



Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council
held on Tuesday 25 February 2025 at 19:15 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall

Present: **Councillors**
D Sowry-House (Chair)
A Craven
P Cuckston
S Florek
A Holland
S Jefferies
A Joyce
J Lortie
P Neil
V Papilio

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk)
Daryl Pearce (Deputy Town Clerk) - Minute Taker

TC 24/338 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Bonham and Purvis due to prior commitments, Cllr Hardy due to work commitments, and Cllr Holland due to personal circumstances.

TC 24/339 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)

Cllr Papilio declared an interest in agenda item TC 24/344 – to approve recommendations from the Community Services Committee relating to replacement raised beds, due to being an allotment holder.

TC 24/340 Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 28 January 2025 – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025 were **APPROVED**.

TC 24/341 Paper B – To Approve Accounts for Payment

The Clerk provided the following update:

- Lines 1025 & 1026: due to connection issues with the smart meter at the Sports Pavilion not submitting meter readings since October 2024, previous invoices were estimated with a credit note now issued. The smart meter was now working correctly with actual usage now invoiced for processing.

Members raised the following query:

- Line 1008: did the invoice relate to the total costs for service and associated repairs for the gator. The Clerk confirmed the invoice for approval related to the

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associated repairs only. The service had been invoiced separately and already processed for payment.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £30,033.98.

TC 24/342 Paper C - To Approve Bank Reconciliation for January 2025

Members raised the following query:

- Line 932: What training did this relate to. The Clerk confirmed the expenditure related to Lantra training the Grounds Team had completed in safe use of ride on mowers, strimmers, brushcutters and multi-use tools.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for January 2025.

TC 24/343 Paper D – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees:

- Community Services Committee – 12 November 2024
- Planning & Highways Committee – 17 December 2024
- Planning & Highways Committee – 7 January 2025
- Planning & Highways Committee – 28 January 2025

The already approved minutes of committee meetings were **NOTED**.

TC 24/344 Paper E – To Approve Recommendations from the Community Services Committee

The Clerk presented the report, noting the following updates:

- **Allotment Raised Beds:** summarised discussions at the Community Services Committee meeting relating to the five quotations received from Contractors and the materials and construction of replacement raised beds. Contactor/Option 3 provided additional information to provide clarity on the construction of raised beds as requested by the Committee shown in Appendix 1.
- **Allotment Grass Paths:** decision on turning paths over to grass remained outstanding, with a decision required on how to proceed ahead of 1 April 2025, when allotment holders would be signing revised tenancy agreement and maintaining paths.
- **Tree Planting:** if approved, a provisional date had been scheduled on 9 April 2025 during the Easter break, to host a potting event at the Recreation Ground, whereby members of the community could attend and pot up a tree sapling to nurture at home and then return in the Spring 2026 as part of a community planting day.
- **Replacement Doors for the Recreation Ground Public Toilets:** Dorset Police had closed the incident relating to the reported vandalism, with no further action taken, which resulted in closure of the public toilets.

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

- **Allotment Replacement Raised Beds:** contractor/option 3, Evergreen Services to excavate and dispose of 6 wooden raised beds, including soil and to replace with new concrete boards measuring 5.4m long x 1.8m wide x 0.60m high, refill with soil, and to clear the ground around the raised beds infilling with hoggin/path gravel for improved accessibility at a total cost of **£14,700 +VAT**.
- **Allotment Grass Paths:** to pause turning vertical paths over to grass for 12 months.
- **Tree Planting – Adopt a Tree:** to hold a potting event on Wednesday 9 April 2025 for members of the community to attend and pot up a tree sapling to nurture at home and then return in the Spring 2026 as part of a community planting day.



Young people to be encouraged to decorate a pot. Remaining saplings to be potted up by the Grounds Team and nurtured at the Grounds Unit compound.

- **Replacement Doors for Recreation Ground Public Toilets:** Option 1, Seyward Window Co Ltd to supply and install grey steel doors with no glass, made of high-quality aluminium extrusion, approved to BS6375 which complies and conforms to BS7950. Existing door timer locking mechanism to be utilised. Cost for two replacement doors, including installation of **£2,744+VAT**.

TC 24/345 Paper F – To Consider and Approve Updated Electronic Communications Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the updated Electronic Communications Policy.

TC 24/346 Paper G – To Consider and Approve New Civic Protocol

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the new Civic Protocol.

TC 24/347 Verbal – To Note Update on launch of New Council Website

The Clerk gave a preview of the new website, advising photos would be updated later in the year when new photos would be taken during the summer months, and the history content would be populated as soon as possible.

Members made suggestions as follows:

- Include photos of the Commonwealth Graves and War Memorial under Cemeteries.
- History to include photo gallery of Corfe Mullen through the years and community voices of living in Corfe Mullen.
- Jubilee Walks.

The Clerk confirmed the launch of the new website was anticipated on 27 February 2025, which would be promoted on the Council's social media and noticeboards.

