

TOLLER PORCORUM PARISH COUNCIL

Chair Neil Farmer

Clerk Clare Smith

Minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting

Wednesday 13 November 2024, 7pm at Toller Porcorum Village Hall

Present:

Councillor Neil Farmer (NF)

Councillor Peter Crabbe (PC)

Councillor Debbie Billen (DB)

Councillor Jane Curry (JC)

Councillor Helen Jones (HJ)

Councillor Chris Wardle (CW)

In attendance:

Clare Smith (Clerk)

Dorset Councillor Neil Eysenck (NE)

Members of the public: 4

24/11-1. Public Democratic Forum

Member of the public thanked councillors for taking up and performing their roles. They also thanked NE for being involved in parish meetings.

The same person detailed the expenses the village church is facing. They asked that these be taken into account when the church's grant application was considered as the churchyard is a benefit to the community.

They went on to ask if medicine blister packs can be recycled for metal at the tip (household recycling centre). They were advised the village Post Office has a collection point for such items.

ACTION: clerk to check with Dorset Council (DC) Waste Services and report back.

They also asked how much it costs DC to clear fly tipping as they felt charges at tips would lead to an increase.

ACTION: NE/clerk to find out and report back but NE stated DC can only clear fly tipping on council owned land.

To end they asked how to report fly tipping on unnamed roads. They were advised to use the map on the form for reporting fly tipping on the DC website or to use the what3words app or website as this is also used by DC Highways.

Another member of the public asked who was responsible for clearing discarded hedge cuttings after DC Highways have cut hedges. They also wanted to know where claims for damages resulting from the cuttings should be directed.

ACTION: clerk to check responsibility with DC Highways and report back.

The same person asked if a community litter pick could be started and volunteered to lead it. They felt a litter pick was sometimes needed, particularly on Toller Lane.

ACTION: clerk to canvas opinion of parishioners and report back.

24/11-2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received and accepted for councillor Steve Hodson.

24/11-3. To receive declarations of interest or any grants of dispensations

CW declared his role as chair of the Community Land Trust (CLT) which owns the building housing the Post Office. CW excused himself from the discussion and vote on the grant application from Toller Porcorum Village Association with regard to the Post Office.

24/11-4. Welcome by Chairman

All were welcomed to the meeting, including 4 members of the public.

24/11-5. To accept the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 11 September 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council were proposed and duly accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed: PC

Seconded: JC

Accepted

Clerk to the Council: Clare Smith

Email: clerk@tollerporcorumparish.org

Website: www.tollerporcorumparish.org

Signed by Chair:

Date:

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24/11-6. Matters arising from minutes of the last meeting for information only
None arising.

24/11-7. Dorset Council report

NE informed council that Dorset Council's (DC) deficit is £13 million and not £10 million as previously reported due to increased costs of adult social care. DC receives £300 million in council tax plus income from car parking and other fees that leads to an annual turnover of £1 billion. DC is trying to get back on track and its hoped efficiency savings will make a difference. It does mean hard decisions are looming for all departments.

Frustration on how the Big Conversation events were managed has been understood. The draft DC plan is out now and will be discussed at cabinet in November and voted on in a full council meeting in December 2024.

Cabinet Portfolio Holders plan to provide quarterly updates on work and changes in each of their areas. NE will provide TPPC with a link to the updates and DATPC will also cascade the updates to member councils. NE encouraged all to read the updates as they are a valuable insight into the key themes and focus of the administration.

Winter preparedness is of great concern, particularly around flooding. DC's Flood Team has advised DC that groundwater levels are already very high and there are worries that springs that usually surface in January and February could do so in December. NE is encouraging everyone to check that plans are in place in case of flooding and to ask him for assistance if necessary.

NE asks that responses to planning applications, whatever the actual response, always include a comment that lists material considerations whether these are positive or negative. DC's Head of Planning is drafting guidelines for local councils to help with this. NE highlighted the importance for parish council to clearly state whether they support or object to an application. Under rules of the Scheme of Delegation, only responses that directly contradict the decision of a Planning Officer can be reviewed to see if further consideration at committee level is required. Without a support or object statement it is unlikely there would be recourse for any parish council to disagree with the Planning Officers recommendation at a later date.

24/11-8. Finance

i. To approve the accounts for September and October 2024

HJ carried out the checking of invoices, bank statements and bank reconciliations.

Bank on 6 November 2024: £18,388.03

Proposed: HJ

Seconded: CW

Approved

ii. To consider and approve the payments due for November and December 2024

Payee	Detail	Amount
Hugo Fox Ltd	Website hosting (November)	£11.99
DAPTC	Councillor and clerk training	£400.00
Ken Hussey	Recreation Ground inspection	£25.00
SLCC	CiLCA course fee	£450.00
Hugo Fox Ltd	Website hosting (November)	£11.99
Clare Smith	Clerk's pay (September and October)	£348.48
Clare Smith	Mileage	£21.33
Clare Smith	Clerk's allowance	£52.00
Hugo Fox Ltd	Website hosting (December)	£11.99
Amazon	Microsoft 365	£59.99

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Payments considered and approved.

