



Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council
held on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 20:20 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall

Present: **Councillors**
P Neil (Chair)
J Bonham
A Craven
L Hardy
P Holland
A Holland
S Jefferies
A Joyce
J Lortie
V Papilio
P Purvis

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk)
Rachel Virrill (Senior Administrator) - Minute Taker

Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

TC 24/364 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Sowry-House and Florek who were attending an urgent Full Council meeting at Dorset Council in their roles as Ward Councillors, and Cllr Cuckston who had a prior commitment.

TC 24/365 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 24/366 Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 25 February 2025 – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2025 were **APPROVED**.

TC 24/367 Paper B – To Approve Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £38,237.08.

TC 24/368 Paper C - To Approve Bank Reconciliation for February 2025

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Lortie', is written over a faint circular stamp.

TC 24/369 Paper D – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees:

- Staffing Committee – 12 December 2024
- Planning & Highways Committee – 11 February 2025
- Planning & Highways Committee – 25 February 2025

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

TC 24/370 Paper E – To Agree How to Proceed with the Appointment of Neighbourhood Planning Consultant

The Clerk provided feedback from the Planning Consultant following the informal meeting prior to the Full Council meeting, whereby the Consultant confirmed he was involved in developing several other plans across the south and felt in order to focus on an explanatory project for Corfe Mullen, the timeline to commence work would not be until later in the year and questioned whether the Council were content with this approach.

Members discussed the benefits of appointing a planning consultant, the timeline and should the Council not proceed with developing a Neighbourhood Plan due to time, resources and lack of community engagement, alternative options were available. Therefore, the work conducted as part of the exploratory project would not be wasted.

Cllr Craven queried whether the Consultant fees would be covered by a locality grant, as previously. The Clerk explained the government had yet to confirm if grant funding would be available via locality for the 2025/26 financial year and clarified that the exploratory project would not be eligible for grant funding even if it was available. A budget of £5,074.78 had been allocated, with any additional costs remaining unbudgeted.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** appointment of Planning Consultant, Richard Eastham of Feria Urbanism to progress with an exploratory project at a total cost of £9,900+VAT, with a timeline to be confirmed.

TC 24/371 Paper F – To Consider and Approve Request from Corfe Mullen United Junior Football Club

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the request from Corfe Mullen United Junior Football Club (CMUJFC) to store four solid goal frames measuring 12' x 6' on the outside of the Grounds Unit, next to the cricket nets at the Recreation Ground on the following basis:

- Goals must be secured when not in use.
- Goals must be stored tidily and not restrict access to Corfe Mullen Cricket Club practice nets and equipment.
- Goals stored at CMUJFC own risk. The Council would not take any responsibility for loss or damage.

TC 24/372 Paper G – To Retrospectively Approve Upgrading Streetlighting to LED

It was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively **APPROVE** Envereo to supply and install complete replacement of LED lantern, photocell, bracket and GRP box and transfer service to two remaining columns on Pine Road and one on Wayground Road at a total cost of £3,740.91+VAT.



TC 24/373 Paper H – To Consider How to Proceed with Community Coffee Mornings

The Clerk presented the report, reiterating the options for community engagement in terms of continuing to host coffee mornings in the current format, members attending the coffee mornings hosted by St Nicholas Church every Saturday or hosting drop-in sessions in the Village Hall office space to meet with members of the public by appointment on a one-to-one basis.

It was recognised the number of residents attending the coffee mornings was low, albeit the Council was committed to being accessible and inclusive with residents encouraged to contact the Council office to be signposted for any support or guidance in the absence of coffee mornings. Members felt the coffee mornings were invaluable during the Autumn/Winter months as a warm space for residents.

It was **RESOLVED** to pause community coffee mornings held in Corfe Mullen Village Hall from 1 April 2025 to 31 August 2025 and to review the initiative at the Full Council meeting scheduled on 26 August 2025, ahead of the Autumn/Winter months.

TC 24/374 Paper I – To Note Update on Usage of the Council's Electronic Communications

The Clerk presented the report, noting the website data would be available from April 2025. In future, all data to be shared with members at each Full Council meeting, as a standing agenda item.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/375 Paper J – To Consider Small Grants Programme Application


It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** awarding a small grant of £988.40 to 'Youth at St Nic's' to cover room hire costs to hold sessions on Wednesday nights from 23 April 2025 until 23 July 2025 at St Nicholas Church, whilst the Youth Club was paused.

TC 24/376 Verbal – To Note Update on Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council Sites

The Clerk read out an update from Sargent Payne, Neighbourhood Policing Team as follows:

- Local Neighbourhood Policing Team renamed East Dorset Neighbourhood Policing Team which now included Verwood under Sargent Payne's supervision. No more new staffing, however there were two additional officers working in the team allowing more flexibility when allocating workload.
- Crime in Corfe Mullen remained low, albeit residents should be encouraged to report all incidents to provide further evidence for more officers required in East Dorset.
- Working with the families of a few local young people who had been issued with Anti-social Behaviour Contracts (ABC's) to encourage positive changes in behaviour in public spaces.
- Anti-social behaviour incidents reported to Dorset Police included Towers Way Green Space and Rushcombe First School carpark along with the closed unit behind the Esso garage at Windgreen where young people were gathering, lighting bonfires.