Members thanked the Clerk and those involved in the work to populate the data for the new website.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/348 Paper H – To Consider and Approve Next Steps for Appointment of Neighbourhood Planning Consultant

The Clerk presented the report, noting the purpose of the agenda item was to agree in principle the appointment of the Planning Consultant and to arrange an informal face to face meeting for both parties to meet and understand commitments of developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk advised Locality grant funding for the 2025/26 financial year had yet to be confirmed by the Government, albeit circa £5000 was allocated in the Council's earmarked reserves for the project.

Cllr Neil noted, ahead of the informal meeting, to collate documentation from the Steering Group, to enable the Planning Consultant to understand the work already taken place to develop the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chair noted the importance of developing the plan, particularly a design code for Corfe Mullen, to ensure the characteristics of the village are maintained and considered as part of any new development, due to the Dorset Local Plan not including design codes.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** in principle, for the Clerk to schedule a face to face informal meeting with Planning Consultant from Fera Urbanism, with a view to appointment to relaunch and develop the Corfe Mullen Neighbourhood Plan.

TC 24/349 Paper I - To Consider Items for Approval

The Clerk presented the report, noting the following comments:

- **Upgrade to Office Intruder Alarm:** following the annual service on 22 January 2025, the Contractor recommended upgrading the system to ensure reliability.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Points:** Dorset Council had received Government funding to install further EV charge points across Dorset and were asking for suggestions of locations. Further phases would include more Council owned public carparks, and other recreational locations.

Members felt further EV charging points provided those residents without off street parking the ability to charge electric vehicles and met with the Councils commitment to being greener and more sustainable. The installation of EV charge points in Broadstone was noted, and should EV charge points be installed on Town Council owned property, the Town Council should be involved in the process to minimise disruption and loss of parking spaces.

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

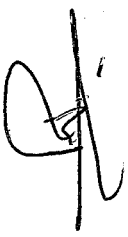
- a) **Upgrade to Office Intruder Alarm:** Unique Fire & Security to upgrade office intruder alarm at a total cost of £681.44.
- b) **Electric Vehicle Points:** to submit suggestion to Dorset Council for Corfe Mullen Village Hall as a location for an Electric Vehicle Charging points in Corfe Mullen.

TC 24/350 Paper J – To Consider and Approve Request from Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee

The Clerk presented the report, noting the request from the Carnival Committee was in line with previous years.

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

1. Use the Recreation Ground for the Carnival on Saturday 14 June 2025 and the preceding days from 10 June 2025 for set up. Town Council to arrange for contractors to cut grass on 10-11 June 2025.
2. Access to the Grounds Teams compound from 10 June 2025 to access the Carnival Committees equipment and use of white line markers.
3. To fly model helicopters over the Recreation Ground on carnival day within a large designated and secure area managed in compliance with the activity's appropriate legislation.
4. To run a dog show on the Recreation Ground on Carnival Day. The Clerk to seek permission from Dorset Council as previously.
5. Unrestricted use of the Recreation Ground on 17 June 2025 for the 5K run and fun run.
6. Assistance of the Grounds Team on the 17 June 2025 to trim any low branches, fill divots and assist with line marking.
7. Unrestricted use of the Sports Pavilion from 18:00 on 17 June 2025.
8. On site security overnight on 13 June 2025 at the Recreation Ground.
9. Accept invitation for the Mayor as a guest, to take part in the street procession on carnival day, Saturday 14 June 2025.



10. Permission to stage the festive lights at Windgreen from the end of November 2025 to beginning of January 2026 utilising the council's power supply.

TC 24/351 Paper K – To Receive and Note Internal Audit Interim Report covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024

The Clerk presented the report, highlighting the key points to be considered by members.

Members thanked the Clerk and staff for their hard work in achieving a positive audit outcome, noting the recommendations within the report. The Clerk to pass on the Council's thanks for the thoroughness of their first conducted audit of the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- **NOTE** Interim Internal Audit Report for 2024/25 financial year.
- **NOTE** actions shown in Appendix 1 from the Interim Internal Audit Report for 2024/25 financial year.
- **AGREE** the Internal Auditor is independent of the Council.
- **AGREE** the effectiveness of the Internal Audit.
- **APPROVE** the continuing appointment of the Internal Auditor, Tim Light, Lightatouch, for the 2025/26 financial year, subject to quotation and letter of engagement being obtained.

TC 24/352 Paper L – To Consider and Approve Accessibility Statement for the New Council website

The Clerk presented the report, noting the statement along with the Transparency Code required approval ahead of the launch of the new website.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accessibility Statement for the New Council Website.

TC 24/353 Paper M – To Consider and Approve Transparency Code

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Transparency Code.

TC 24/354 Verbal – To Note Update on Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council Sites

The Clerk provided an update as follows:

- Cannabis had been found at the skate park at the Recreation Ground by the Grounds Team, which had been reported to Dorset Police and disposed of.
- Abandoned vehicle at the Recreation Ground had been removed.
- Graffiti on the Council Notice Board at the Close, off the Roman Road had been removed by the Grounds Team.