Proposed: HJ Seconded: JC Approved

iii. Consider grant applications and agree grant amounts (Appendices F and G)

Grant of £500 awarded to St Andrew's and St Peter's Church.

Proposed: PC Seconded: HJ Approved

Grant of £170 awarded to Toller Porcorum Village Association. CW excluded himself from the discussion and vote as he is chair of the CLT.

Proposed: JC Seconded: HJ Approved

ACTION: clerk to make payments

iv. Approval replacement of Parish laptop with a recommended model (Appendix H)

Laptop 2 from the report was approved as a replacement.

Proposed: CW Seconded: PC Approved

ACTION: clerk to purchase laptop

v. Approve recommendations from Staffing Committee to update and backdate clerk's pay rate and to increase contractual hours (Appendix I)

Recommendation to update the clerk's pay to 2024/25 rate and backdate to start of contract approved.

Proposed: JC Seconded: CW Approved

Recommendation to increase the clerk's contractual hours, effective immediately, was approved

Proposed: HJ Seconded: CW Approved

vi. Consider and approve budget and precept for 2025/26 as put forward by Finance Working Group, subject to Band D rate being acceptable (Appendices J and K)

Recommendation that any underspend in the current year be moved to reserves was approved.

Proposed: CW Seconded: DB Approved

Budget for 2025/26 and precept of £9850, dependent on Band D council tax figures, was approved.

Proposed: PC Seconded: HJ Approved

24/11-9. Review Action List 2024-25

Nothing to report.

24/11-10. Highways

i. Powerstock Bridge update

NE has met with involved parties in Dorset Council and is encouraged that progress is being made. Council is waiting to receive an update from National Highways.

ii. Agree resolution on the future of Powerstock Bridge

Resolution agreed: Toller Porcorum Parish Council supports the demolition of Powerstock Bridge by Highways England and raising of the road level of Barrowlands Lane by Dorset Council to reduce the impact of long-term flooding through a joint project plan.

Proposed: CW Seconded: HJ It was resolved

iii. Brief verbal report from representative

Upcoming road closures in Maiden Newton.

24/11-11. DAPTC

i. Consider motions for DAPTC AGM and instruct representative on whether to vote for or against (Appendix M)

Motions were considered and representative NF instructed to vote FOR.

Proposed: CW Seconded: JC It was resolved

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ii. Brief verbal report from representative

Nothing further to report.

24/11-12. Community including Church and Village Hall

i. To consider if council and clerk should be trained in defibrillator use and CPR and whether to open training to community

Proposed by NF and agreed by council as a good idea. Clerk instructed to investigate costs and update at next meeting.

ii. Consider contributing to the purchase of a living Parish Christmas tree and agree maximum amount

JC proposed a live fir/spruce tree be bought for the village to be used as a Christmas tree for years to come. The tree would be planted at the back of the Village Hall and be visible from the trailway, bridge and road. Approximate costs for a tree are £100 - £120 plus good quality solar lights.

Council resolved to provide a maximum of £100 towards a tree and lights if the amount was matched by CLT.

Proposed: JC

Seconded: CW

It was resolved

iii. Brief verbal report from representative

Nothing further to report.

24/11-13. To receive brief verbal reports from councillors representing the areas below:

i. Recreation Ground Working Group

NF, in councillor Steve Hodson's absence, gave his report. A new contractor for grass cutting is suggested and the Working Group will discuss this further. Views from parishioners would be sought on future grass cutting and making the Recreation Ground a place more people will use.

ii. Environment including Rights of Way

CW and NF attended a workshop event held by Dorset National Landscape (previously Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB). It was an interesting event but both councillors were frustrated by the lack of advice about the Maiden Newton Trailway. Maiden Newton Trailway update: meetings are taking place with all involved to progress the project and it is accepted by Dorset Council that both Toller Porcorum and Maiden Newton and Frome Vauchurch parish councils want the trailway in place. NF thanked NE for his work and support on the Trailway.

NF noted the speed of completion of works by Dorset Council's Rights of Way on issued reported.

iii. Emergency Planning

Nothing to report.

iv. Ammonite Patient Participation Group

Nothing to report from the Patient Participation Group.

CW has received a proposal from residents to set up an informal drop in health café to be held every month at the Village Hall. Council stated anything that aids residents should be supported if possible.

CW and NF will meet with the residents to gather more information and report back at the next meeting.

24/11-14. To receive any correspondence received for noting

Grant applications received from St Andrew's and St Peter's Church and Toller Porcorum Village Association as already discussed.

Lloyds Bank is changing the names of accounts but no change to operation.

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24/11-15. To confirm arrangements for future Parish Council meetings

i. Confirm arrangements for Parish Council meeting in January 2025

The next meeting was moved back a week and will be held Wednesday 15 January 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

ACTION: clerk to book remaining meetings for 2024/25 year.

ii. Confirm date for Annual Parish Assembly in April 2025 and discuss possible speakers

Annual Parish Assembly to be held Wednesday 9 April 2025 in the Village Hall, time to be confirmed.

NF suggested Steve Oliver as a speaker to update the parish on the reintroduction of beavers to the area.

ACTION: NF to invite Steve Oliver.

ACTION: clerk to book Village Hall for Annual Parish Assembly.

Meeting closed at 20:50pm