

DRAFT MINUTES
**Fontmell Parish Council held at the Village Hall,
Fontmell Magna on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at 6.30pm.**

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Kurton. Cllr Lister explained that she would be acting Chair in Cllr Kurton's absence. Apologies were also received for Cllr Main.

In attendance Cllr Jane Somper; Ann Lee Parish Clerk

Cllr Lister (HL) welcomed 45 residents and explained there would be an opportunity for residents to ask questions at a dedicated period during the meeting. She reminded those present that each individual would be able to speak for three minutes within a 15-minute open forum.

- 2. Declarations of interest:** Cllr Scott Walby (LSW) declared an interest in agenda item 6b (P/OUT/2022/07505, stating that she knew the applicant who was seeking planning permission and would not be making a recommendation in this case and would leave the chamber when this application was discussed.

- 3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting:-**

Tuesday 15th August 2023 at 6.30pm at the Springhead Trust.

A correction to the minutes was made on page 4, item 7d (One reason cited was that the Police would not support the application as they could **not** enforce the 20-mph speed limit.)

A spelling mistake was also noted and corrected.

The minutes of the previous meeting were subsequently signed as a true and an accurate record.

Proposed Cllr Scott Walby and Seconded Cllr Lister Resolved Unanimously

- 4. To discuss matters arising from previous minutes**

Cllr HL welcomed and introduced John Roberts-Davies (JR-D) to the Parish as a co-opted member following open advertising in accordance with Dorset Council Elections and Monitoring regulations.

Cllrs voted to elect Mr Roberts-Davies Proposed by Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed.

Cllr Lister invited Cllr Roberts-Davies to introduce himself. He stated that he has lived in Bedchester since 2014, and has a technical background.

b) Councillor responsibilities: Cllr Roberts-Davies will be responsible for supporting work relating to Highways with Cllr Lister who also has a remit of working on community reach and will continue to work closely with Peter Mole to improve road safety.

Cllr Lister announced that sadly Cllr Kurton has formally given notice of her resignation as Chair but will continue to remain on the Parish Council responsible for communications. She will step down at the November meeting and at that point a new Chair.

- 5. Reports**

a) To receive any police matters. **None received.**

- b) To receive County Councillor reports. **Cllr Somper**

Cllr Somper welcomed John Roberts-Davies thanking him for taking the responsibility of becoming a Councillor. Cllr Somper highlighted from her report that is published on the website. She made reference to the housing strategy consultation that was still live and urged the PC to participate and residents, as well. She mentioned the Compton Airfield Consultative meeting and reported that they take the safeguarding and highways issues seriously. Another meeting will be held in March 2024.

6. Planning: To receive a Planning report from Cllr Scott Walby

6.1 To receive Planning Applications since the last meeting of the 15th of August 2023.

Cllr Scott Walby reported that two planning applications had been submitted since the last meeting. The following applications were discussed:-

- a) **P/PAAC/2023/04466** Application to Change of use and convert agricultural building to 1no dwelling (Class C3). Location: Land South of West Street near Marshmoor Lodge. There are permitted development rights to convert agricultural buildings up to 450 square metres to residential. The recommendation to the parish is nevertheless to object to the application on the grounds of a new access on West Street as the road is very narrow. The landowner of the barn does not own the land on either side of the proposed junction so cannot create a visibility splay for reasons of safety especially as it is outside the 30 mile an hour speed zone. The area is also used as an informal passing place for traffic.

Cllrs resolved to object to the application due to poor visibility, road safety concerns for an additional entrance on West Street and outside the 30mph zone.

Proposed to object Cllr Lister, Seconded by Cllr Scott. Unanimous decision

- b) **P/OUT/2022/07505** Application to erect 1no. dwelling. To the remove existing caravan and garage. (This is an outline planning application with all matters reserved). Location: Land East of Orchard Corner, Hartgrove, Shaftesbury, SP7 0LA.

The applicant was known to Cllr Scott Walby and she left the chamber at 18.46.

Cllr Lister explained that the site has the benefits from a Certificate of Lawfulness to continue using the land to station a mobile home. It is proposed to replace this with a three-storey house. The applicant proposes to build the property onto the side of the hill facing towards Duncliffe. The Proposal is an outline application only which means that all matters are reserved. This effectively means that the PC is being asked to support an application to which none of the details are known. Cllrs discussed the proposal and expressed concerns at the location of the site on a sharp corner. Cllrs recognised that the development would improve the site but that the property was of a considerable height and size which may impact on views from other locations. Cllrs concluded that a more modest and full application detailing the style and finish was need in order for the parish council to consider the application.

