



**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council
held on Tuesday 28 May 2024 at 19:30 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall**

Present: **Councillors**
D Sowry-House (Chair)
J Bonham
A Craven
S Florek
L Hardy
S Jefferies
J Lortie
P Neil
V Papilio

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.

TC 24/22 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs A & P Holland due to medical reasons.

TC 24/23 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 24/24 Paper A - To Approve minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 14 May 2024
(LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41)

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 were **APPROVED**.

TC 24/25 Paper B - To Approve Accounts for Payment

Cllr Craven raised the following queries:

Line 196: Was the invoice total, the cost of repairs following the EICR inspection. The Clerk confirmed the cost related to the inspection and repairs to lights in two changing rooms at the Sports Pavilion. The work required as a result of the EICR inspection would be invoiced separately.

Line 191: Why was a re-test required. The Clerk reported a retest was required in the Sports Pavilion prep room following repairs to the water heater.

Line 173: How often were the ride-on mowers used and should consideration be given to contractors carrying out all grass cutting, negating the need for the Grounds Team to use ride-on mowers and associated costs for repairs and maintenance of

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equipment. The Clerk confirmed contractors cut the larger grassed areas. However, the Grounds Team were still responsible for the allotment site, cemeteries and edges of sites cut by the contractors.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £22,547.80

TC 24/26 Paper C – Summary of Income & Expenditure and Reserves Balance Reports for the financial year ended 31 March 2024

The Clerk presented the report, noting the general reserves fund as at 31 March 2024 was £315,498.76, equating to circa 6 months operating costs and included £60,000 allocated to cover the 2024/25 budget shortfall. The recommendation was to hold a minimum of 3-6 months operating costs.

The Clerk reiterated the Council's reserves were at the higher recommended limit, noting public consultation relating to the re-development of the Sports Pavilion should commence during the 2024/25 financial year.

Cllr Craven raised the following queries:

Line 74: Why were there no figures shown against Allotment rent. The Clerk confirmed allotment rent was shown under line 4.

The report was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

TC 24/27 Paper D – To Receive and Note the final report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 March 2024

Cllrs Lortie and Craven congratulated the Clerk and staff on the positive report received from the Internal Auditor.

The Clerk presented the report, noting the following:

Control B – VAT partial exemption: The Council would need to be mindful of the VAT position, particularly during the rebuild of the Sports Pavilion and seek professional advice.

Control G – The names of staff members leaving or joining the Council to be recorded in the minutes.

Control H – Only assets over the value of £250 to be included on the Asset Register going forward.

The Clerk reminded members that their register of interests needed to be submitted to Dorset Council by 28 May 2024.

The report was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

TC 24/28 Paper E – To Consider and Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Clerk presented the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form 3 for the 2023/24 financial year, noting the External Auditor had confirmed an intermediate audit was required, due to the Council's income and expenditure being in excess of £500,000.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2024. The Chair and Clerk duly signed section 1 at the end of the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statement 2023/24 which had been prepared and signed by the RFO, with the Chair duly signing section 2 at the end of the meeting.

The completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ending 31 March 2024, along with supporting documents would be submitted to the External Auditor by 1 July 2024.

TC 24/29 Paper F – To Confirm and Note the dates for the Notice of Public Rights and Publications of the Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Clerk confirmed the dates for the period of exercise of public rights would commence on Tuesday 4 June 2024 and end on Monday 15 July 2024.

The Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for Accounts ending 31 March 2024 was **NOTED**.

TC 24/30 Paper G – To Declare any Conflicts of Interest with the External Auditor, BDO

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no conflicts of interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP declared.

TC 24/31 Paper H – To Note the already Approved minutes of the Committees:

- Staffing Committee – 29 November 2023
- Finance & Administration Committee – 4 January 2024
- Planning Committee – 9 April 2024
- Planning Committee – 23 April 2024

The already approved minutes were **NOTED**.

TC 24/32 Paper I – To Consider and Approve Recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee

The Clerk presented the report, noting the Q4 Budget Monitoring Report and Reserves Balance report presented to the Committee was shown in Paper C, Appendix 1.

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

- Updated Bank Mandate and Signatories to remove Paul Harrison, Dave Everett and David Mattocks and replace with Cllrs Adrian Craven, Jocelyn Lortie and Vanessa Papilio.
- General and Earmarked Reserves Policy.
- Investment Strategy Policy.
- Use of variable Direct Debits, BACs and CHAPs payment methods.
- Fund Transfer from the Co-operative Bank to the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) on 1 May 2024 totalling £260,000.

TC 24/33 Paper J – To Review and Approve the Council's and/or Staff Subscriptions to Other Bodies

The Council's and/or Staff Subscriptions to other bodies during 2024/25 were **REVIEWED** and **NOTED**.

Paper K – To Review and Approve Council Policies & Procedures

The Clerk presented the report, noting approval was sought for the Council's complaints policies, policies and procedures in respect of the Council's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection legislation along with the Press & Media Policy and the Council's employment policies and procedures.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the draft policies & procedures as follows:

- Complaints Procedure
- Vexatious Complaints Policy
- Data Breach Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Model Publication Scheme
- Subject Access Request Policy & Procedure
- Data Privacy Notice
- Press & media Policy
- Absence Management Policy
- Capability Procedure
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Paper L – To Approve and/or Retrospectively Approve

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

- 1) **Installation of electricity meter at the Grounds Unit:** To install a new in-line sub-meter to the electrical supply to allow the Council to monitor kWh usage at the Grounds Unit at a total cost of £249.99+VAT.

This work has not been completed due to requiring access to the Scouts Hut. The Clerk has emailed the Scouts to gain access, however to date, no response has been received.

