

## STOURPAINE PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in the Village Hall at 7pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs P Partridge (Chairman), G Cowie, M Farwell, J Jakes, D Meaden, A Woodland.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Dorset Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Mrs J O'Connell (Clerk). 4 Members of the public.

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

**1. Declarations of Interest:** None received

#### **2. To consider matters arising from the February Minutes.**

-The welcome pack – The chairman had met with Mr Oxbury who had prepared a draft of a flyer with a view to it being distributed to all households in Stourpaine -the draft would need to be reviewed, however Mr Oxbury felt he had taken the project as far as he could now, the PC await further action.  
-The Chairman had sent a message to DC Highways reporting the problem with the drain outlets from the River Iwerne – this was acknowledged and given a reference number: 1271595, and marked as a pending action waiting for the camera to become available.

**3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025.** The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **4. Democratic Period:**

-Parents of children attending The Blandford School had received a letter from Ed Denham, DC Officer, advising that there had been an audit carried out of the area and the free bus passes for children who were no longer eligible would be cancelled with effect from September. Cllr Jespersen advised that periodically there is an audit carried out of the statutory walking distance between the village and the school. Those who had received the letter were deemed to be of a suitable distance from the school a would not qualify for the free bus pass. Those children with extended rights would still be eligible but the parents would need to reapply for the bus pass. Those wishing to appeal the decision have been given 20 days from the date of the letter to appeal to DC via their website. The bus will continue to run and there may be spare seats that are available. Concerns were expressed that the letter proposed the Trail way as a possible route for children to walk to school. All present agreed that this was not a suitable route for children to be walking along in the dark, also the trail way is prone to flooding and the children would be exposed to any adverse weather conditions. Anyone wishing to appeal should visit the DC website, you will need to explain why you feel that your child should still be eligible for the free bus pass. The clerk to write to DC Office Ed Denham to express our disappointment at this decision and to complain that the letter does not explain the appeal process and the time limit to appeal. The Chairman requested that those present who use the Next-Door Facebook page make residents aware of that they can appeal but it is time sensitive.

#### **-5. Matters arising:**

-Fingerpost ref: 1271835 the post is broken, Clerk has contacted DC Highways to request a quote for them to reinstate the post.

#### **6. Dorset Councillor Report:**

-Cllr Jespersen reported that DC Chief Executive Matt Prosser has resigned as he is moving to New Zealand. The interview process to select a new officer will commence soon and hopefully the new officer will be in place by September.

-The Vale Pantry in Sturminster Newton has been renamed The Vale Family Hub and can be found at 22B Butts Pond, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1AZ. Services include midwifery, health visiting, financial advice, parenting classes, learn and play sessions, more information available on [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-hubs](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-hubs)

-The Blandford Recycling centre: The is currently some traffic disruption as the work has commenced for the new improved recycling centre.

- The new verge cutting timetable is now available on the Dc website, there will be fewer cuts, but the cuttings will now be taken away which will encourage the growth of wild flowers.
- DC Budget has been approved, car parking charges will increase from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

**7. To consider development control matters:**

**P/HOU/2025/00966-** Demolition of existing lean to and replace with new lean to and utility room: – Comments have already been made on this as the comment deadline would have passed.

**8. Reports:**

**a. Neighbourhood Watch:**

**-Neighbourhood Policing team:** Consisting of 1 sergeant and 4 PC’s, they had reported that there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour and shop lifting. Several young people have been entered into the Community Consequence Scheme, with positive results.

-There is a Road Safety event planned for older drivers Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 10-1pm, Dorchester Baptist Church.

**b. Highways: No update**

**c. Flood Prevention: No update**

**d. Rights of Way/Footpaths/ Trailway:**

- Cllr Jakes had distributed photographs of the concrete which has not yet been moved from the trail way.

- There is a new café opened at Gains Cross – Called The Black Cat – very positive feedback so far.

**e. Play Areas:**

-The Chairman had received 3 quotes for the replacement of the wooden play equipment and the swing sets in Kidzone. The quotations were to replace with similar.

Quote 1: Sutcliffe Play Southwest: £19,622.00. Quote 2: Playdale: £20,148.45

Quote 3: Sovereign Play: £17,212.77

After inspecting and discussing the quotes, SPC voted and resolved to go ahead with the quote from Sovereign Play, as they felt that the equipment was of good quality, and we have dealt with them before and it was felt that their equipment would fit in well with the surroundings. They will take away the existing equipment. The Clerk to pay a 25% deposit and obtain a lead time as it is hoped that the equipment will be installed, inspected and ready for use by the school summer holidays.

**f. Village Hall:**

-There will be a Medical Wellness Walk in a the Village Hall on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 10am to 12pm. This will be run by the Blandford Group Practice.

**-9. Finance:**

**a. SPC agreed to make following payments:**

**-The finance report has been circulated to Cllrs and all payments were approved.**

-Clerk (at agreed rate), HMRC Clerk’s PAYE, Iwerne Grass Cutting £324.57. Sovereign Play £5310.84  
Deposit for new play equipment, Azets Payroll £252.00

All payments were unanimously approved.

-It was approved that the Clerk could approach Christine Cosgrove to conduct the internal audit.

**10. Other Matters:**

-It was confirmed that SPC will not be holding any event for VE day on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Date of next meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

**There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm**

**Date:**

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Chairman, Stourpaine Parish Council.