

CHIDEOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at Chideock Village Hall on Tuesday 30 May 2023 at 10am.

Present: Cllr George Dunn (Chair), Cllr Vanesa McAra (Vice-Chair), Cllr Anna Dunn, Cllr Peter Hunt.

In attendance: The Clerk, Cllr Simon Christopher, PCSO Bishop, Simon Rose (Clerk from 1 June) and 2 members of the public.

The Parish Council meeting commenced at 10.00.

2912 Election of Chair and Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair.

Cllr Hunt nominated Cllr McAra.

Cllr McAra nominated Cllr George Dunn, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn.

Cllr George Dunn was elected unanimously.

Cllr George Dunn signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair.

Cllr George Dunn thanked Cllr McAra for all her work and efforts over the past 4 years as Chair.

2913 Apologies.

Cllr Mick Downes sent his apologies which were accepted.

2914 Grants of Dispensations.

None received.

2915 Declarations of Defined Pecuniary Interests.

None.

2916 Minutes.

RESOLVED to accept and sign, as a true record,

a) the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 25 April 2023.

Proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

b) The draft minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on 26 April 2023 were noted.

2917 Election of Vice-Chair and Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice Chair.

Cllr McAra was proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, and elected unanimously.

Cllr McAra signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office a Vice Chair.

2918 Election of Councillors to Committees.

RESOLVED that all councillors are members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and of the Planning Committee.

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

2919 Appointment of Representatives, who do not have to be Councillors.

a) Rights of Way matters – all councillors.

b) Village Hall representative – Cllr Hunt.

c) Environmental and Air Quality matters – Cllr Anna Dunn, Cllr George Dunn and Cllr McAra.

d) All other matters pertaining to the A35 Trunk Road Dorset – all councillors.

e) Dorset Council Highways Matters – all councillors.

f) Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP) Steering Group – to be decided depending on what is on the Agenda for the meeting.

g) Western Area Transport Action Group (WATAG) – Cllr Anna Dunn.

h) Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC) – Western Area Committee –Cllr McAra.

i) Clapp's Mead Playing Field Maintenance co-ordinator – Cllr George Dunn.

j) Parish Liaison Meeting representative – Cllr George Dunn and Cllr McAra.

- k) All-Purpose All-Weather Footpath representatives - Deirdre Coates. and Mr Maskell.
- l) Winniford River Action Group – Cllr McAra.
- m) Community Flood Group representative – Cllr Downes.

2920 Dorset Ward Councillor and Police Reports.

a) PSCO Bishop.

He apologised for not attending the last meeting, it depends on whether he has other meetings at the time.

There is little crime to report in the Chideock are: -

- On 19 May a garden ornament was stolen from a garden on Chideock Hill.
- Theft from cars at Langdon Woods. The police have used “trap” vehicles here and up warning signs asking visitors to not leave valuables in their vehicle.

Cllr George Dunn said that the Parish Council had written to the Police and Crime Commissioner about noisy motorcycles but had not yet had a reply. PCSO Bishop said he will investigate what can be done. He said that all incidents should be reported online to Dorset RoadSafe – if several reports are made then they will attend to monitor / apprehend.

b) Cllr Simon Christopher:

- Suggested that the council invites Dorset Cllr Laura Beddow (Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities)
- Chris Loder MP has e-mailed Dorset Cllr Simon Gibson (Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Levelling Up) and Dorset Cllr Noc Lacey-Clarke (Lead for Highways & Travel) supporting the proposed railway from Chideock to the top to Quarr Hill.
- There are a lot of positive things going on nationally regarding water pollution.
- There are issues with section 21 of the Levelling Up Bill which could lead to more holiday letting of premises.
- The economic situation is constantly changing - in February inflation appeared to be under control, in May the bank rate is raised yet again.
- This impacts Dorset council's budget for 2023 – 2024 – wage inflation – a significant proportion of spend is on labour costs.

Cllr McAra said that the new Dorset Council Cabinet is still biased to the East of the county and that people expect a broader representation. Cllr Christopher said that Cllr Mark Roberts (Chesil Ward) has considerable influence on the Cabinet. He is on the Harbour Committee, the Farm panel and the Governance and Pensions Committees.