The Chair noted the recent fire on Upton Heath at the beginning of half term, where four youths were seen near the location, which destroyed 2000sqm of heathland.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/355 Verbal – To Note any updates from Representatives to Outside Bodies

Cllr Jefferies noted there was no further update relating to the work to complete the final cell at the Beacon Hill Landfill site. The Tri-Party Agreement between Dorset Council, Suez and Natural England had yet to be signed.

Cllr Lortie attended the recent Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) Executive Committee meeting, providing the following update:

- Transition to Company Limited by Guarantee was progressing with Interim Board of Directors to be appointed prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in November 2025. Substantive Board of Directors to be in place following the AGM.
- Graham Sanson's Working Relationships report assessing progress made since Dorset Council became a Unitary Authority in 2019 was due to be finalised and presented to the next DAPTC Towns & Large Parishes Committee meeting.
- Due to increase in DAPTC subscription fees for Town and Parish Councils, three small Parish Councils were no longer members.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/356 Verbal - To Note the update from the Climate Change Working Party – Cllr P Neil

Cllr Neil advised clarification on Dorset Councils response to completion of their sustainability statement and checklist for planning applications was awaited and would be followed up at the Future Planning Event scheduled on 4 March 2025 with Dorset Council Planning Officers.

The Climate Change Working Party would play an integral role in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/357 Verbal – To Note Clerk's Update

The Clerk provided the following update:

- Registration of Armed Forces Covenant.
- Government Grant funding for defibrillators had closed. Await notification of grant funding opportunities from London Hearts Charity.
- Corfe Mullen Carnival had booked the Recreation Ground and Sports Pavilion for their 'Thank You' event on 20 July 2025.
- Closing date of applications for the Lead Youth Worker role was on 21 February 2025. 10 applications received, which were being scored ahead of inviting candidates to interviews w/c 3 March 2025.
- Closing date of application for the Project & Community Engagement Officer role was on 24 February 2025. 19 applications received, which were also being scored ahead of inviting candidates to interviews w/c 17 March 2025.
- Cabling work for new office digital phones and broadband was scheduled on 13-14 March 2025.
- Clerk on annual leave from 3-17 March 2025 inclusive.
- Donated Christmas tree and fence was due to be installed by the Grounds Team w/c 3 March 2025.

Finally, the Clerk thanked members for their nomination for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party, which she was very much looking forward to.



The Chair noted the registration of the Armed Forces Covenant and suggested the official signing should take place on 6 June 2025 to coincide with the 80th Anniversary of VE day.

The update was **NOTED**.

At 21:15, the Chair Suspended Standing Order 3w to enable the meeting to continue.

TC 24/358 Verbal – To Note Mayor’s Report

The Mayor presented a joint Mayor and Dorset Councillor report under minute no. TC 24/359.

TC 24/359 Verbal – To Note Dorset Councillors Report

Cllrs Sowry-House and Florek provided the following update:

- Thanked members for not responding to recent negative posts on social media relating to Corfe Mullen Youth Trust, which were factually incorrect.
- Met with residents in Victoria Close who had raised concerns relating to their families poor living conditions in social housing.
- Met with residents in Birch Close relating to private land which had become an eyesore and dumping ground.
- Attended Beryl Bikes webinar hosted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Beryl Bikes.
- Met with residents at Windgreen Gardens who had raised concerns relating to fencing, lighting, and maintenance issues on the site with the managing agent, Remus. Cllr Florek had established contact with the new area manager and hoped to foster a more positive and productive working relationship.
- Guest speaker at recent Corfe Mullen Home Watch event.
- Acted as Vice-Chair at Dorset Councils Full Council Budget Meeting held on 11 February 2025.
- Met with My Time Young Carers and asked to present awards to 16–25 year old carers at their annual event on 13 March 2025 at Broadstone Golf Club.
- Attended meeting with NHS Dorset in capacity of role on Corporate Parenting Board.
- Chaired Fire Authority Local Performance Scrutiny Committee for Dorset division in Poundbury.
- Attended Dorset Council Strategic & Technical Planning Committee whereby discussions took place relating to a second Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) storage location in Chickerell.



The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/360 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken¹

There were no matters for forthcoming agendas.

TC 24/361 Verbal – To Note Date of the next Annual Parish Meeting scheduled on 13 March 2025

Cllr Sowry-House gave his apologies for the meeting, due to a prior commitment. Cllr Neil as Vice-Chair was asked to Chair the meeting in his absence. Cllr Neil agreed to confirm his availability to the Clerk.

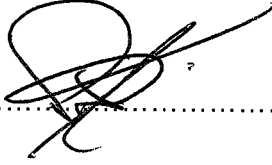
¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/362 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 19:00
in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

TC 24/363 Close of meeting 21:46

Signed as a correct record of the meeting.....



Date

25th MARCH 2025