

TOLLER PORCORUM PARISH COUNCIL

Chair Neil Farmer

Clerk

Minutes of Parish Council meeting

Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7pm at the Toller Porcorum village Hall

Present:

Cllr N Farmer (NF)

Cllr P Crabbe (PC)

Cllr H Jone (HJ)

Cllr J Miller (JM)

Cllr J Stavenhagen (JS)

Cllr C Wardle (CW)

In attendance:

5 members of the Public and an Officer from Wessex Water.

Public Democratic Forum - Up to 15-minutes session to give residents the opportunity to indicate interest in the agenda items/put questions to Council that may be answered at a later date/become future agenda items.

Mrs Connelly raised an issue about a right of way adjoining her property (Old Mills) which was muddy resulting in walkers walking across her property. Cllr Wardle had agreed to arrange for wood chippings to be put down. Mrs Connelly was ask to advise the Parish Council that if this action was not sufficient then they would approach Dorset Council Rights of Way on her behalf.

24/03-1. Chairman's announcements and housekeeping

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and Councillors to the meeting. He introduced Andy Mears from Wessex Water. The Chairman gave Councillors a resume of his attendance at the recent Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils Annual Conference. As this was the last meeting of Council before the elections the Chairman thanked all Cllrs for their support over the past five years and during his time as Chairman.

24/03-2. Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr David Ennals

24/03-3. To receive declarations of interest or any grants of dispensations – none.

24/03-4. Presentation from Wessex Water on current and future improvement plans for the village water treatment works.

Andy Mears from Wessex Water gave a technical presentation about the discharge standards that Wessex Water were required to meet, their current performance and plans they had to meet new government disposal targets. He gave a brief overview of the works being undertaken from May 2024 (completed by

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February 2025) to reduce the number of storm overflow discharges into the River Hooke, which stood at 76 for 2023 compared to 43 in 2022.

Wessex Water are working towards achieving no more than 10 spills per year for any overflow and no local adverse ecological impacts from any overflow. These are long term deadlines attached to these targets set between 2023 and 2050.

Wessex Water are required to provide either 68l/hd or 2 hours retention at maximum flow. To meet this requirement, they will provide a 27m³ new storage tank at a cost of £1.5m.

Councillors asked that Wessex Water ensure no contract vehicles enter the village and that Toller Lane is kept clean to ensure gullies and drains do not get blocked. Councillors also asked that Wessex Water attend their 2025 Annual Parish Assembly to receive an update on the project.

24/03-5. Dorset Council Report -Cllr Tony Alford

Cllr Alford gave an update on a revised approach Dorset Council will be taking in regards to the development of the Local Plan. Under the new system, initial scoping and early engagement will take place in September 2024, before the bulk of the new local plan work begins in November 2024. It is expected the plan will be submitted for public examination in November 2026 and subject to that examination adopted in May 2027.

Cllr Alford advised that Dorset Council had allocated extra funding of about £8m towards proactive road improvement measures such as pothole repairs, resurfacing and preventative treatments to manage road conditions and maintain highway safety.

Cllr Alford also advised that the total Dorset Council budget for 2024-25 was £377 million. 81.8% from Council tax, 17% from Business Rates, 0.2% from Central Government and 1% from other sources.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Alford for his attendance at meetings over the last five years and his reports.

24/03-6. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th January 2024.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council were proposed and duly accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed PC

Seconded CW

All in Favour.

24/03-7. Matters arising from minutes of the last meeting - none.

24/03-8. Finance and Procedures

i. To receive an update on the May 2024 local election procedures.

The Chairman advised the meeting that as the formal pre-election period had commenced that the Council could not be seen to influence who residents should vote for if there was a formal parish poll. The Council would focus on encouraging residents to vote. Nominations were now open and closed at 4.00pm on Friday 5th April 2024. Election Day was Thursday 2nd May 2024. Councillors remain in office until the 7th May 2024.

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24/03-9. Recreation Ground

- i. **To receive an update on the legal transfer.**

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had been formally advised that the legal transfer of the land encompassing the Recreation Ground was formally transferred to the Parish Council on the 6th March 2024. He had duly notified our Insurers. The Chairman would liaise with the Recreation Ground Charitable Trustees to transfer the balance of their reserves over to the Council – noted.