Cllr McAra asked why Dorset Council does not transform its empty properties into housing rather than selling them off. Cllr Christopher said that may happen to the old West Dorset Council buildings in Dorchester and that old Weymouth Borough Council building at North Quay, Weymouth, was probably going to be demolished and turned into a car park.

He then said that there are VAT considerations and the cost to developers of turning vacant shops, for instance, into homes has VAT levied at 5%, whilst if they are demolished and the land redeveloped VAT is 0%.

Cllr McAra said that Dorset Council's plans need to be communicated to the public. People see empty building and people without homes. Cllr Christopher said that Dorset Council has allocated £2m to help those in need of housing.

Cllr Anna Dunn said, at the DAPTC organised event at Kingston Maurward in March, where parish and town councillors could meet to Dorset Council officers and councillors, Cllr Ray Bryan said that all e-mails are responded to. Cllr Dunn said that the Western Area Transport Group (WATAG) has e-mailed him inviting him to attend a WATAG meeting and has had no reply.

Cllr Anna Dunn said that no reply had been received from the Dorset Council Leader Cllr Flower following Cllr Christopher forwarding her e-mail about Coombe House school which was bought for £10m to be a school for children with special educational needs.

Cllr Christopher asked for an e-mail to be sent to him about lack of response which he will forward to Cllr Flower and Chris Loder MP.

Standing Orders were suspended for the following item.

2921 Democratic Period.

Mr Richard Benjamin, Village Hall Committee Chair, spoke as follows: -

- The new pollution warning signs provided by the Parish Council at Seatown are an improvement of the Dorset Council sign.
- Following the Annual Village Meeting at which Wessex Water did a presentation, he wished to make the following points:
 - The effluent discharged by the storm overflows is untreated, not partially treated.
 - He said that previous Parish Council Meeting minutes which say this should be amended.
 - Wessex Water continues to pull the wool over everyone's eyes.
 - It is crazy that the Winniford River Action Group (WRAG) will apply for funding from Wessex Water to do Wessex Water's job.
 - Dorset Council has a responsibility to ensure that water is safe.

Cllr George Dunn said that minutes cannot be retrospectively amended and that it is too early to say what pollution there is and where – WRAG's testing will provide evidence.

Mr Benjamin said the issue cannot wait.

Cllr McAra said that the Parish Council liaises with WRAG – WRAG collects information, the Parish Council will use that to inform Wessex Water.

Another Chideock elector said: -

- It is sad that Deirdre Coates resigned from the council feeling that she had achieved nothing as a councillor apart from getting the pedestrian crossing lights fixed.
- Will there be enough candidates for the next full election in May 2024?
- How is the casual vacancy going to be filled.

The Clerk said that a lack of candidates for parish council elections is an issue across the whole of Dorset. The Dorset Association of Parish and Town Council is preparing materials to be used to encourage people to stand for election.

The Clerk explained that casual vacancy had to be advertised asking 10 electors to request an election by 30 May. If that does not happen, then the council can co-opt someone. In this case the vacancy would be advertised in the July Chideock News and the earliest date for co-option would be the meeting at the end of July, otherwise the end of September.

Cllr George Dunn asked if the elector would be willing to be co-opted – they replied that they would.

Standing Orders were resumed.

2922 Reports / Updates by the Clerk and Councillors.

Items 1 to 2 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Item 1 – BLAP Parish Liaison Meeting. Steven Rose, the new Clerk, will attend along with Cllr George Dunn, the Parish Council representative.

Item 2A - DAPTC / Dorset Council Webinars. The Clerk said she will attend the online seminar on Libraries. She said that someone should attend the one on Grants.

Item 2B – Bus Back Better. The Clerk asked Cllr Anna Dunn if she would attend as she is the Parish Council representative to WATAG (Western Area Transport Action Group).

Given the low response to the survey about Christmas lights in the village it was **AGREED** to not pursue the matter further.

2923 A35 Matters.

Items 3 to 12 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Items 3 to 5 – A30/A35 Route Walks – National Highways. **AGREED** to meet National Highways, prior to the walk, at the Village Hall with coffee to give an opportunity to raise concerns prior to the walk.

Item 9 – Dorset Council Air Quality Annual Status Reports for 2020 and 2021. Cllr George Dunn noted that the NO₂ figures given are much lower, with only 1 location exceeding the legal level. However, the data is from periods when COVID lockdowns were in place so there were fewer vehicle movements.

