

## Fontmell Magna Parish Council

### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 7pm, in the Village Hall

**Present:** Cllrs A Davis (Chair AD) M Humphreys (MH) C Scott (CS) A Main (AM) & L Kurton (LK)

**In Attendance:** S Smith (Clerk) Dorset Cllr Jane Somper and 19 members of the public.

**1. Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Public Questions:** The Chairman of Melbury Abbas PC, David Webber, attended the meeting. MAPC are seeking to introduce a 40mph speed limit by Guys Marsh Prison and through Kit Hill. David requested FMPC support, part of the road runs through our parish. It was agreed in principle, and it was suggested that a site visit would be helpful with Cllr Somper and the MA Chairman in attendance. The residents of West Lea at The Knapp spoke of how the road was currently covered in black ice and they stated the need for a grit bin. **Action: AD to speak to Highways to see what can be done.**

**3. Apologies for Absence:** All present.

**4. Declarations of Interest:** None.

**5. Minutes of the Meetings held on the 6th December 2022:** The minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chair.

**6. Matters Arising from the December 2022 Minutes:** Nothing to note

**7. Report from The Clerk:**

**7.1 Issues actioned since the last meeting** All items on the agenda.

**7.2 Finance update** the current balance in the PC bank account is **£3,036.43** and the PC savings account **£4,802.71**

**7.3 Resolve to pay bills presented**

**The invoices paid since the last meeting are as follows:**

Landworks inv 47 - **£50.00** War Memorial tidy

Clerks' wages Jan 2023 - **£541.21** inc stamps, Zoom membership & ink

HMRC PAYE - **£7.60**

Morelock Signs SID - **£3,048.00**

J Gilbert - **£215.00** 50% hedge cut at War Memorial

**7.4 Budget/Precept FY 2023/24** A precept planning document had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to meeting. Council Tax payments from the new residents at Spring Meadows will not be counted with regards to the Fontmell Magna's precept until the FY 2024/25. The Precept will need to be raised from the 2022/23 amount due to inflation and increased costs. A Precept of **£11,848.19** for 2023/24 was proposed. An increase on the current year of **£1,079.19**. This will equate to a band D property paying an increase of **£2.36** per property per year. **Action: All Cllrs agreed for the Clerk to go ahead and request this amount from DC.**

**8. Report from Dorset Councillor:** Jane Somper's written report will be available on the PC website. She highlighted the following points: Council tax flexibility - the government is giving local authorities in England additional flexibility in setting council tax by increasing the referendum limit for increases in council tax by up to 3% per year from April 2023. In addition, local authorities with social care responsibilities will be able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 2% per year. The plans for adult social care reform – with a lifetime cap on social care costs – are now

delayed for two years. A further £1bn nationally was pledged as grant funding for social care next year, with £1.7bn the following year. The local government financial settlement was announced late in December, and this has informed discussions on the budget in January scrutiny meetings with decision making at full council on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Cllr Somper encouraged all residents to use the Highways online reporting system via the Dorset Council website for all highway issues eg: pot holes, fallen trees, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles etc. [Web site; https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/roads-highways-and-maintenance](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/roads-highways-and-maintenance)

## Reports from the Parish Councillors

### 9. Planning:

**9.1 Planning Applications** Since the last meeting in December, the PC has received 6 applications:

**P/PABA/2022/07871** Bedchester and Hurdles Farm, Common Lane, Fontmell Magna. Erect agricultural storage building, form hardstanding and access track. This was not a planning application but to determine if prior approval is required. Neighbouring residents have agreed with the applicant to move the barn 5m to the north. With this condition the PC is supporting this application.

**P/FUL/2022/07195** Land known as Margaret's Yard, South Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0PD Erect single dwelling (demolish existing storage building) Based on the submission documents the PC is objecting to this application as it conflicts with two policies in the Neighbourhood Plan: - FM7 Conservation Area – a 2/3 storey house with a high roof line is not in keeping with the general character of houses within the conservation area and the surrounding properties which are 1.5 storey. - FM16 Housing Types – this policy states that new open market housing should predominately be of 1, 2 and some 3-bed properties. The proposed 5-bed dwelling does not contribute to the need for smaller units within the Conservation Area. The PC has met with the applicant who understood our concerns and undertook to review the design with the architect. The PC voted to object to this application as it stands but will take note of the intensions from the applicant to make changes.

**P/HOU/2023/00080** Mulberry, West Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0PF Erection of greenhouse, summer room, shed and flue for wood burner. The PC supports this application.

**P/TRC/2022/08068** Lynchets, Mill Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0NU Various tree works. The PC supports this application.

**P/FUL/2022/07693** Home Mead Cottage, Lurmer Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0NS Erect no.1 new dwelling. This application is currently being assessed by the NPMG.

