



**Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council**  
**held on Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall**

**Present:**

**Councillors**

D Sowry-House (Chair)  
A Craven  
D Everett  
S Florek  
L Hardy  
A Holland  
P Holland  
B Honeyman  
S Jefferies  
J Lortie  
D Mattocks  
P Neil  
P Purvis  
J Stennett

**In Attendance:**

Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)  
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – minute taker)

**Public Participation**

There were two members of the public present, neither of whom wished to speak.

The Chair welcomed all members to the last meeting of the Council in the 2023/24 municipal year, ahead of the elections on 2 May 2024.

**TC 23/287 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence, all members were present.

**TC 23/288 To Record any declarations of interest** Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

**TC 23/289 Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26 March 2024**  
– LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

Cllr Craven asked if there were any updates on the utility invoices received for the Grounds Unit from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corfe Mullen Scout Group. The Clerk advised an update would be provided under agenda item TC 23/299 – Clerk's Update.

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26 March 2024 were **APPROVED**.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C. A.', is written over the page number.

**TC 23/290 Paper B - To Approve Accounts for Payment**

Cllr Jefferies noted the expenditure for the Celebration of Service Civic event held on 21 April 2024 was very reasonable.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £23,344.83.

**TC 23/291 Paper C – To Approve Bank Reconciliation for March 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for March 2024.

**TC 23/292 Paper D – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees:**

- Community Services – 13 February 2024
- Planning Committee – 12 March 2024
- Planning Committee – 26 March 2024

The already approved minutes were **NOTED**.

**TC 23/293 Paper E - To Consider and Approve Recommendations from the Community Services Committee**

The Clerk presented the report, with updates noted as follows:

- Members of the Community Services Committee recommended pausing investigations into a RADAR system for the public toilets at the Recreation Ground whilst exploring options and costings for vandal-proof sanitary ware.
- Ferndown Strollers Cricket Club had also requested use of the Astroturf cricket wicket at the Recreation Ground with the same arrangement as Wimborne Cricket Club.
- Corfe Hill School was also using the Astroturf cricket wicket due to vandalism of the school's cricket pitch.
- The Clerk reiterated the budget of £8000 for tree works during the 2024/25 financial year. Members of the Community Services Committee requested a breakdown of the quotations for tree works across all sites in order to prioritise works within the agreed budget.

*The Chair suspended Standing Orders 3e-g to allow a member of the public to speak.*

The member of the public noted that as a user of accessible facilities, RADAR systems were not a deterrent for misuse and/or vandalism, due to RADAR keys being easily purchased online at a minimum cost.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following:

- Investigate options for vandal-proof sanitary ware, based on advice provided by the suppliers.
- To allow Wimborne and Ferndown Strollers Cricket Clubs along with Corfe Hills School use of the Astroturf cricket wicket at the Recreation Ground.
- To set up a new cost code in the 2025/26 budget to cover vandalism costs, to be discussed as part of the budget-setting process.
- To not proceed with any further planting at the Henbury View Play Area.



- To appoint Treestuff Limited to proceed with non-urgent tree works as follows:

**2024/25 Financial Year:**

- Old & New Cemetery – Total cost of £1975+VAT
- Recreation Ground - Total cost of £850+VAT
- Broadmoor Road Allotments - Total cost of £750+VAT

**2025/26 Financial Year:**

Updated quotation to be obtained ahead of 2025/26 budget setting for tree works at Springdale Road Open Space.

**TC 23/294 Paper F – To Note Elections Update and Approve Co-option Policy**

The Clerk presented the report, noting the uncontested election due to only 11 candidates being nominated out of a possible 14. The successful candidates would take up their role as an elected member of Corfe Mullen Town Council with effect from 7 May 2024 for a 5-year term.

An induction day for all new and existing members was scheduled on Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 18:30 in the small hall of the Village Hall, where the Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be signed in the presence of the Clerk.

Some members noted Dorset Council was also holding their induction for newly elected Dorset Ward Councillors on the same date. The Clerk advised an alternative date would be scheduled to ensure all members were able to participate in the induction training.

