

Manston and Hammoon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 6.00pm in Manston Village Hall

Present:

Councillors – L. Tandoh, C. Poe, N. Frampton, J. Hussey, P. Easter, D. Honeybun

In attendance:

Cllr Jane Somper, Dorset Council

J Ramsay (Parish Clerk)

1 member of the public

Chair's Welcome

Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

23.51. Public Discussion Period

A member of the public raised that where the SID is located is not appropriate, it should be further into the village coming down the hill, perhaps by the bus shelter or by the houses along Hillside. There was a serious traffic accident in this exact area Saturday night (11th November) and the road was closed for 3-4 hours, with both cars being written off. It was clear that the driver had been speeding down the hill, shunting another parked car further down the hill. Chair stated that it would be better to have the SID on the pole by the bus shelter however there is a vision issue so it cannot be done. The SID is working really well outside the village hall, so it is a shame that the SID cannot be placed more centrally in the village. Chair offered to collect the data off the SID that the driver would have passed to see what speed they were doing Saturday night and will circulate it to all Councillors and the member of the public. **Action: Chair**

A brief discussion was had about all the different traffic calming schemes that other areas have done and that the Parish Council has tried to implement various things but to no avail. Question was asked if the data from the SID backs up the fact that this driver was speeding, can we use that to pursue more action to be taken? Cllr Somper suggested that all incidents should be reported on the Dorset Council road safety portal, the more that are reported (even if just a wingmirror is knocked) it will help build evidence.

Cllr Somper stated that she is pursuing the pilot scheme for Hammoon, however is battling with Highways as the speed limit is set at 60mph, although it is not actually possible to drive through the village at that speed.

Buckland Newton was mentioned in that it has put a designated pedestrian walkway in place in a bright colour beside the road, it is a visual deterrent and enough to make you think about not driving on it. **Action: Clerk to follow up on how they achieved this in their village**

23.52. To receive and accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Vestbirk.

23.53. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests in relation to the agenda

None were declared.

23.54. To agree the minutes of previous meeting on 7th August 2023 are a true and accurate record

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

23.55. Issues arising from the last meeting – Clerk’s Report

- Clerk advised that the SID has been installed and is up and running. Only the Chair is trained on how to move the SIDs at present. Cllr Easter apologized for not being able to attend the SID training.
- The fingerpost has also been repaired with thanks to Cllr Hussey and Ian Faulkner.

23.56. To receive report from Dorset Council (*report circulated prior to the meeting*)

Cllr Somper asked if there were any questions in relation to the report. Cllr Somper encouraged Councillors to think about attending the Ward meeting that she has set up with the NHS Chief Commissioning Officer – which is on 23rd November at 6pm at Ashmore village hall. It is open to anyone to attend, so please circulate.

Budget – Cllr Somper wished to reassure the Parish Council that Dorset Council is a good position financially compared to several other Councils who have had to issue section 114 notices. Dorset Council is keeping tight controls on its savings, and the Council is confident it will be in budget. Cllr Somper reported that in her Directorate 80% of savings have been achieved and plans have been put in place for winter pressures already.

Cllrs asked if becoming a unitary authority had helped with the budget. Cllr Somper stated that it has, duplication and overlap have been reduced and we would be further in transforming if Covid had not happened. Good savings have been made up to £100 million, Cllrs questioned where these savings have been made – how do the general public see these savings? Cllr Somper gave an example of home care optimization, by introducing an interactive map, it means more home care can be given locally so carers are not wasting time driving across the County. Cllr Somper stated that the Leader of the Council is very adamant that cost savings will not affect frontline services. Cllrs asked if the Council was coping with inflation, Cllr Somper stated that her Directorate is working with providers to support each other, and inflation seems to have affected the construction/building departments more. Dorset Council are also investing in the voluntary and community sector to fill the gaps.

23.57. To receive a finance report (*report circulated in advance*) and to agree action in response to proposals and payment approvals

Clerk stated that the budget is not bad considering the high grass cutting costs and other costs that have needed to be paid such as the wasp nest removal.

Councillors noted the below payments made under delegated powers by bank transfer out of Council:

09/08/2023	Vision ICT	Provision of Chairman Email address 23/24	£21.60
09/08/2023	J S Rose	Grass Cutting of Play Area	£300.00
09/08/2023	Normtec (RDB)	Fingerpost Bracket replacement	£107.80
09/08/2023	Dorset CPRE	Annual Membership	£36.00
13/09/2023	Higher Houghton Horticulture	Grass cutting of Hammoon churchyard	£160.00
14/09/2023	Simon Wright T/A Spectrum Pest Control	Wasp Nest Removal in Bus Shelter	£140.00

Chairman:

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30/09/2023	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£18.00
02/10/2023	Dorset Council	SID solar panels and installation	£630.00
06/10/2023	Higher Houghton Horticulture	Grass cutting of Hammoon churchyard	£215.00
16/10/2023	HMRC	PAYE (July to September 2023 payment)	£2.00
16/10/2023	DAPTC	Clerks Conference September 2023	£22.50
16/10/2023	Drewham Construction	Grass Cutting of Play Area	£350.00

Payments to be sanctioned:

13/11//2023	Clerk	Clerk Expenses	£47.55
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Clerk requested that the above payments as listed be sanctioned. ALL IN FAVOUR.

23.58 To discuss Budget 24/25 and approve Precept Request

Clerk explained how the budget document shows what is spent where under the headings, to give an indication of what most of the Precept is spent on. Clerk suggested raising the Precept to cover the increasing costs of the grass cutting and to cover any possible election costs in May.