**P/FUL/2022/07053** Home Mead Cottage, Lurmer Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0NS Retention of change of use from agricultural to a flexible commercial use to operate a small holiday camping park & siting of 4 x shepherd huts. An application for this development was made in November 2020, opposed by the PC, and refused by Dorset Council. The huts will still be highly visible from the East and it does involve potentially quite a lot of traffic, on the wrong side of the A350. The PC voted to object to this application.

Two founder members of the NPMG have stood down – Barry Roberts as Chairman and Robert McCurrach as Secretary. MH has agreed to take on the Secretary role on a temporary basis until new recruits have been found. Barry & Rosie Roberts will soon be moving away from Fontmell and they will be sorely missed. The PC is particularly grateful to Barry who served as a key member of the project team that produced the Neighbourhood Plan over 2015-18. Alongside this work Barry researched and wrote the Conservation Area Appraisal, because whilst Fontmell has held the status of a Conservation Area since May 1977 there was no document to substantiate why: so Barry wrote one. It's a very good read, available on the parish website, and explains what makes Fontmell Magna special. Since 2018 when the Neighbourhood Plan became part of the Dorset Local Plan, Barry has worked tirelessly as a member of the NP Monitoring Group to ensure planning applications adhere to its policies and in that way to keep Fontmell a special place to live.

**9.2 NP Review Group** Start-up activities for the project will be getting under way shortly, including: an inaugural meeting of the Review Group, arranged for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023, appointment of a Chair and Secretary for the project; application for an initial grant; handover of relevant documents; arranging a communications event and scoping meeting for residents. The Review Group is still looking for new members, please contact the Clerk if you feel you can help. The process will take 12/18 months. Most of the expense will be covered by Government grants.

**9.3 Section 106 grant money** A total of £360,000 is to be paid directly to Dorset Council from the developer of Spring Meadows. A third of this money will go to educational needs. The first home was occupied in Spring Meadows on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022. This triggered payment of 50% of the S106 Levy monies to Dorset Council. The remaining 50% is payable before the 12<sup>th</sup> house is occupied. DC has confirmed it will not release any funds until 100% of the payments have been received from Pennyfarthing Homes and this is likely to be around June 2023.

**9.4 Site 22 Blandford Farm** no update and no contact from developers.

**10. Communications:** LK gave a short presentation with the slide projector.

**10.1 Parish website for all** A move towards a village FB page is proposed that could be used by all partners. The cost for the website could be shared with the community groups using it. LK has been speaking to website providers to ascertain specific costs with regards to the changes that could be made. An evaluation/plan of how much work will be involved in maintaining an up-to-date site and who will make these updates will need to be made. Providing costs are in line with the 2023/24 budget, these changes then need to be shared with the relevant parties involved and if everyone is in support, a plan put into action.

**10.2 Community transport** all ideas welcome; LK is looking into ideas & schemes. LK will connect other PCs & groups that have implemented a similar service. Through the development of the emergency response plan, we have collated a list of people who could offer transport assistance in the event of an emergency. Our efforts continue to identify who may be in need of a more 'regular/everyday' service and how we may be able to implement such a service within Fontmell. There is much more work and research that needs to be done here before we can launch anything without any flaws.

**10.3 Community Support hub** The Community Support Hub has been launched and organized by members of Village Hall Committee and the Church Committee. It aims to provide support, advice and a warm place to eat, drink and chat with friends and neighbours. It is available for absolutely everyone no matter their situation and although the Parish are unable to offer financial support to this amazing project it is something very much supported by the councillors as residents. Dates are: 12-5pm Jan 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>; Feb 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> :March 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April 5<sup>th</sup> 2023. The Chairman acknowledged and thanked Lisa Le Druillenc for obtaining the financial grants and all her hard work within the community.

**11. Highways:**

**11.1 Speed Indicator Device (SID)** We have ordered the SID unit and we are waiting for Highways to complete the installation of the posts at the three sites.

**11.2 20mph speed limit** the PC has put in an application to DC in for a 20mph speed limit through the village and along the A350. The PC application for a 20-mph speed limit on the A350 and other roads through the village is being reviewed by Dorset Highways and we have been informed that we are unlikely to hear anything before the end of March 2023. We were asked to provide further evidence of near-misses and accidents and thanks to the CSW team members, we were able to this. We recorded 9 incidents over a two-three-year period. If you do have a near-miss or minor accident on any Parish Road, please let Peter Mole or AD know so we can log it on the Highway's web site.