The Clerk confirmed that all newly elected members would be sent a link to review/update/complete their Register of Interests electronically within 28 days of accepting office.

As a result of the uncontested election and 3 vacant seats, the law requires the Council to co-opt persons to fill the vacancies as soon as practicable. In line with the Co-option policy, under 3.1 - Insufficiency of candidates at an ordinary election also provides the Council with authority to exercise its rights to co-opt any person or persons to fill any vacancies within thirty-five days following the date of the ordinary election.

A public notice will be published on 7 May 2024 via the Town Council website, Link article and notice boards. The closing date for applications to be co-opted onto the Council is Thursday 20 June 2024.

All eligible candidates to be invited to attend and present at the Full Council meeting scheduled on 25 June 2024. If candidates are unable to attend, the meeting would not be rearranged. The Clerk noted that candidates could still apply if they are unable to attend the meeting on 25 June 2024. However, they would be unable to present to Council.

The Clerk reminded members that the Town Council is not a political Council and any members of the public wishing to be co-opted onto the Council do not need to be linked to a political party.

Discussion took place relating to members personal political views as part of the nomination process and how this may be perceived by members of the public. Those



members who had included their personal political views on their nomination forms apologised and stated it was not their intention to promote their political views.

The Clerk reminded all newly elected members of the election expenses process sent via email ahead of the meeting, reiterating that an election spending return must be completed and submitted to Dorset Council Electoral Services by 30 May 2024 regardless of whether any expenses had been incurred.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following:

- Co-option Policy
- To publicise co-option on 7 May 2024 with closing date of 20 June 2024 for completed applications.
- Eligible candidates to attend and present to the Full Council meeting scheduled on 25 June 2024.

**TC 23/295 Paper G – To Consider Request to Hold an Event at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the request for a family picnic in the Community Orchard at the Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground on Saturday 19 May 2024 as follows:

- Erect a gazebo as shelter during the event.
- £50.00 refundable damage deposit payable to ensure the area is left clear of any rubbish.
- Evidence of Public liability insurance in place to be shared with the Council office ahead of the event.

**TC 23/296 Verbal – To Note Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council Sites**

The Clerk noted that although there had been no vandalism on Town Council sites since the last meeting, the Dorset Council toilets at Towers Way had been vandalised again and subsequently closed. Members of the public were being signposted to use the public toilets at the Recreation Ground which had re-opened following previous vandalism.

The Clerk confirmed contact would be made with Dorset Council to understand the issues being experienced and plans for re-opening of the public toilets at Towers Way.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/297 Verbal – To Note any updates from Representatives to Outside Bodies**

Cllr Jefferies confirmed there were no further updates on the Beacon Hill Landfill site. Cllr Florek confirmed the Friends of Corfe Mullen library continued their second hand book sales to raise funds for the library garden.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/298 Verbal - To Note the update from the Climate Change Working Party – Cllr P Neil**



Cllr Neil noted he had worked alongside the Clerk on the objection wording, particularly relating to climate change implications on planning application P/FUL/2024/01470 – Little Manor Farm, Waterloo Road, Corfe Mullen BH21 3SN.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/299      Verbal – To Note Clerk's Update**

The Clerk provided an update as follows:

- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council along with the Clerk had met with the Clerk, Chair and Vice-Chair of Wimborne Minster Town Council to discuss pedestrian and cyclists' safety when using Julians Bridge and Julians Road, particularly school children from Corfe Mullen attending Queen Elizabeth School. It was agreed to establish a working party from both Town Councils to progress the case for Dorset Council Highways to investigate safety measures on this dangerous stretch of road.
- Mayor presented Civic Awards to Gail Pape, Corfe Mullen Women's Institute, Cllr David Everett and Jane Adams; active member of the Climate Change Working Party at the Celebration of Service civic event held at St Nicholas Church on Sunday 21 April 2024.
- CIL monies totalling £6019.75 had recently been received from Dorset Council.
- HMRC was carrying out a compliance check of the Council's PAYE.
- The Deputy Clerk had attended a meeting with Lockyers School and the local neighbourhood policing team to share information.
- 2023/24 financial year end accounts were in progress and looking very positive going into the 2024/25 financial year. Internal auditor is due on site on 1 May 2024 with the approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) scheduled at the Full Council meeting on 28 May 2024.
- The Deputy Clerk had provided support to the Senior Youth Support Worker relating to re-opening of the youth club following the Easter break and introducing a behavioural agreement for all young people attending.
- The new office IT had been ordered and it was anticipated to be installed in June 2024.
- Ongoing discussions with Dorset Council Highways relating to bus shelters on Wareham Road, at Windgreen.
- Contact had been made with SSEN to obtain a quotation to connect the Grounds Unit utilities to the mains, rather than through the Scout hut. The quotation was £11,897.75 plus additional cost for groundwork. No contact had been received from the treasurer of 2<sup>nd</sup> Corfe Mullen Scout Group relating to copies of utilities invoices as back up to their invoice issued for payment.
- Dorset Council Countryside Team had offered a Christmas Tree to replace the dying tree at Windgreen. The tree had been received and would be planted in the Autumn 2024.
- Peninsula, the Councils Health & Safety Advisers had carried out their annual inspection w/c 15 April 2024. Their report will be presented to a future Full Council meeting.

Members discussed the quotation received from SSEN and felt alternative lower cost options should be investigated.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/300      Verbal – To Note Mayor's Report**

The Mayor provided an update on events he had attended as follows:

- Met with Corfe Hills School Sixth Form Environmental Officer.



- Keep Corfe Mullen Green Meeting in the Village Hall on 13 April 2024.
- Good Friday Service at St Huberts Church.
- Alpine Garden Society talk by the Head of the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh.
- Ferndown and Dorchester Town Councils Civic Days.
- Community Cinema at Wimborne Allendale Centre.
- Supported Reverend Jane Burgess of St Nicholas Church during her half marathon.
- Homewatch meeting where the Clerk presented 'A day in the life of the Town Council'.
- Mysteria Concert at St Huberts Church.
- Blandford Town Council Thanksgiving Service.
- Opening of Wimborne Country Park.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/301 Verbal - To Note Dorset Councillor Report**

There was no Dorset Councillor report or update received.

**TC 23/302 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas** No decisions can be taken<sup>1</sup>

There were no matters for forthcoming agendas.

**TC 23/303 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting** – The Annual Town Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

**TC 23/304 To Resolve to exclude members of the press and public** – to agree that agenda item TC 23/305 be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

*Members of the public and the Deputy Clerk left the meeting.*

**TC 23/305 Paper H – To Note Staffing Update**

Cllr Purvis as Chair of the Staffing Committee presented the report, noting the recommendations from the Staffing Committee meeting held on 15 April 2024 relating to recruitment of a Grounds Team Leader role and Deputy Clerk role due to the request from the current Deputy Clerk to reduce her hours and step down into an administrative role.

Members felt the recommendation provided resilience to the Council during times of absence and succession planning.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following:

- Proposed Staff Structure.
- Advertise internally a full time (37 hours) Grounds Team Leader role, SCP 16 - £28,282 per annum.
- Current Deputy Clerk to step down and move to a part time (22.5 hours) Senior Administrator role SCP 17 - £28,770 per annum, pro-rata.
- Advertise externally a full time (37 hours) Deputy Clerk role, SCP 26 - £34,834 per annum moving to SCP 27 £35,745 per annum on completion of iLCA within 12

<sup>1</sup> Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)



months of employment. CiLCA qualification to be obtained within 3 years of employment.

The Chair thanked all members present for their support and commitment to the Town Council during their term as Town Councillors and wished those who were stepping down all the best for the future and looked forward to working with the newly elected Council from 7 May 2024.

**TC 23/306 Close of meeting at 20:15.**

Signed as a correct record of the meeting  Date 14-5-24.