Grass cutting is one of the Parish Council's biggest expenses for both Manston and Hammoon. The grass cutting analysis shows a significant rise in costs, but circumstances this year have been different to years previously so the costs do explain themselves. Chair suggested that we need to try and secure 3 quotes for the work to be done, however this will be difficult as the job is an in-between size, too big for just one person but not big enough for a larger contractor. Grass cutting will always need to be done though so the increased costs and changeable weather need to be taken into account.

Chair proposed that the Precept is increased for 24/25 by £400 per year to £4,850.00, seconded by Cllr Frampton, a vote was taken. ALL IN FAVOUR.

23.59 To agree Grant Request for Dorset/Somerset Air Ambulance (to be paid in February)

Clerk advised that £300.00 was given to the Dorset/Somerset Air Ambulance last year and requested Councillors consider whether we should continue to provide another grant, although this will not be paid until February to ensure that there are enough funds available. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Clerk asked the Parish Council to consider paying a small grant to the Hill magazine, it appears that the subs price has had to go up therefore Clerk suggested helping towards their costs to ensure that the magazine continues to be published. A donation of £50.00 was agreed. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Action: Clerk to contact the Hill Editor and advise, also Clerk to direct them to the community grants available if more funding is required

A brief discussion was had about increasing the presence of the Parish Council in the magazine and maybe trying to put some content in monthly, as well as perhaps create a logo for the Council to help identify us.

23.60 To decide on rent payment to the Village Hall and discuss the Village Hall future

Clerk advised that in the past £100.00 has been given to the Village Hall for the rent (4 meetings per year) and £100.00 per year towards upkeep and maintenance. However the future of the Village Hall is in doubt due to the subsidence in the property and the fact that it is getting visibly worse. Chair provided a brief history of how the building came to be in this situation.

The problem with the Village Hall, however, is that no one appears to own the land on which it sits, it has not been registered with the Land Registry. Clerk explained that she had been in touch with Dorset Council's Community Asset Planning Team and found that they have no records on who owns the land. Chair explained that he had spoken to a local resident who knew the history of the land and it was given verbally to the parishioners. No action has been taken to register it so it is unsure who owns it.

The Parish Council discussed potentially asking the Village Hall Committee if the Parish Council could take over management and ownership of the hall. Concerns were generally that the Village Hall is an asset and it would be a shame to lose it. Precedent would suggest that it would get more use if repaired and developed, as putting in the new play equipment has shown. Cllr Frampton proposed that Parish Council should investigate further the option of running the Village Hall, seconded by Cllr Tandoh. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Action: Clerk to write to the Village Hall Committee Chair to start the process

23.61. To discuss Defibrillator Community Funding

Chair expressed apologies with regards to the defibrillator funding. Clerk put it in the Hill magazine, but has had no direct donations. Clerk has created a poster for the noticeboards, to be circulated to all Councillors.

Action: Clerk

Clerk advised that the Department of Health recently had a £1million grant funding notice for defibrillators and although the budget is restricted at present, next time this opportunity opens up maybe the Parish Council can pursue it further.

22.62. To discuss Recreational Area maintenance – Grass cutting spend analysis

Grass cutting was covered under item 23.58. Chair raised that the fence is broken around the playing area, if the gate is closed then the fence falls over so the gate is permanently open. Chair has asked for 3 quotes and only received one in return for £240.00. Cllr Honeybun stated that he would review the fence for the Parish Council before committing to any quote. **Action: Cllr Honeybun**

23.63 To receive an update on SID deployment

Chair informed Councillors that the SID was installed however it broke quite quickly but Dorset Council came out and fixed it. It is now working properly and it has been moved once since it was installed at the Village Hall. The Chair is the only one who can move the SID at present, so it was requested that all Councillors familiarize themselves with the key and how to do it. Agreed next time the SID is moved, Chair will show Cllr Easter how to do it, and then in May (in daylight) the rest of the Councillors will be shown (same day as the meeting day).

23.64. To receive an update on Hammoon Bridge & Flooding

Cllr Frampton reported that there have been two floods but there were no issues. Cllr Poe raised that there is no padlock on the Hammoon gate so it gets left open. Cllr Frampton offered to get quotes for 2 signs to be placed on the gates to remind people that they must be shut. **Action: Cllr Frampton**

23.65. Discussion on any highway issues in both villages (to include traffic and speeding)

- Speedwatch Update (*paper circulated in advance of the meeting by Cllr Vestbirk*) – it seems from the report that the first step is to contact ND Police CSW liaison. **Action: Clerk to contact Cllr Vestbirk to see if this has been done.**

23.66. Next year's Town & Parish Councillor Elections Process

Chairman:

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Clerk raised that part of the Clerks Conference focused on the upcoming Parish Council elections and what needed to be done and by when. The key part for potential Councillors is that there is a form that needs to be completed, which will not be available until mid February. Clerk explained the process and suggested that the February meeting be moved back 2 weeks until 26th so that at that meeting there will be time to ask questions and hopefully complete the forms which needs to be done by hand, and given in to Dorset Council by hand.

23.67. To comment on any planning applications

None received for the parish area, however Clerk has circulated the planning application for the large development in Marnhull of up to 120 houses if anyone wants to make any comments.

23.68. To review and adopt the following policies

- Expenses (Staff) Policy
- Expenses (Councillors) Policy

Clerk advised that there had been no significant changes to the policies since they were last reviewed, the policies were agreed. ALL IN FAVOUR

23.69. Confidential Matters (public and press to leave the meeting)

Clerk explained the recent backdated pay award given and made Councillors aware of the impact on the budget.

23.70. Items for the next meeting

- Defibrillator Community Funding
- Village Hall
- Elections Process Update

23.71 Date of next meeting(s)

Monday, 26th February 2024 at 6.00pm

There being no further business to be transacted the meeting closed at 19:58 hours.