- ii. **To consider a draft Recreation Ground Policy and booking form.**

Cllrs considered a Policy document and booking form for the management of the Recreation Ground and duly adopted it.

- iii. **To consider set up a Working Group and its terms of reference.**

Cllrs agreed to set up a Recreation Ground working group comprising three Cllrs. Cllrs PC, NF and JM agreed to serve on the group until the Parish AGM. Cllrs considered terms of reference for the group and duly adopted them.

24/03-9 ii and iii were voted on block.

Proposed: HJ Seconded: JM. All in Favour.

24/03-10. Work Plan 2023-24

Cllrs noted progress on the Parish action plan and the current actions it contained - noted.

24/03-11. Planning-To consider any planning applications in circulation and any other planning matters.

- i. **P/HOU/2024/00402 – Poor End, Kingcombe Road, Toller Porcorum DT20EG
Erection of single story and first storey extension. Instal solar panel array on the roof.**

Cllrs reaffirmed their online views that the Council would raise no objections to this application - noted.

24/03-12. Highways

- i. **To receive an update on recent meeting with officers from Dorset Highways.**

Having previously noted highway issues contained in the Action Plan CW made Cllrs aware that despite raising the issue on more than one occasion the gully opposite his house forming part of a small roundabout was still discharging into the road. Chairman would raise this with Dorset Highways.

Cllrs in noting that as this was JS last formal meeting thanked him for his years of hard work as the Council's highways officer and shared in his pain that he had not been able to get the High Street re-profiled.

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24/03-13. Countryside Matters:

- i. To receive a verbal update on any Rights of Way/Footpath matters.**

CW advised the meeting that other than the issue raised about the footpath in Old Mills (Public Forum), that a tree had fallen over the Toller Brook south of the Village. CW to send Chairman a photograph and he would liaise with Dorset Council. There were no other outstanding matters - noted.

- ii. Update on Gates Project.**

Chairman advised the meeting that the installation of gates to the east side of the High Street had been completed. Meeting agreed that it was for the new Council to consider any further works under this project – noted.

- iii. Update on planned meeting with Environment Agency to discuss ground water and river flooding.**

CW advised the meeting of the meeting he and NF had had with the Environment Agency (EA) and Dorset Council. He was waiting for a formal response from the EA before recommending to Council what potential actions might be able to be taken – noted.

24/03 -14. To receive any correspondence received for noting and where necessary action.

- i. To sign the Armed Forces Covenant.**

The Chairman advised the meeting that the Vice Chairman PC and he would be attending an event, yet to be arranged when the Covenant would be formally signed – noted.

- ii. Powerstock Parish Council – request for Grit Bins on Common Road**

Cllrs discussed the contents of a recent email from Powerstock Parish Council and agreed to take no further action until the Council had received a formal response to the questions raised – noted.

- iii. Future of Toller Porcorum Community Website**

Cllrs noted that the current custodian of the Toller Porcorum Community website, which the Council pays for was standing down shortly. If no one came forward to take over the website the Council would withdraw its funding – noted.

- iv. Notes of 12th March 2024 Community Meeting with representative of Ammonite Health Partnership (Maiden Newton Surgery).**

Cllrs reviewed a note that Cllr DE had sent in his absence following a meeting he attended on behalf of the Council with Cllrs from other Parishes and representatives of the Ammonite Health Partnership (AM). Cllrs recognise that there is at times reason for frustration amongst patients for the level of service provided at the Maiden Newton Surgery. Equally Cllrs recognised that there were many examples of excellent and prompt patient care particularly onward care.

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Cllrs were very concerned to hear of the recent cases of staff intimidation that had taken place at the surgery and in no way accepted that there was any justification for such actions. Cllrs acknowledged the right of AM to delist patients. Cllrs views were that they wanted to positively work with representatives of the AM to improve service delivery. Cllrs also accepted that some of the reasons behind the current levels of patient care were not the direct fault of the AM. Cllrs agreed that the Parish would not be part of any group that did not want to work positively with the AM – noted.

24/03-15. To confirm arrangements for the Parish Assembly on Friday 19th April 2024 and Annual Parish Meeting on 15th May 2024.

Cllrs noted the dates.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm.

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