- 2) **EICR remedial works at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground Sports Pavilion at a total cost of £360.00+VAT as follows:**

- Replace the lighting contractor box which has a broken lid and a hole in the side.
- Replace the male WC surface 1g switch which has a hole in the side.
- Replace the non-IP rated LED batton in shower changing room two for a new non-corrosive LED IP rated fitting.
- Replace the 1g metal clad switch which has an incorrect plate supplying the shower room light in changing room two for a new unit.
- Install support fixings on the 1x unsupported cable in the old immersion heater cupboard.
- Investigate and locate the loading of circuit 13.
- Replace one times cracked surface double socket in the hallway by room 10.

Further investigation relating to the work to upgrade to the DB1 & DB2 was required. The Deputy Clerk agreed to liaise with the electrical contractor to arrange a site visit with Cllrs Neil and P Holland prior to approval of upgrade.

- 3) **Installation of water meter at the Grounds Unit:** To supply and install a water meter to the water supply at the Grounds Unit to allow the Council to monitor usage at a total cost of £160.83+VAT. Meter to be installed on 4 June 2024.
- 4) **Corfe Mullen United Juniors to hold event at the Recreation Ground:** Annual end of season presentation on Saturday 27 April 2024 from 9.15am to 12.30pm.
- 5) **Corfe Mullen Beavers to Complete Gardening Badge at the Allotment site:** Group of approximately 15 beavers to visit the site with their leaders on 6 June 2024 from 5.15pm to 6.15pm.

TC 24/36

Verbal – To Note Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council Sites

The Clerk reported since the last meeting the 'steep drop' signs in the new cemetery had been removed and were found at the bottom of the steep drop on Newtown Lane. The signs had been recovered and re-installed by the Grounds Team. Graffiti had been removed by the Grounds Team at the Recreation Ground skate park, octagon play equipment in the Recreation play area had been damaged with replacement parts to be progressed along with large amounts of rubbish and smashed glass bottles found at Towers Way, particularly by the MUGA. All items had been reported to Dorset Police 101 and the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/37

Verbal – To Note Clerk's Update

The Clerk provided an update as follows:

- HMRC Compliance Payroll Audit completed on 25 April 2024, with no issues identified.
- Dorset Clerk's met virtually with the Chief Executive of Dorset Council to receive an update on the make up of Dorset Council following the 2 May 2024 elections and how Officers were reviewing the Liberal Democrats priorities as the majority party versus the financial impact to Dorset Council.
- Corfe Mullen Lawn Tennis Club to hold an open day on 29 June 2024, with a banner placed on the tennis courts fencing to promote the event as previously.
- Recent activities taking place on site at 113 Wimborne Road are being investigated by the Dorset Council Environmental Officer.
- Legionella testing carried out across all Town Council sites. However, re-testing to take place in the prep area at the sports pavilion due to minimal legionella bacteria identified as a result of a faulty water heater.
- Dorset Council had provided guidance and costs to the Town Council relating to the use of the Piddlehinton Traveller Transit site to be used under section 62.
- Pre-election period commenced on 25 May 2024 which applies to all local authorities. Awaiting further guidance from Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC). *Following the meeting, DAPTC confirmed the pre-election period commenced on 4 June 2024 not 25 May 2024 as previously stated.*
- Springdale Road car park and the Village Hall to be used as Polling Stations for the General Election on 4 July 2024.
- Met with Corfe Mullen Junior Tennis Club coaches to understand how the club was doing, and the challenges faced with the cost-of-living crisis.
- Office IT upgrade due on 6-7 June 2024.
- Replacement memorial bench in place at Towers Way to replace the damaged bench to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II.
- Reminder to all members to complete their Councillor profiles for the website, mandatory training, Register of Interests and Election expenses.

The update was **NOTED**.



TC 24/38 Verbal – To Note Mayor’s Report

The Mayor reported attendance of civic events had been disbanded during the pre-election period as a result of campaigning for the General Election on 4 July 2024.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/39 Verbal – To Note Dorset Councillors Report

Cllrs Sowry-House and Florek provided the following updates:

- Attending Dorset Council training with some scheduled meetings cancelled due to the pre-election period.
- Liaising with the Dorset Council Environmental Officer relating to 113 Wimborne Road, Corfe Mullen.
- Feasibility of Dorset Town & Parish Clerks having access to Dorset Council Microsoft Office 365 for sharing and communicating information.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/40 Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken¹

Cllr Jefferies provided a positive update on the current situation with the Beacon Hill Landfill site, noting Suez had recently reached an agreement with Dorset Council’s legal team on the section 106 wording. However, SUEZ only leased the land, therefore, would need the landowners, Beacon Hill Brick Company to sign up too.

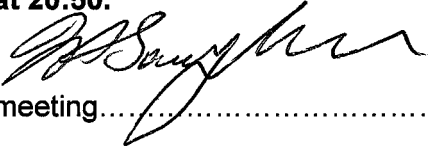
Suez had advised that the situation with regards to landfill waste had changed and consequently the final cell 13, may be filled with inert waste. Inert material/soils work under a specific type of environmental permit whereby it was classed as recovery rather than disposal, therefore, not classed as landfill requiring the same high level of engineering.

It was noted Natural England had visited the site earlier in the week and were very pleased with the heathland restoration.

Cllr Craven asked for an update on purchasing and installing of bus shelters on Wareham Road. The Deputy Clerk confirmed an update would be provided at the next Community Services Committee meeting scheduled on 11 June 2024.

TC 24/41 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 25 June 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

TC 24/42 Close of meeting at 20:50.



Signed as a correct record of the meeting..... Date 25-6-24

¹ 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)