is a fairer system. Also, the stopping of the live transport of animals should never have happened.

CL commented on the effect of covid, and how businesses have recovered from it. The hotel pub trade has been the worse hit and can't get staff, but this is a Europe wide problem and what people are prepared to do for work, it is morally questionable what we pay workers and if we value their service. A lot of railway companies use immigrants rather than employ locals.

There are thousands of positions for daffodil picking and visas are available but very few are taken up because they are only valid for 6 months and they are needed for 10 months in the working season. To grow produce artificially out of season costs are high. So, the message is to buy local and support producers in the UK. CL explained that children need to know about seasonality.

CL commented on the issues raised about striking Doctors and nurses, the NHS being broken also the many rail strikes. The NHS is the biggest cost to the taxpayer and the health secretary needs to find solutions. The salaries for train drivers and those working on the railway compared to doctors and nurses is disproportionate.

CL commented on the White-tailed eagles released on the Isle of Wight, that have now come to the mainland, this being an issue for sheep farmers and other young livestock.

The rural crime teams have been increased with a clear emphasis on illegal camping.

A comment from the floor on the issues of migrants and refugees and this country being a soft touch. CL was quite confident that Sunak is doing a good job. Chris's session ended at 8.23pm

3. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May 2022

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed DE

Seconded JS

4. Matters Arising- none.

5. Chairman's Report for 2022-23 –

The PC has carried out Community Support with the County Cars scheme, play area, Church grounds, Post Office, Queen's Platinum jubilee, Defibrillator and party to celebrate the Kings coronation.

There have been meetings with Ammonite Health Care. Cllrs have visited the Beavers at the Kingcombe Centre.

Administration: we now have a new PC website www.tollerporcorumparish.org and continue to support the Village community website.

Policies: we reviewed and adopted 22 policies and procedures. Introducing a new grant awarding policy and environmental and sustainability policy.

Planning: we continue to comment as statutory consultees on planning applications, about 6 in the last year. Of most interest was an application for a new solar park off the A356 southwest of Wraxall Woods, Wraxall Road near the junction of Higher Kingcombe Road. If the application is successful, we are pushing for a share of a community fund, which might be available.

Sandbags: we have increased quantity of sandbags in the store

Highways: we have reported and followed up on the following highways issues-

- Flooding on Toller Lane,
- Powerstock Bridge flooding and potential removal,
- Smelly drains in Church Mead,

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- Reprofilng of High Street,
- Fixing of potholes,
- Reporting of fly tipping.
- Gritting of school routes through parish.
- 20mph speed limit,
- Managing of grit bins,
- Repairing of fingerpost signs

Countryside and Rights of Way: we have followed up on the following issues-

- Gates Project 4 gates to replace stiles
- Poor condition of Toller Stream and River Hooke
- Reporting of blocked ROW
- Upgrading of permissive routes
- Upgrading of Countryside Noticeboard.

Finance: Last Financial Year (2022-23) precept raised at £6485 compared to this year of £6750 (4%) + CIL monies received of £1062-WD/D/18/001293 Higher Kingcombe Farm.

We have made grants to Toller PCC - towards grass cutting costs £430, Recreation Ground – towards running costs £870, Village Association – towards insurance for PO £180, Jubilee event costs of £220.74, Country Cars towards mobile phone costs £40.00.

Our Capital Assets consist of a Bus Shelter, Noticeboard, Sandbag store, 10 grit bins, Computer & Printer. For major expenditure such as civil emergency or major works these are met by other agencies.

6. Financial Report from the Clerk 2022-23-

Last Financial Year (2022-23)

Precept raised at £6485

CIL monies received of £1062-WD/D/18/001293 Higher Kingcombe Farm

Vat reclaims of £264.99

Interest of £20

The PC set up a new Website and Cllrs have dedicated PC email addresses.

A new accounting system was set up, Defibrillator consumables purchased, and finger post repairs completed in the year.

End of year balance £13682

This Financial Year (2023-24)

Precept raised at £6750

Looking forward, there will be the continuation of gate replacement project (match funded by Dorset Council)

7. Report from the Recreational Area Association

The Association have completed hedge works on two boundaries. This started on western boundary to cut back overgrown hedge.

We have applied for funding towards Boule court but were not successful, so the committee are considering whether to pursue this project or purchase another piece of play equipment.

The TPRA is maintaining 100 + trees planted as part of the coronation. Some have been replaced as some did not survive the hot summer, so a few extras were added to cover area where bonfire was located. The TPRA are consider asking the PC to take over running of recreation unless residents come forward to take on roles to support existing committee members who feel they have done enough. AGM in June.

8. Report from the Parochial Church Council

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DE thanked the PC for their annual grant towards the upkeep of the Churchyard. Also thanked the community for their funds but the church is on its knees. The parish has to raise £8000 per year that goes towards the parish priests. The Church relies on village events for fund raising to keep the church open.

DE also commented on the Village Hall, he has recently taken over as Chair, volunteers are needed for the treasurer and secretary for the coming year an advert is in the Toller Times. The VH does not receive a grant from the PC but reported it provides a community hall for the village with Wi-Fi, picnic tables, and BBQ. The PC pays for the costs of the grounds to be maintained and has a new car parking scheme which is working well. The railway is now complete and the hall manages the village allotments.

9. Report from the Jubilee event 2022

Our Queen beloved mostly all over the world – over 70 years on the throne of the United Kingdom – a memorable occasion.

A team came together to formulate ideas as to how Toller Porcorum could celebrate this occasion. Mindful that it was a National Celebration it was thought everyone should be involved.

The event was held on Friday 3 June and the weather held out. A Village Jubilee Tea Party was organised, sponsorship was received from Toller Porcorum Parish Council, The Community Land Trust, and the Village Hall Trustees. TPPC sponsored the giving of a Jubilee coin to the children as a lasting memento of their childhood living in Toller. We catered for over 100 people with so much help coming from villagers with bunting, blowing up balloons, setting out tables and chairs, cover, and decorate tables and window ledges with flower arrangements and of course provide much of the food without cost, largely due to the generosity of members of Toller & Hooke WI which meant that ultimately, we managed to come in under budget.

Face painting for the children kept them occupied prior to tea and due to the beautiful day, we were able to have a gazebo outside for them to do colouring and painting while their parents and family following tea, cake and scones, enjoyed a glass of prosecco and slice of a specially made Jubilee cake by a resident who managed to incorporate the emblems of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. A pay bar was organised, and the obligatory raffle was run and prizes were very generously donated by villagers. Raffle ticket sales amounted to £290 which was donated equally to Weldmar Hospice care and the Ukrainian Appeal each receiving £145 each. Grateful acknowledgement was subsequently received from these two charities.

So, following such a jubilant day last June, there followed the death of our Queen in September. This of course meant that there would be a Coronation and reminded residents of the Coronation Tea Party starting in May. Sponsorship has also been sought from the TPPC, CLT and the VHT.

10. Democratic Forum

11. Close and refreshments- Thanks was given to Mrs Ennals for organising the refreshments again.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm