

Fontmell Magna Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7pm, in the Village Hall

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

In Attendance: S Smith (Clerk) Dorset Cllr Jane Somper and 56 members of the public.

1. Welcome & apologies: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. PC Cllr A Main (AM) Sent his apologies ahead of the meeting.

2. Co-opt new PC Councillor: Hannah Lister was co-opted onto the Parish Council by a unanimous vote. Hannah will lead on community reach matters – liaison with Dorset Council, neighbouring councils, village school, etc. Hannah joined the PC Cllrs at the table for the rest of the meeting. The Clerk gave Hannah a copy of the PC Code of Conduct & Standing Orders. Hannah signed her 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' and handed this back to the Clerk.

3. Public Questions: A resident asked if checks will be made that Pennyfarthing Homes implement the biodiversity plan measures that were included in the planning permission for Spring Meadows. A resident of the new development stated that bird boxes and other facilities had been installed. MH expressed confidence that Pennyfarthing Homes would honour the biodiversity plan.

4. Declarations of Interest: None.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on the 17th January 2023: The minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chair.

6. Matters Arising from the January 2023 Minutes:

6.1 Grit bin - The request by a resident at the last PC meeting for a grit bin has been held over to the next financial year.

7. Report from The Clerk:

7.1 Finance update & resolve to pay bills presented -

The current balance in the PC bank account is **£4,977.68**. The PC has received a NP plan grant for **£2,877.00**. This has been deposited into the PC savings account.

The invoices paid since the last meeting are as follows:

Clerk's wages February 2023 inc expenses **£433.26**

HMRC February 2023 **£7.60**

Clerks wages March 2023 inc expenses & laptop software renewal **£485.05**

HMRC March 2023 **£7.60**

Blackmore Vale Handyman – village noticeboards x 3 refurbishment **£558**

SLCC – CilCA Clerks training balance **£173.75**

Village sign (Mill Street) Dorset Council **£196.84**

Parish online GeoXphere **£45.00**

Village Hall NP meeting Nov 2022 **£18.00**

Village Hall PC meeting Dec 2022 & Jan 2023 **£49.50**

Dorset Planning Consultant - Mill Street P/OUT/2023/00667 **£891.00** – The Clerk/RFO highlighted that this payment had not been authorised correctly, by the councillors concerned, in accordance with PCs financial regulations for an amount over £500; the payment was subsequently authorised by resolution and approved unanimously. The Clerk reminded Councillor's that the PC makes decisions as a whole body and not as individuals.

Action: Clerk to request WORD version from Planning Consultant of the objection submitted to DC

A VAT refund claim has been submitted for **£1,307.88** but the payment has not yet been received.

8. Planning:

8.1 Planning applications received - Since the last meeting the Parish Council has received 5 new planning applications. Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Groups (NPMG) reports on each of these applications can be found on the parish website.

Cllr Davis gave a slide presentation on planning issues in the village.

P/OUT/2023/00667 - Land at Mill Street Fontmell Magna Dorset SP7 0NU Erection of x 25 dwelling houses with associated access, drainage infrastructure, LAP, public open space & landscaping (outline application to determine access, layout & scale only) This is a re-hash of an application in 2017 (2/2017/2014/OUT) for 29 houses on this site, which was refused. The new application conflicts with 10 policies in the NP and may conflict with 4 more policies. The PC is **objecting** through submission of a formal statement prepared by the NP Monitoring Group and our retained planning consultant.

The key issues are:

- the site has been classed as unsuitable in a 2021 SHLAA exercise,
- there is no evidence of housing need for 25 new dwellings,
- the site is outside the settlement boundary, the development would harm the setting of the AONB and of Fernlea Cottage, a Grade II listed property.
- would mean the loss of grade 2 agricultural land.
- the development would harm biodiversity on the site and at nearby sites such as Middle Mill.

The PC approved a resolution to strongly object to this application. The objection statement can be found on the PC & Dorset Council website.

P/FUL/2022/06530 - Middle Farm, Lurmer Street Fontmell Magna Shaftesbury SP7 0NT

Demolish existing barn and erect dwelling with associated landscaping. The application conflicts with 10 policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, the site for the proposed dwelling lies outside the village's Settlement Boundary, contrary to Policy FM18 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and will consequently cause significant harm to the setting of the AONB. **The Parish Council has objected to this application.**

P/FUL/2022/06531 - Middle Farm Cottage, Lurmer Street, Fontmell Magna Shaftesbury SP7 0NT

Erect rear extension & garage (demolish existing extension). Carry out internal reconfiguration and external cladding. Boundary change to plot 1 (2/2017/1856/FUL) and erect garage. The proposed design will conform to some Neighbourhood Plan policies but it would conflict with others. On balance, the Parish Council **objects** to this application. It was noted that a large mobile chalet has been erected on the Middle Farm site. This structure is not included in the planning application and the matter has been referred to Planning Enforcement.

P/HOU/2023/00322 and P/LBC/2023/00524 - Myrtle Cottage, West Street, Fontmell Magna, SP7 0PF.

Convert garage to additional living space – now Granted by DC planning. Myrtle Cottage is a Grade II listed building from 1960. The PC **supported** this application, to convert a garage to living space.

P/MPO/2023/01555 - Land at South Street Fontmell Magna, Spring Meadows

Modification of S106 agreement dated 23rd December 2021 2/2020/0577/FUL by Sovereign Homes. This application is currently being assessed.

8.2 Site 22 Blandford Farm - This site is allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan for 10 custom or self-build homes, with access achieved by connecting to the road through Spring Meadows.

There have been discussions with the potential developer, Intelligent Land, who have a plan for 9 houses but with access to the site via West Street, west of the Village Hall. They cite problems with creating access through Spring Meadows because of land ownership restrictions. IL has suggested a public consultation event to display their plan to residents and receive feedback. Vernon Christopher revealed that he has retained ownership of a strip of land 1m wide around the edge of the Spring Meadows site. He stated that no approach had been made by Intelligent Land to discuss buying the piece of land needed to join Spring Meadows to a development on site 22. **The PC approved unanimously a resolution to oppose access to Site 22 from West Street and to insist any development must provide access by connecting through to the Spring Meadows.**

Action: The Clerk will write to Intelligent Land behalf of the PC to reiterate the PC's stance on the access.

Spring Meadows Development completion of the housing development is expected in July 2023 although some of the final landscaping planting may not complete until November 23 due to seasonality. Sales figures to date are:

- 6 houses completed, 9 exchanged (including 6 affordable rented homes to Sovereign Housing).
- 5 houses reserved, 10 on the market.

The School Drop-Off Area will be completed by June 2023. Adoption of the Drop-Off Area by Salisbury Diocese is being negotiated and agreed currently. Concerns have been raised by the school's Academy Trust over security and lighting for the Drop-Off Area.

Action: HL to liaise with the School regards the operation of the drop-off area

8.3 Other possible sites being considered by developers - Cllr Davis described three more sites around the village where planning applications could come forward for new housing development.

Land adjoining Spring Meadows, South Street. A planning application may come forward to build 20 homes on the field south of the Spring Meadows development. The PC would be minded to object to such an application because there is no evidence of housing need for new homes beyond the allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan and the site is outside the village Settlement Boundary.

Land near Middle Farm, Lurmer Street. A planning application may come forward to build new homes on adjoining Middle Farm. The PC would be minded to object to such an application because there is no evidence of housing need for new homes beyond the allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, the site is outside the village Settlement Boundary and a development would harm the setting of the AONB.

A resident raised the question of how to stop speculative housing developers bringing forward plans to develop sites, sometimes several times over on the same site. The Parish's Neighbourhood Plan provides the best defence against inappropriate and unwanted housing development in and around the village.

8.4 NP Review Group - Currently the Neighbourhood Plan policies on housing, which span the period 2017-31, are deemed out of date because Dorset Council are unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and meet the Government's housing delivery test. The remedy is to update the NP and have it re-approved by residents, which will give it at least 2 more years of currency. A project team chaired by Rosie-Anne Yates has started this work, to update the key policies and hopefully fast-track its re-approval by September 2023. More residents are needed to volunteer their time to bolster the project team and get this work done quickly.

8.5 Chair & secretary to the NPMG - Two new members have joined the Monitoring Group – Ian Warr and Aidy Lister; a full list of members is on the parish website. Cllr Humphreys is acting Chair and Secretary until new people come forward to take over these roles. When MH steps down from the PC in May, the Chairman will take on the Planning remit until new members are prepared to take this on.

