



**Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council**  
**held on Tuesday 27 February 2024 at 19:03 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall**

**Present:**                   **Councillors**  
D Sowry-House (Chair)  
A Craven  
D Everett  
S Florek  
L Hardy  
A Holland  
P Holland  
B Honeyman  
S Jefferies  
J Lortie  
D Mattocks  
P Neil  
P Purvis (Vice-Chair)  
J Stennett

**In Attendance:**       Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)  
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – minute taker)

**Public Participation**

There were 3 members of the public present, two of whom wished to speak pertaining to agenda item TC 23/250 – Special Motion to revisit daily fee for Mini Munchkins hire of the sports pavilion lounge.

Two members of the public put forward their case regarding the increase to the daily fee for the use of the sports pavilion lounge and storage, noting the increased costs for their small business in terms of reduced 2-year-old funding and minimum wage changes effective from 1 April 2024 and asked if Council would reconsider the proposed daily hire fees.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their representation and opened the meeting.

**TC 23/244    To Receive and Accept apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence.

**TC 23/245    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 23/246    Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23 January 2024** – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23 January 2024 were **APPROVED**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JL' or similar, is written at the bottom right of the page.

*Following the members of public representation, the Chair proposed considering item TC23/250 in the first instance.*

**TC 23/250 Paper E - Special Motion – To revisit the decision of Council at its meeting on 19 December 2023 under minute TC 23/200 relating to early learning provider, Mini Munchkins daily fee for use of sports pavilion lounge and storage**

Members discussed the approved daily fee of £95, noting to reduce the daily hire fee to £80 would be in line with the precept increase of 9.73%. It was felt due to the ongoing running costs of the sports pavilion, particularly utilities any revised fee, should be reviewed in six months.

The Chair suspended standing orders 3e-h to ask the members of public if the proposed daily fee would be more appropriate and supportive of their small business, noting the importance of early years provision for young families in Corfe Mullen. The members of public thanked the Council for reconsidering the daily fee and felt the revised fee would ensure their business was viable in the future.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** a revised daily fee of £80 to early learning provider, Mini Munchkins, for the hire of the sports pavilion lounge and storage to be reviewed in October 2024.

*The Chair thanked the two members of the public for attending and returned to the sequential agenda. The two members of the public left the meeting.*

**TC 23/247 Paper B –To Approve Accounts for Payment**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £20,941.66.

**TC 23/248 Paper C – To Approve Bank Reconciliation for January 2024**

Cllr Honeyman raised the following queries:

Lines 708 & 718: what period did the costs cover and should this information be included on the payments list. The Clerk confirmed line 708 related to the monthly costs for security of the Recreation Ground and line 718 related to the six monthly keyholder costs for the Grounds Unit at the Recreation Ground.


The Clerk reiterated, the payment and receipts lists accompanying the bank reconciliation listed all transactions in the month as back up to the bank reconciliation, with payments approved as part of the Accounts for Payment schedule already presented and approved by Council. The payment and receipts lists were automated reports produced by Scribe, the Council's accounting software.

The Accounts for Payment schedule listed all payments with commentary of what each payment related to and for what period.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for January 2024.

**TC 23/249 Paper D – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees:**

- Community Services Committee – 12 September 2023
- Community Services Committee – 14 November 2023
- Planning Committee – 4 January 2024
- Planning Committee – 23 January 2024

 The already approved minutes were **NOTED**.

**TC 23/251 Paper F - To Consider and Approve Recommendations from the Community Services Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation from the Community Services Committee held on 13 February 2024 as follows:

- To investigate quotations to replace the new cemetery wall and pillars, and to investigate further options for internment of cremated remains.

**TC 23/252 Paper G – To Consider Items Requiring Approval**

**a) To approve - updating Town Council Streetlighting to LED**

The Clerk presented the report, noting the two remaining columns in Towers Way had recently been updated to LED lighting. Cllr A Holland reported the column nearest to the Co-op carpark did not appear to be working. The Clerk confirmed this would be followed up with Enerveo.

The Clerk reported the budget allocated in the 2024/25 financial year for streetlighting and furniture, was insufficient to cover upgrading all columns, which were the responsibility of the Town Council to LED lighting. Therefore, a phased approach should be considered.

The quotation supplied for the Recreation Ground carpark to be reconsidered, once a breakdown of costs for Pine and Wayground Roads had been obtained.

It was **RESOLVED** to obtain a breakdown of costs for Pine and Wayground Roads in order for Council to agree how to proceed as follows:

- To supply and install LED lantern and photocell to 3 columns on Pine Road
- To supply and install complete replacement of LED lantern, photocell, bracket and GRP box and transfer service to 2 remaining columns on Pine Road and one on Wayground Road.

**b) To approve – upgrade to Council Office IT Technology**

The Clerk reported the agenda item would be deferred to the next meeting, due to awaiting additional information in order for Council to consider the proposal for upgrading the Council Office IT.

The update was **NOTED**.

**c) To approve – resident request to conduct metal detecting at the Recreation Ground**

The Clerk presented the report, noting the Metal Detectorist was unable to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to present his findings, due to another commitment. However, he would be invited to attend a future meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** resident continuing to carry out metal detecting within dog walking field and community orchard at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground for a further 2 years up to 30 April 2026.

**d) To approve - request from the Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee**

The Clerk presented the report, noting the request received from the Carnival Committee was in line with previous years, with exception of on-site overnight security on 7 June 2024 at the Recreation Ground. Access to the sports pavilion on 11 June 2024 would be from 6pm not 5pm, due to Mini Munchkins hire of the sports lounge until 6pm.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the request from Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee, with an amendment for the use of the sports pavilion from 6pm rather than 5pm.

*The Chair, Cllr Sowry-House handed over to the Vice-Chair, Cllr Phil Purvis to chair agenda item TC23/253 in order to remain impartial, due to standing as a Dorset Councillor in the forthcoming elections.*

**TC 23/253 Paper H – To Review and Approve Electronic Communications Policy**

The Clerk presented the report, reminding members of the resolution at the Full Council meeting held on 27 June 2023. Should the Council approve the electronic communication policy, a Town Council Facebook page would be established to act as a noticeboard to share information and updates on the work of the Town Council.

The Clerk reiterated the importance of a Town Council social media presence ahead of the forthcoming elections in order to promote becoming a Town Councillor and the importance of voting.

Cllr Hardy noted some inconsistencies within the policy and agreed to feedback comments to the Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed as follows:

- Clerk to re-review the draft electronic communications policy in line with feedback and update where necessary.
- Updated electronic communications policy to be circulated to members outside of a meeting to seek approval to proceed.
- Update and/or retrospective approval to be included on the agenda of the next Full Council meeting scheduled on 26 March 2024.

*The Vice-Chair handed back chairing of the meeting to the Chair.*

**TC 23/254 Paper I – To Note Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council sites**

The Clerk presented the report, noting there had been further vandalism of the Recreation Ground public toilets, and Christmas tree electricity supply at Windgreen since the papers had been published.

The Clerk reported that she had been liaising with Sargeant Payne, from the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team to install a static CCTV camera at the Recreation Ground. An installation date had yet to be determined.

Members noted their disappointment and felt the Council should take a tougher stance, due to the continual criminal damage to Town Council property and associated costs for repair and/or replacement to the Town Council which was funded by those residents who paid council tax.



Members went onto discuss the attendance of David Sidwick, Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) at the Annual Parish Meeting scheduled on 14 March 2024. Members felt the PCC should be challenged on the anti-social behaviours experienced in the village and asked what was being done by Dorset Police to deter these behaviours.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was **RESOLVED** to investigate costs to install a RADAR locking system at the Recreation Ground public toilets and to include costs incurred by the Town Council to repair and/or replace Town Council property in future reports.

**TC 23/255 Verbal – To Note Update on Purchasing of Bus Shelters**

The Deputy Clerk reported that she had approached Dorset Council Highways to seek approval on the types of bus shelters and locations in the village, ahead of purchasing. An update to be provided at a future meeting.

Discussion took place relating to new bus shelters being used for external advertising to provide additional income to the Town Council. The Deputy Clerk agreed to investigate the feasibility.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/256 Paper J – To Note Elections Timetable and Pre-Election Period**

The Clerk presented the report, noting the pre-election period commences on Monday 11 March 2024 and for members to familiarise themselves with the protocols during this period, particularly not using Town Council email accounts for electioneering/campaigning purposes.

The update was **NOTED**.

*The Chair, handed back to the Vice-Chair, to chair agenda item TC23/257 in order to remain impartial.*

**TC 23/257 Paper K – To Consider Community Engagement**

The Clerk presented the report, with comments noted as follows:

- **Content of Draft Parish Newsletter:** The Elections Special newsletter had been distributed to all households in Corfe Mullen. However, the actual costs were higher than the approved quotation due to Royal Mail characterising the mailing as business mail rather than advertising mail.

The content of the second draft newsletter was discussed. Bearing in mind the limited time available ahead of the pre-election period. It was felt a drop in event for those members of the community interested in becoming a Town Councillor would be more beneficial. The Clerk and Chair of the Council, Cllr Sowry-House to draft wording and format of a postcard to promote drop in event to be held on 5 March 2024, to be distributed to all households in Corfe Mullen as soon as possible.



- **Councillor Surgeries:** The Clerk advised she had sought guidance from the Monitoring Officer relating to a recent drop-in event publicised on social media by a Councillor following her request to postpone until following discussion at the Full Council meeting and a resolution by Council on how to proceed with community engagement. The Clerk reiterated Councillors were a team and no Councillor should work in isolation.

The Clerk reiterated the guidance for holding Councillor surgeries and the recent advice published by Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC) relating to personal safety.

A lengthy discussion took place relating to the events leading up to and following the drop in event, the Councils integrity, how this may be perceived by members of the public, the Monitoring Officers advice, any learning for future events and the Councils disappointment the event had taken place.

*The Vice-Chair suspended standing order 3x to allow the meeting to continue.*

- **Link Magazine – Chairmans Article:** Cllr Hardy questioned whether it was appropriate for Cllr Sowry-House, as Chair of the Council to write the Chairmans article in the Link Magazine during the pre-election period, bearing in mind he was standing as a Dorset Councillor in the forthcoming elections. The Clerk agreed to follow up.

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

- Delay second newsletter until following the elections on 2 May 2024 to introduce and promote the work of the newly elected Town Council.
- Clerk and Chair of the Council to draft postcard to be distributed to all households in Corfe Mullen inviting those members within the community interested in becoming a Town Councillor to a drop-in event to be held on 5 March 2024 in the Village Hall.
- Councillor Surgeries to be renamed Councillor Drop-in sessions to commence following the elections on 2 May 2024.
- Clerk to ascertain who was able to draft the Chairmans article in the Link magazine during the pre-election period.

*The Vice-Chair handed back chairing of the meeting to the Chair.*

#### **TC 23/258 Verbal – To Note any updates from Representatives to Outside Bodies**

Cllr Jefferies reported slow progress had been made relating to the Beacon Hill landfill site, due to agreement of the Section 106 still outstanding. It was noted Suez had not committed to any further financial investment on the site until planning consent had been received from Dorset Council. Dorset Ward Councillors had been asked to follow up with Dorset Council Planning, however, no update had been received to date.

Cllr P Holland reported himself and Cllr A Holland had attended the recent virtual Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) Town & Larger Parishes Committee meeting, with updates noted as follows:

- Councillors networking event scheduled on 7 March 2024. Cllrs Jefferies and Hardy to attend on behalf of the Town Council.

- Social media videos relating to 'Becoming a Town Councillor' had been produced and were available to view on the website.
- An extraordinary meeting had been scheduled on 7 April 2024 regarding DAPTC becoming a limited company.

Cllr Craven noted his disappointment that Councillor training was held during the day, making it difficult for those working full time to attend.

Cllr Florek noted book sales for Friends of Corfe Mullen Library were going well.

The updates were **NOTED**.

**TC 23/259 Verbal - To Note the update from the Climate Change Working Party – Cllr P Neil**

There were no new items to note.

**TC 23/260 Verbal – To Note Clerk’s Update**

The Clerk provided an update as follows:

- Recent request under GDPR for the 'Right to Erasure' had been completed.
- Dorset Police Inspector for East and North Dorset had sent invitations to Town Councillors to attend a virtual meeting on 6 March 2024, to present the Police forces work in the east and north of the county.
- Sargeant Payne from the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team to attend the Annual Parish Meeting scheduled on 14 March 2024, alongside the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner to answer any operational questions attendees may have.
- Portrait of King Charles III had been ordered.
- Coffee Guys would no longer be proceeding with permit to run a mobile café at the Recreation Ground.
- One of the new style memorial benches built by the Handyman/Caretaker of the Village Hall was near completion.
- Dorset Clerks meeting with the Chief Executive of Dorset Council scheduled on 13 March 2024, had been postponed. Therefore, agenda item to revisit purchasing Parish Online software to be rescheduled to a future meeting once access to Dorset Explorer for Town & Parish Councils had been confirmed.
- Interviews for the Grounds Team, Youth Trust and Village Hall job vacancies taking place on 28 and 29 February 2024.
- Utility Gator for the Grounds Team had been ordered, with delivery anticipated w/c 4 March 2024.
- Virgin Media Local Community Lead had visited the Town Council office to provide an update on the installation of Virgin Media across the village. Copies of documentation received to be shared with members following the meeting.
- Plumbing works on the Allotment mains water supply was complete. Wessex Water had carried out a reinspection of the site, which was now deemed to be compliant.
- Positive feedback received relating to the recent ground works to the old cemetery driveway.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/261 Verbal – To Note Mayor’s Report**

The Mayor provided an update as follows:

- Attended a talk by the Arch Deacon of South Sudan at St Nicholas Church.



- Met with residents regarding antisocial behaviour and noise.
- Attended re-opening of Hillview Post Office.
- Assisted resident with visa issue.
- Attended Mysteria Concert held at St Huberts Church.
- Met with local resident Anjana Khatwa, who would be hosting a talk on the Jurassic Coast at Corfe Mullen Village Hall later in the year, ahead of her book launch.
- Meeting scheduled with Corfe Hills School to talk with sixth form students about the work of the Town Council and becoming a Town Councillor.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/262 Verbal - To Note Dorset Councillor Report**

Cllr Paul Harrison was unable to attend due to personal commitments, however an update was provided as follows:

- Annual setting of Council Tax was approved at the last full meeting of Dorset Council with an increase of just below 3% and adult social care precept of 2%. The increase is equivalent to £1.82 per week for a Band D property.
- Dorset Council was recently acknowledged by DEFRA as the number one Unitary Authority for recycling, recycling 59.1%, compared to a national average of 43.4%.
- Followed up with contractors relating to learnings from the recent resurfacing works carried out on Wareham Road, with a view to minimising issues experienced during any future works.
- Arranged temporary gritting to be carried out, if necessary, during the cold weather, on Pardys Hill.
- Liaising with law firm who act on behalf of The Crown Estate, relating to an ongoing issue on their land, within Corfe Mullen.
- Worked with the Adult Assessment Team, relating to a resident with dementia and helping to set up support.
- Untended hedge on Dorset Council land had now been tended to.
- Celebrated six years of the Corfe Mullen Community Litter Pick.
- Liaised with an Arboricultural Officer regarding the replacement of a dead tree.
- Worked with Aster Homes on an issue in an area of their concern.
- Assisted a resident with a TPO matter.
- Assisted residents in resolving a long-standing issue with the building company of a new development.

Members noted the 'Go Fund Me' page set up by Cllr Harrison to fundraise for an additional defibrillator to be located by Hillview Post Office and queried how ongoing maintenance costs would be funded. The Clerk agreed to follow up.

The update was **NOTED**.

**TC 23/263 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas** No decisions can be taken<sup>1</sup>

The Clerk noted the updated street furniture policy and community engagement statement would be presented to a future meeting for approval.

**TC 23/264 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 26 March 2024 at 19:00** in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

<sup>1</sup> 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)



TC 23/265 Close of meeting at 21:35.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting *Bawny Aue* Date 26-3-24