Item 10 – Land Slippage on the northern side of Chideock Hill. AGREED that this will be raised at the meeting with National Highways on 14 June.

AGREED to ask Dorset Council Environmental Health if they have made any progress regarding the current legality of the 30mph speed limit on Chideock Hill in the absence of a Traffic Regulation Order (as agreed by them at the meeting with councillors on 18 April). **CC**

2924 River Winniford and Water Pollution Issues.

a) Dorset Council.

No updates.

b) Wessex Water.

NOTED that, at the Annual Village Meeting, Andy Mears (Wessex Water) said he would update the Parish Council on the five-year development plan re sewage outage flows - Chideock is in this cohort. Cllr McAra said that she will draft a letter to him as follow-up. **VM**

c) Winniford River Action Group.

Items 14 and 15 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

2925 Motions Received with Notice. None.

2926 Planning Matters.

a) Applications.

None.

b) Determinations.

P/LBC/2023/01354 Chideock Manor Access To Chideock Manor North Chideock - Repair and repoint garden walls. **GRANTED.**

P/HOU/2022/06704 Lushays Brighthay Lane North Chideock - Demolition of garage & erection of extension & lean to link; Alterations to outbuilding. **WITHDRAWN.**

P/LBC2022/06705 Lushays Brighthay Lane North Chideock - Demolition of garage & erection of extension & lean to link; Alterations to outbuilding. **WITHDRAWN.**

P/HOU/2023/00822 Larks Hey Duck Street - Erect First floor extension. **GRANTED.**

P/FUL/2022/07144 Golden Cap Holiday Park Golden Cap Caravan Park Seatown - Installation of Photovoltaic modules (Solar Panels) to generate carbon free electricity. **GRANTED.**

c) Appeals. None.

d) Other Planning Matters.

i. AONB, Lighting / Dark Skies, Dorset National Park, Conservation Areas.

Nothing to report.

ii. Enforcement, Retrospective Planning Applications.

Nothing to report.

iii. Other.

Items 16 and 17 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

2927 Finances.

Items 18 and 19 on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED**.

a) Payments.

| | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| i. Clerk's Salary and Expenses for May | TBA | |
| ii. Village Hall Hire –5 and 30 May x 2 | | £374.60 |
| iii. Water Pollution Warning Notices | | £178.70 |
| iv. Winniford River Action Group – Mary Rogers | £30.00 | |
| v. Winniford River Action Group – Paul Ramsden | | £280.00 |
| vi. Winniford River Action Group – balance of grant made 31.3.2023 | | £395.03 |
| vii. Cliff Allen – Internal Audit | | £120.00 |

Proposed by Cllr George Dunn, seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

b) Internal Audit & Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Items 19A on the Actions & Information List was **NOTED**.

RESOLVED to accept the Internal Auditor's Report.

Proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr McAra, carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to sign the Declaration of Exemption from External Audit, given that both income and expenditure for 2022-2023 are less than £25,000.

Proposed by Cllr McAra, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to accept and sign page 5 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-2023, - this must be approved by the Council and signed by the Chair and Clerk

Proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to accept and sign the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-2023, page 6 - this must be approved by the Council and signed by the Chair.

Proposed by Cllr McAra, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

c) Asset Register and Insurance Renewal.

The Clerk is satisfied that all Assets are listed and insured as required. Items with a value less than £250 are not insured due to the insurance policy excess of £250.

RESOLVED to

- Enter into a 3-year Long Term Agreement with Hiscox Insurance Company Limited.
- To take out Parish Council insurance cover with Hiscox Insurance Company Limited for a premium of £589.37, for the period 1 June 2023 – 31 May 2024. (£630 budgeted).

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr McAra, carried unanimously.

d) Risk Register.

RESOLVED to accept the Risk Register as an accurate assessment of risk to the Parish Council.

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

e) Clerk Vacancy.

RESOLVED to appoint Steven Rose as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, with contract start date 1 June 2023.

Proposed by Cllr Anna Dunn, seconded by Cllr George Dunn, carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to accept the resignation of Sal Robinson from the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer effective 30 June 2023.

Proposed by Cllr George Dunn, seconded by Cllr McAra, carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to reimburse Sal Robinson for any significant time spent assisting Steven Rose after 30 June 2023 by payment of an Honorarium taken from the Clerk's Salary Reserve.