**11.3 Speed Watch** Peter Mole reported that a recent Speed watch session on the A350 showed an increase in speeding. The road layout has been widened between Sutton Waldron and Fontmell to facilitate access to the new Spring Meadows development. This has resulted in noticeably higher speeds and a worrying reduction in visibility for both drivers and

pedestrians. The Community Speed Watch team have reported a 30% increase in vehicles travelling at 35-mph or more, within the 30mph zone in South Street. We have made this new safety concern known to Highways and a meeting is planned in February with the DC Corporate Director with our Ward Councillor.

## 12. Environmental Protection:

**12.1 Defibrillator** The feasibility of a 2nd defibrillator for the village was discussed, maybe at the telephone box at the shop. The cost would be approx. £1,500 for 4 years. Funding will need to be found. A discussion with residents in attendance followed. It was thought that a refresh of First Aid/CPR training might be more beneficial at the present time. **Action: CS to research defibrillator training.**

**12.2 Plan for litter pick** a successful village litter pick took place on 12th November 2022. A Spring pick will need to be planned, **Action: CS to arrange a date in March 2023.**

## 13. Social Infrastructure:

**13.1 FMCLT & Village Shop update** Nothing new to report. All the work is nearly completed.

**13.2 Fontmell Inn** With the need to garner the support and interest from Parish residents we have been discussing executing a survey and/or community 'future of the pub' meeting. **Action: LK to look into an online survey for residents to complete.** It was agreed by all PC Cllrs to submit an application to DC to register the pub as an ACV (asset of community value)

**13.3 Doctors Surgery** the Blackmore Vale Partnership cannot recruit the staff to re-open the surgery, they have suggested that it could be used for other services. The surgery cannot be sold due to covenants on the building. The PC has been invited to make suggestions as to how the surgery could be used for the benefit of the community. The village hall, the PC and Cllr Somper are due to meet the surgery Practice Manager in February to discuss the matter further.

**13.4 Village Hall Deed Swap** Solicitors have been appointed. The documents need to be collated 1<sup>st</sup> to minimise our legal costs. **Action: AD will meet with Villager Hall Chair to arrange this.**

## 14. Community Reach:

**14.1 Emergency response plan** A booklet has been produced with help from the village hall and has been circulated to all residents. An electronic copy can be obtained from the PC. A meeting is in the process of being organised with Elle Wilson who will be coordinating an emergency response test plan. This will take us to the final stage of completing the plan. DC have commended our emergency plan and acknowledged the amount of work put into it. It was agreed that emergency coverage would be put in place again for the ambulance strike at the end of January 2023. **Post meeting note:** This strike is only for the West Midlands area but a further national paramedics strikes planned in February will have FM emergency coverage.

**14.2 Mobile coverage** Further contact has been made with EE about how the mobile network coverage in Fontmell Village centre could be improved with no progress to date.

**15. Footpaths:** With regards to the planning application for a new build property on Margaret's yard, next to Home Farm and adjacent to footpath 63/6 from West St to the A350, a potential condition could be the widening of the existing footpath: a 'fenced in' footpath apparently has to be 2.5 meters wide. As this footpath separates the Margaret's Yard site, and the Pennyfarthing development, it could be argued that both should contribute a small strip to enable the path to be widened. **Action: MH to speak with Pennyfarthing about possible land for a widened footpath.** As yet no progress with replacement dog waste bins at Middle Mill, and behind the school on footpath N63/7. **Action: AM to chase DC contact for the new bins.**

Nothing new to report on the Council's plea to re-establish access to the track between footpath N63/11 and West Street at Marshmoor Lodge – the track's owner is apparently still in dispute with some of the users. The stile has still not been replaced at the junction of footpath N63/9 and Mill Street. Residents stated that this stile is needed as it prevents dogs off the lead running on to the road. **Action: AM to chase up for the stile to be replaced**

**16. Governance:**

There are currently two vacancies on the Parish Council for Councillors.

There are several opportunities for new people to come forward to help with Parish Council activities:

- someone to lead on Environmental Protection matters for the parish council;
- someone to lead on Community Reach matters for the parish council;
- someone to lead on Planning matters for the parish council, as Mike is stepping down in May;
- Emergency Response activities – those who can offer their skills in the event of an emergency/crisis;
- joining the project team for the Neighbourhood Plan review;
- joining the Neighbourhood Plan monitoring group, looking at planning applications.

Any help would be most welcome; **please contact Laura on 01747 812449 for further information.**

**17. Matters arising from Councillors:** Coronation celebrations in May 2023, to be discussed at next PC meeting in March 2023. The bank holiday will fall on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May, following the Coronation on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May.

Date of Next Meeting: The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **21<sup>st</sup> March 2023** at the Village Hall. **Commencing at 6.30pm for tea / coffee and main meeting at 7.00PM.**

Signed..... Date.....

**Cllr. Andrew Davis**  
**Chair, Fontmell Magna Parish Council**