Cllrs resolved to object to the outline application with matters reserved.

Proposed Cllr Lister, Seconded by Cllr Scott, Unanimous decision.

Cllr Scott Walby returned to the chamber at 18.51.

6.2 Planning matters updates:

a) Planning North Committee Meeting at the Sturminster Newton Exchange 26 September from 2pm – 5pm

Anyone wishing to find out more about how Planning committees work and how Dorset Council makes some of its planning decisions can attend this committee meeting. You will not be able to participate, only observe, but is considered a valuable opportunity to gain insight into highways and other agencies engaged in housing policy and planning matters. You do not need to register for this event, it is advertised as an open session.

b) Compton Abbas Airfield

The airfield is operating substantially more flights and extended flying dates than under previous ownership. If this is causing problems to substantial numbers of parishioners, then this should be taken up with the airfield which has a liaison group in place.

c) Spring Meadows Development

Planting will take place in the Autumn to complete the buffer zone, landscaping and the wildlife corridors masterplan. Two members of the PC will oversee this.

d) Mobile Telecommunications Mast at Wessex Water Recycling Centre at West View, Fontmell Magna.

Cllr Scott Walby explained that Cllrs recognise the importance of improved signal reception but emphasised that this is not yet a planning application. She explained that because Parish Council has already been asked for its views on the location and appearance and has replied to the agent and Dorset Council with its response the PC can comment on this proposal. Agents Gallifordtry, on behalf of Vodafone, are proposing a 20m metre mast at the STW site at West View with vertical antennae and satellite dishes. It is not known whether these are 4G or 5G. The mast was the subject of a planning application in 2017 which was refused by Dorset Council on the grounds of impact on views in the Conservation Area towards St Andrew's Church. This is not considered a suitable site and would be harmful to the conservation area and the sewage treatment plant is also likely to be upgraded in the future with another circular tank.

The agents have given further information as to the rejected sites, possibly to make the selected option appear as relatively harmless. Discounted options were the Village Hall, the Surgery, the U5s, Hurdles Farm, Fontmell House, Springhead, and Springhead Farm. The Sutton Clump Mast, was also discounted.

Cllr Scott Walby explained that the Parish Council has asked that the previous application details and documents be uploaded to the Dorset Council Website [2/2017/1163/TEL](#).

The proposed location of the mast will appear like a candelabra on the landscape, whereas if it was nestled in amongst the hills, as are all the other masts between Shaftesbury and Blandford, it would be less visible.

Cllrs recognise that mobile communications are vital for the village as there are black spots in the locality. They will consider the application carefully and give it their full consideration when the application is forthcoming. Cllrs await discussions with Wessex Water on their opinion as well.

Cllr Scott Walby reminded residents that they could express their views by writing to the Clerk.

e) Land at Mill Street P/OUT/2023/00667 (Erection of 25 no. dwellinghouses with associated access, drainage infrastructure, LAP, public open space & landscaping outline application to determine access, layout & scale only)

Cllr Scott Walby explained that concerns were raised by the Tree Officer concerning ecological buffer zones must not be sited within individual private gardens. Veteran trees should be kept outside of private gardens with their roots also protected and outside of the domestic curtilage of private gardens. This has apparently not happened in the landscaping. Two substantial willow trees have been removed without planning permission. The Arboriculturists have replied by saying that they had done modifications to protect the trees.

The Tree Officer and the AONB have maintained their collective recommendation to refuse the application, contrary to some of the other statutory consultees who have raised no objection.

ADDENDUM – Post the PC Meeting on 19th September this application has been refused by Dorset Council.

f) Home Mead Retention of change of use from agricultural to a flexible commercial use to operate a small holiday camping park & siting of 4 no. shepherd huts.

Cllr Scott Walby explained that there are one or two shepherd's huts currently on the land. The Parish Council objected to the continuation of use and the retention of the shepherd's huts. The application has been refused; however, the applicant has six months to appeal that decision. The applicant has indicated to the case officer that they are going to appeal that decision within the six-month period.

The Chair thanked Cllr Scott Walby and proceeded to close the meeting to facilitate a 15-minute interlude to provide residents with the opportunity to ask questions.