Proposed by Cllr George Dunn, seconded by Cllr Hunt, carried unanimously.

The Clerk said that she will take the following actions regarding the TSB bank accounts: -

- Add Steven Rose.
- Change the account address to Steven Rose's address, so that he receives bank statements etc.
- Add Cllr Peter Hunt as a signatory.
- Remove Cllr Deirdre Coates from the account.
- Remove herself from the account.
- Find out how Cllr McAra changes her name and signature following her marriage.

Once Steven Rose has been added he can apply for internet access to view the accounts.

The final step will be to apply for full internet access so that online payments and transfers between the current and savings accounts can be done. Cllr Hunt has experience of doing this and he will help Steven.

f) Foss Orchard Car Park.

RESOLVED to purchase an additional BOSCH charger and battery for the mower and hedge trimmer used by Mr Rob Murray for the Foss Orchard Car Park garden. **CC**

Proposed by Cllr George Dunn, seconded by Cllr Anna Dunn, carried unanimously.

AGREED that Cllr George Dunn will investigate whether the lowering of the hedge, as requested by Rob Murray, can be done by volunteers – any costs incurred to be repaid from the Foss Orchard Maintenance Fund. **GD**

2928 Clapps Mead Playing Field.

a) Playing Field Update.

The Clerk to ask Huck Play for an update on delivery of the new 2' by 6' aluminium goal posts and nets. **CC**

b) Friends of Clapp's Mead.

- a) The Classic Car Show on 25 May was well attended. The Friends thank to Parish Council for allowing Clapp's Mead to be used.
- b) The next event is the Village Fete on 12 August.

2929 Dorset Rights of Way, Dorset Highways and Flood Management.

a) Rights of Way.

Item 20 on the Actions and Information List was NOTED.

Cllr McAra said that she is concerned that the matter of Dorset Council referring the disputed section of Mill Lane Bridleway to the Planning Inspectorate is still outstanding and may get forgotten. The Clerk said that this is only reflected on the Actions and Information List when there has been action taken or information received. She said that the new Clerk could create a new list for Outstanding Matters. **CC**

b) Dorset Highways.

Items 21 to 24B on the Actions & Information List were **NOTED** with those detailed below discussed in more detail.

Item 22 Duck Street / upper Sea Hill Lane - traffic survey. AGREED to go ahead with this. These are funds in the Highways Contingency Fund which can be used to pay for it.

Items 24B - Issues with HGVs, speeding traffic etcetera in Mill Lane, Duck Street and North Road. Cllr McAra agreed to **VM**

- i. Draft a letter to WDLH regarding deliveries to the Spar Shop at Golden Cap Holiday Part by HGV using Mill Lane not Sea Hill Lane.
- ii. Draft a letter to Dorset Highways asking for assistance in tackling the issues.
- iii. Investigate how "sat nav" mapping can be changed to stop Mill Lane Bridleway being shown as a vehicular road.

c) Flood Management.

No updates.

2930 Current Consultations.

- a) Planning for climate change guidance - Dorset Council. By 8 June.
- b) Road Investment Strategy 3 Consultation. By 13 July.

AGREED that this needs a detailed response with input from all councillors. The Clerk agreed to send all councillors the responses made to previous consultations. **CC**

2931 Correspondence.

There were no other items of correspondence to be brought to Councillors' notice.

2932 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting of Chideock Parish Council meeting.

The next scheduled meeting is at 10am on Tuesday 27 June 2023.

The meeting closed at **12.30 am**.

Cllr Christopher's E-mailed Report – 29 May 2023.

A very brief report before Tuesday

Clearly there is a great desire to see improvements to safe cycling and walking in the Chideock area and I will speak about this at the meeting.

Dorset has received £1,978,000 as part of the round of Active Travel Funding from the Department for Transport.

This week will see the continuation of the Agricultural Show season with the Royal Bath and West Show following on from the very recent Devon County Show.

Farmers in England have finally been given clarity on how they will receive financial support for providing environmental goods and services under the government's post-Brexit farm payment scheme. Designed to replace the Common Agricultural Policy, the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes have been created to pay farmers for nature-friendly farming practices such as protecting hedgerows and managing crops without pesticides. All of this is taking place against the backdrop of falling milk prices. And there is a great deal of concern throughout the Marshwood Vale farming community.

