

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT OF THE MEETING CHAIRMAN

4 APRIL 2017

The Parish Council met each month (excluding January 2017) in 2016-17 with all seven Councillors in place to 2019. Councillors continue to be actively involved in a voluntary capacity to contribute as locally informed eyes and ears whilst directly supporting the financial management of the car parks and assisting with local minor maintenance matters.

The workload has been busy and varied. We have considered local planning and tree work applications to the Local Planning Authorities, Purbeck District and Dorset County Council.(DCC). 25 Planning applications and 18 Tree Work Applications came to the Parish Council and were commented on in 2016-17. Many major consultation items have emerged and been commented on such as PDC Public Housing allocations and, within the new Mineral Strategy, additional site specific proposals in the Parish for extracting Purbeck Stone..

Purbeck District Council and other bodies consulted the Parish on a range of other issues. These included the DCC Waste Plan Consultation, the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group developments, and ‘Reshaping Local Councils’ the future Local Government Reorganisation to 2 Unitary authorities from the 9 existing principal councils . The Purbeck Local Plan with the major additional Housing Sites proposal review continues to be controversial. The PC fully supports the work of the Pan Purbeck Action Group in their work challenging the proposed and very high housing targets being proposed for the Purbeck Local Plan review. A public inquiry into the Plan is expected in 2018. We have also considered a National Park proposal for Dorset and Devon.

In 2011 a parking and waiting restrictions review was initiated by the Parish Council to ease access through the village centre. Restrictions were to cover the whole year rather than the summer months were agreed with DCC Officers. These proposals were finally reported in 2017 with 2 objections to DCC. DCC Councillors decided not to proceed.

The PC paid DCC to carry out speed surveys in three sites in Worth village and these showed that a 20 mph limit would have been followed by 95% of all drivers in the centre. A reduction from the national 60mph speed limit was not agreed by DCC Officers. The Parish will be looking at possible ‘Gateway’ 20 mph advisory signs on the Abbascombe and Kingston approaches to the village.

DCC as Highway Authority are increasingly seeking through a ‘Working Together’ initiative to involve the PC in the carrying out and meeting the costs of minor amenity and environmental highway maintenance . We have kept this matter under review without entering into any specific arrangements for regular maintenance work. We did agree to support the request of the HXVH MC to relight the two street lights at the A351 junction with Haycrafts Lane. These are not maintained as public street lighting by DCC. A speedy and efficient local service repair service was provided by Southern Electric (SEE).

I regret that the position of WM Rights of Way officer is vacant and we would welcome a volunteer. Repair items raised are reported and pursued with DCC Highways by the Clerk.

The village halls at Worth and at Harmans Cross continue to give the PC a great venue for public and Council meetings. Their individual web sites show that both offer a full range of community events and activities. Thankfully the weather for the HX Field day and the morning Gymkhana was better in 2016. We have continued to support through donations the work of, both village halls including a Defibrillator unit outside the village hall at Harmans Cross and the replacement of the Duck House with new occupants at the Worth village pond for summer 2017.. Further donations have been made to the Citizens Advice Service, Burngate Stone Centre and to the National Coast Watch service for their work in this area of Purbeck. The restoration of the memorial stone at Winspit was also supported with a donation. The PC supported with a donation for equipment a new voluntary litter picking organisation 'Purbeck Litter free'. I am pleased the PC were able to fund the provision of a small roundabout as an addition play to the existing facilities for small children at Worth playground.

We considered and commented on a service specific DCC Concessionary Bus Fares consultation. DCC made further financial cuts to their annual bus subsidies in the county removing services from many rural areas. We await the findings of the proposal being trialed by DCC to make better use of spare capacity on existing schools buses for residents to use . This scheme if successful could be extended in future to those routes through WM and HX. The subsidised week daily 44 services from Swanage into Worth village continues and the Bus Company have continued to run the full Poole to Swanage 40 service. DCC have cut out their mobile library bus service which used to call in the parish.

The PC continues to be represented and make its views known at the meetings of the Dorset (Purbeck District) Area Parish and Town Council meetings held across the district. (DAPTC). I have been attending with the Clerk new informal liaison arrangements for East Purbeck Parish and Town councils to see how we can jointly progress similar and shared service issues in the future. I attended the East Purbeck Chair/ Clerks liaison meeting with the National Trust in December 2016.

It is planned by BT that a mobile signal would be available in the Worth village area by the end of 2017 or 2018 from any of the BT mobile networks. I agreed to be the point of contact with BT/EE for the new system in terms of working together to identify appropriate small cell transmission sites in the village. These would be on non residential property with sufficient height and an electricity supply.

Once again due to a lot of hard work from parish councillors collecting and banking donations from the car parks that we are able to set a £NIL precept for 2017 -18 being the sole parish or town councils out of 24 in Purbeck to do so. I am pleased that with the support of the Clerk I have been able to fulfil the role of Chairman ably assisted by Cllr Bugler as my Vice Chairman.

Councillor Jerry Burden Chairman Worth Matravers Parish Council