Members noted the positive outcomes of issuing ABC's and working with families to encourage changes in behaviours in public spaces.



Cllr Hardy noted the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner had launched Operation Relentless Grant Funding and asked if the Town Council would be applying for funding. The Clerk advised an application would be submitted on behalf of Corfe Mullen Youth Trust to support youth services in Corfe Mullen, as previously.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/377 Verbal – To Note any updates from Representatives to Outside Bodies

Cllr Lortie shared an update from Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) advising the final report 'Future Directions for Dorset's Towns and Larger Parishes' written by Graham Sansom and Gordon Morris would soon be circulated to key stakeholders.

Cllrs Neil, Bonham, Sowry-House and Florek attended a Dorset Council Future Planning Project event in Dorchester on 4 March 2025.

Cllr Bonham asked for an update relating to the suggestion to install a defibrillator at the Lambs Green Inn. The Clerk noted the request had been unsuccessful and that Cllr Sowry-House was approaching Harlees Fish and Chip Shop as an alternative location.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/378 Verbal - To Note the update from the Climate Change Working Party – Cllr P Neil

Cllr Neil noted his disappointment to the feedback received from Dorset Council Planning relating to completion of Dorset Council's sustainability statement and checklist. Planning policy ME3 – Sustainable Development Standard for New Development from the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy (2014) would be used as a material planning consideration, if appropriate when commenting on planning applications.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/379 Verbal – To Note Social Media Update

The Clerk confirmed, the agenda item was an error, with the update provided under agenda item TC 24/374.

TC 24/380 Verbal – To Note Clerk's Update

The Clerk provided the following update:

- IT work to upgrade the Office and Grounds Unit Broadband and phone lines was in progress, albeit there were issues with the Office Broadband and the Intruder Alarm at the Grounds Unit, which were being investigated. Further IT works required relating to replacement network switch/ports and digital phones, with quotations being progressed.
- Installation of raised beds at the Allotment site due to commence on 1 April 2025.
- Deputy Clerk due to meet with Dorset Council Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) Team on 2 April 2025 to discuss installation of SIDs in the village.
- Tree potting event scheduled on Wednesday 10 April 2025 between 10am-12noon at the Recreation Ground. All members were invited to attend.
- Thank you to all members who attended and donated Easter eggs for the Spring Fair in the Village Hall on 22 March 2025.
- Replacement doors for the public toilets at the Recreation Ground were being made to order. It was anticipated the doors would be installed early May 2025.



- New Tenancy Agreements for allotment holders had been issued, albeit there were some issues to be resolved relating to maintenance of paths and all allotment holders becoming members of the Allotment Association.
- Leader of Dorset Council, Cllr Nick Ireland would be in attendance at the next Full Council meeting scheduled on 22 April 2025.

Finally, the Clerk provided an update on the recruitment of a Lead Youth Worker for Corfe Mullen Youth Trust and reminded members that the Youth Club's last session would be on 4 April 2025. The Clerk and Senior Administrator would be attending the Youth Club to handover and present gifts to all the youth workers and senior helpers thanking them for their commitment to youth services in Corfe Mullen over the years, particularly the Senior Youth Worker who had been involved in the Youth Club for over 20 years.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 24/381 Verbal – To Note Mayor's Report

None to note.

TC 24/382 Verbal – To Note Dorset Councillors Report

None to note.

TC 24/383 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken¹

Cllr Bonham requested for consideration to be given to joining the Open Spaces Society Charity (OSS).

TC 24/384 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 22 April 2025 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

TC 24/385 To Resolve to exclude members of the press and public – to agree that agenda item TC 24/386 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.

TC 24/386 Paper K – To Approve Recommendations from the Staffing Committee

The Clerk presented the report, noting the recommendations from the recent Staffing Committee held on 20 March 2025 as follows:

- Following interviews for recruitment of a Project & Community Engagement Officer, a suitable candidate had been offered the position with referencing underway.
- Formal request had been received from the Senior Administrator to take extended annual leave from 12 December 2025 to 5 January 2026.
- Part time Grounds Team member had requested to increase his working hours from 22 hours to 30 hours per week. The Clerk to speak with the team member with an option to increase working hours on an ad-hoc basis to cover absence, increased workload or specific Council projects and not on a permanent basis at this point in time.
- Staffing Committee meeting scheduled for 10 April 2025, to be re-scheduled to 9 April 2025 at 10:00.

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)

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations from the Staffing Committee held on 20 March 2025.

TC 24/387 Close of meeting at 21:20.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting *Alamy House* Date *22-4-25*