9. Report from Dorset Councillor: Jane Somper's written report will be available on the PC website. She highlighted the following points:

Strategic Poole-M4 Route The Department of Transport has announced that the A350 south of Warminster will not form part of the main north-south strategic corridor. This means the new road will not be built along the A350/C13 corridor, which is very good news.

Planning Dorset Council is inviting landowners to submit parcels of land for various forms of development, including housing and employment.

10. Highways:

10.1 Speed Indicator Device (SID) - The new SID unit will be installed on 29th March 2023. The previous VAS device on the South Street has been removed by Dorset Highways. A new sign has been installed on South Street before the sharp bend displaying a MAX SPEED 20 message.

10.2 Peter Mole gave a report on the **Community Speed Watch** group's work. There have been two near-misses reported on the A350 involving pedestrians in last two months. There is evidence that incidents of speeding along South Street have increased, following the widening of the road at the Spring Meadows entrance.

11. Social Infrastructure:

11.1 Fontmell Inn - The PC's application for the pub to be registered as an Asset of Community Value has been refused. Dorset Council has stated that there was insufficient evidence the pub would continue as a pub. Information is being sought from Dorset Council on the future intentions of the pub owner via a Freedom of Information request.

11.2 Doctors Surgery - The Village Hall Committee, some PC Councillors and Cllr Somper met the surgery Practice Manager in February 2023 to discuss the future use of the surgery building. The Practice has no plans to re-introduce medical services. Alternative uses would not be financially viable, in having to meet the mortgage costs and maintenance of the building fabric.

12. Community Reach:

12.1 Kings Coronation celebrations - Cllr Lister is organising an event for Sunday 7th May 2023. The idea has been kept fairly simple due to capacity and timeframes but is basically for a BYO picnic, cream teas, a possible street food truck and linking in with the friendship garden.

Post meeting Note: The event will now be held on Monday 8th May at Springhead - not the Village Hall. It is still an event organised by the PC. The plan is for BYO picnic and there will be the opportunity to walk down and look at the Friendship Gardens. Plants will be on sale at Springhead the proceeds from which will go to the Friendship Gardens. It has also been confirmed that cream teas will be served between 3 and 5pm and the proceeds will go to supporting the warm hub. More details about the day can be found on the poster to be circulated including in the Gossip tree,.

Action: LK to distribute the poster and comms

13 Social infrastructural

13.1 Emergency response plan - Emergency coverage was provided by Parish councillors during the recent ambulance strikes. A scheme is being explored for linking the mobile phones of responders to a single number.

Action: CS to confirm details and costs for the proposed scheme

13.2 Defibrillator A second defibrillator for the village has been made possible by a generous donation of £1500 from a resident. The new defibrillator will be installed in the phone box next to the village shop. The PC would need to meet the costs of installation and maintenance.

Action; CS to confirm plans and costing for the new defibrillator.

13.3 Plan for Litter Pick a Spring litter pick will take place on Saturday 1st April 2023 volunteers to meet at the Village Hall at 10.30am. All equipment will be provided and along with refreshments.

14. Footpaths: The footpath N63/6 along the north side of Spring Meadows was temporarily closed whilst being upgraded. It is now reopened. The footpath N63/7 from West Street to Home Farm is to be widened, at least to the rear of the school; the hedge has already been cut back to accommodate this. The Margaret's Yard development and the owner of the land strip around Spring Meadows, may allow the widening process to extend to Home Farm.

Action; AM to confirm timetable for the pathway work and new surface to replace the muddy path
The stile at the junction of footpath N63/9 and Mill Street has been restored and the rail lowered to make it easier to traverse. The dog waste bin at Middle Mill has been removed and it is intended to move the general waste bin (or a replacement) to a position alongside the footpath. The dog waste bin behind the school at the confluence of footpaths N63/6 and N63/7 has been replaced with a general waste bin.

15 Governance: The frequency of Parish Council meetings has been increased to 10 per year, i.e., every month except for August and December. This will make it easier to process planning applications, which operate on tight deadlines for commenting. 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, 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 LK on 01747 812449 for further information.

16. Matters arising from Councillors: Cllr Kurton invited residents to join the email subscription list for receiving news on parish events; please contact LK on 01747 812449.

Date of Next Meeting: The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **18th April 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