A reminder, farmers will no longer be paid for the size of the area they farm, many will find they have to work harder under ELMs, as well as face higher costs to undertake land management actions.

At the Dorset Council Full Council meeting Spencer Flower was re-elected as leader of Dorset Council. The meeting included concerns re the state of empty listed buildings. This concern came from a number of speakers including from CPRE.

This will sound familiar given local history in the Ward where I have battled to get effective enforcement. There is also the matter of work taking place without permission and I continue to work with Senior lawyers and other Officers on this and met with our MP.

It is very difficult for those who do things properly and struggle with the planning system while others are perceived to have buildings constructed or turned agricultural land into garden without perceived necessary permission being received.

Failure to obtain listed building consent is a criminal offence and can lead to enforcement notices, fines and even imprisonment in the most serious of cases.

The meeting also featured concern for the Dorset construction workforce due to planning delays through nitrate and phosphate concerns. More later.

Potholes

Dorset Council was given a £2,914,000 slice of the £200 million budget set aside by Chancellor Jeremy Hunt during his Spring Budget, Dorset Council monitors approximately 2,400 miles of road.

Parking Fines

The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Leader of Dorset Council recently wrote to the Transport Minister asking them to consider increasing parking fines particularly in rural and seaside areas. Currently they are low in comparison to London and other big city charges - such that holiday makers sometimes abandon their cars and view the 25 fine as worth it. In areas such as Lulworth this has caused severe disruption and has prevented emergency vehicles from getting through.

Town and Parish Councillors

At this time of year Town and Parish Councils are frequently looking for new Councillors to replace those who have retired or moved on. Please consider this valuable and essential work if you could spare some time.

Second Homes Council Tax

Dorset Councillors have been discussing proposals for council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties, in anticipation of the new flexibilities for councils in the forthcoming Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. At that time, it was hoped that the Bill would receive Royal Assent by April 2023. Councillors were due to vote on proposals at a rescheduled Full Council meeting on 30 March in order for the change to be introduced from April 2024, as the council was required to make the decision a year in advance.

There was no likelihood of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill becoming law before the end of March and therefore a decision on this matter could not be taken by Full Council on 30 March as planned. The proposal to introduce council tax premiums on second homes and empty properties continues to be something Dorset Council are

keen to explore, following constructive discussions at Overview committee and Cabinet. We will watch the progress of the government's new Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill closely and bring this to Full Council once the legislation has passed.

Electric Vehicle charging points.

We aim to provide access to charging points within a 10-minute drive for most residents within 10 years. That is the target set by Dorset Council which has announced 'ambitious plans' to expand the charge points into villages and rural locations across the local authority network. The announcement comes as part of the council's 'Charging Ahead' policy which switches the focus from the county's 'main towns' to supporting households in areas that are not able to charge electric vehicles at their homes. The plans, which will play a key part in preparing the county for the government's 2050 net-zero target, will see as many as 200 electric vehicle charge points installed in communities across the Dorset Council area over the next three years.

Funding for the new charge points will mostly come from the government's local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) scheme and Mer, a European EV charging company, with additional contributions from the council. If your community could benefit from a ChargePoint, you can suggest possible locations by submitting an online form on our website or by contacting your local town or parish council.

School attendance strategy.

The new strategy, which will be implemented during this year and next, sets out to achieve the best attendance and raise the hopes and ambitions of our children and young people through a community partnership approach. The vision for the new strategy is "attendance is everyone's business" and will be achieved by the community working closely and positively together, and with everybody taking responsibility to support children to be safe in school. Everybody in the community will be able to be involved in making the strategy work, from school staff, parents and carers to local shop owners and GP surgeries.

After thorough consultation, the attendance strategy has identified five key priority action areas of work which are:

- Consistent Dorset-wide policy and practice
- Knowledge sharing and communication.
- Early identification and targeted intervention
- Consistent approach to transition (moving to a new school)
- Transport

Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund (HSF) will reopen for applications on 6 June 2023 for low-income households in the Dorset Council area. The support will be in the form of supermarket vouchers. Citizens Advice will be allocating this fund on behalf of Dorset Council and vouchers will be issued to residents who meet the eligibility criteria within 6 – 8 weeks. Dorset Council households will be able to apply if they have an annual household net income of less than £30,000 and savings of less than £16,000 and not applied for a previous HSF payment within the last 6 months. Calculations for the annual net income. should not include Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance or Child Benefit. Applications are limited to one per household. Funds are limited for each window and the form will close when they have been allocated. The April window opened and closed on the same day, so please get in touch as soon as possible once the form opens. If applicants need help completing the form, they can telephone Customer Services on 01305 221000.

Community Grants

Grants of up to £5,000 are available for projects that bring communities across Dorset together. If you are looking to kickstart a new project that will make a difference for people in your community, round 5 of the Community and Culture Project Fund has now reopened. The grants, which are managed by Dorset Council, welcome applications for projects and events for community, arts, accredited museums, heritage, sport, youth, play and physical activity.

Last year the grants supported a wide range of local projects including arts and crafts, physical activities, sports clubs, warm spaces, foodbanks, lunch clubs and cost of living support for childcare places. Not for profit groups who meet our funding criteria are welcome to apply for the grant, which can fund up to £5,000 towards a project that will have a social impact and support local communities and hard to reach groups.

A total of £54,420 was awarded to heritage, museums, and arts organisations across Dorset last year. In addition, 27 grants worth a total of £64,970 were awarded to voluntary and community organisations that work with disadvantaged, under served and marginalized communities in the Dorset council area.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 7 July and decision letters will be sent to all applicants at the end of July. Application details are on the Dorset Council website.

Poole Harbour pollution incident

This report below may well have been superseded by more up to date information; it was believed correct at the date of publication.

Good progress has continued with the clean-up operation since the Perenco Oil Spill on 26 March. Poole Harbour Commissioners are the lead organisation in the clean-up operation, which has gone extremely well. So far over 300 bags of oil and contaminated materials have been collected from the beaches as well as 417,000 litres of oil and oily water collected to tankers from Ower Bay. The clean-up and remediation operation will continue at Ower Bay until the contamination has been fully dealt with. Localised impacts to the site required to enable the clean-up have been assessed and considered necessary in order to remove the oil and protect the wider harbour. Natural England (NE) /Environment group is advising on the remediation and recovery plan.

Foster Carers

Our foster carers and supported lodgings carers now benefit from an increase to their financial payment of 15 per cent from 1 April with a further increase of 12.43 per cent being added to the allowance part of the payment.

Foster carers play a vital role in Dorset by providing care for children who find themselves in need of a home, through no fault of their own. The uplift in payments will help foster families cover the increasing costs of caring for a child in their home.

Recycling Barbecues

Litter Free Dorset is working with Southern Co-op and W&S Recycling to dismantle and recycle 8,000 disposable barbecues as a reminder of how destructive they can be to the environment. A display of disposable barbecues for sale weighing in at over seven tonnes were taken off the shelves following the devastating heathland fires of 2022 and campaigns from Litter Free Dorset (LFD) and the Urban Heaths Partnership supported by Dorset Council

Portland Barge

Dorset Council and Dorset Police have set out their shared position on the Home Office's plans to house asylum seekers on a barge in Portland Port later this year.

The organisations have questions about the proposal that remain unanswered and continue to seek clarity from the Home Office on plans. Both agencies have statutory responsibilities to ensure minimal impact on local services, should the Home Office's plan go ahead. We are still waiting for answers to questions from the Home Office.

Car Parking Machines upgrade

All our car park and on-street pay and display machines are to be replaced. Replacement of the machines is expected to complete by mid-July, with the new machines offering improved reliability and a consistent user experience.

The machines will provide customers with a range of payment options, including cash, card, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and an online app. Wi-Fi will also be improved in car parks with weak phone signals, ensuring smoother transactions. The payment facilities and display screens will at a height suitable for wheelchair users.

Nitrates.

We have had many questions as to how the nitrates policy affects development. Below is a summary article explaining this.

There are five catchment areas for internationally protected wetland habitats within, or overlapping with, Dorset Council's administrative area where phosphorus and/or nitrogen levels have the potential to adversely affect water quality. Dorset Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that any development it permits will not adversely affect the integrity of any internationally protected site.

Simon

Councillor Simon Christopher
The Dorset Councillor for the Marshwood Vale Ward
077988 33715