7. Open meeting

This section of the meeting is not minuted but themes included concerns about: -

1. The continued support to be received by the Village Hall Committee from the PC towards the ongoing maintenance of the playground.
2. The application of a mobile phone mast, its impact on safety, perceived radiation risks, concerns for child health as well as the impact on the outstanding natural beauty of the village.
3. Proposed developments on land southwest of Spring Meadows and the impact this will have on removing the connection of the countryside with properties in that locality.
4. Message from Ann Hobbs has organised a coffee morning on Saturday the 21 October from 10 am to midday at the Village Hall. All are welcome.

Cllr Lister thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussions and stated that all the points raised will be considered by Cllrs in their deliberations.

8. Finance

To note 2023-24 budget, spend to date. This is within the anticipated forecast.

a) To approve the cashbook and bank reconciliation to 31st August 2023

The cashbook and bank reconciliation were considered. There is currently a balance of £8,011.45 in the saving account. There have been no outgoings from this account. The balance from the account has increased from £7,807.93. The increase in income was generated from a small amount of accrued interest and £180 from a fundraising raffle at the Fete in May.

The balance in the current account amounts to £2,079.12

Since May, the account was credited with £1,500 for the defibrillator, donations of £50 and a further £100 for the defibrillator; and £200 from the closure of the cinema. All debited requests were agreed from the previous meeting.

Cllrs resolved that the balances were favourable and correct.

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

b) To approve the payment schedule for September 2023

Payment of Salaries for months July, August and September £1,007.28

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

c) To approve the following accounts for payment to be paid via internet banking. Cllrs resolved to approve payments via internet banking.

i) Springhead £50.00

ii) Landworx £75.00

iii) Ann Lee travel expenses July August and reimbursement for copying of Deeds £151.56

iv) Survey Monkey subscription for £300 a year to gather survey data and residents opinions as required.

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

d) To consider a grant application for the maintenance of the Church Yard for £400

This was requested by Roger Thomas Treasurer at Fontmell Magna PCC

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

e) To purchase second defibrillator using generated funds for the Parish Cllr Scott

Cllr Scott indicated that she has been waiting to purchase the defibrillator and agree training dates. It is hoped that this will commence by late October. Cllr Scott encouraged residents to participate in the training at a cost of £10 a person. Training will take two to three hours. Costs will be covered if we can secure 20 participants. Cllr Scott appealed to everyone to come forward.

Proposed purchase of defibrillator

Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Roberts-Davies Unanimously agreed

f) To approve purchase of a new domain name from Go Daddy

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Unanimously agreed

g) To approve VISION ICT website charges £100 plus VAT

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

h) To approve annual website support £250 per annum

Proposed Cllr Lister Seconded by Cllr Scott Walby Unanimously agreed

9. Council Matters

a) **Role change proposals** as previously announced at the start of the meeting.

b) **BT Digital Voice switch-over** Cllr Scott acknowledged concerns expressed by residents relating to the switch over from analogue to digital transmission and being cut off from landlines and the subsequent consequence of losing internet connectivity. Cllr Scott advised that having spoken to BT all households will receive individual letters from their own personal suppliers. This will not affect the whole village. It is very much on an individual basis. Connectivity to the new system will be arranged by individual suppliers and not BT. Cllr Scott indicated that no one should

be left without access to a service. Ofcom have a responsibility to ensure that everyone is safely accommodated, especially vulnerable and elderly individuals as well as those experiencing poor signals. Age concern have a dedicated website and are supportive. Switch over will happen by December 2025. It is not going to happen tomorrow so there is no need for panic. Cllr Davies explained that mobile devices will work to connect to 999 in the event of an emergency from any supplier providing a signal is in the area. He explained that the PC was going to be looking to see where the signal strength or not was in the village as part of a balanced opinion on where a new mast might be positioned.

- c) **Highways update** Cllr Lister explained that following the rejection of the 20mph speed limit, Peter Mole has spoken with David Sidwick and Cllr Lister spoke with Mark Armstrong who is head of Highways for Dorset Police. From this conversation it is evident that Dorset Police didn't reject our application. Mark Armstrong stated that it is not policy for Dorset to reduce speeds to 20mph on a major route. Cllr Lister stated that she advised him vehemently that policies can be changed, especially as the road is dangerous, people are afraid to walk down it and that the speed needs reducing to accommodate these facts. He has agreed to work with the village to resolve the problem. He is going to look at a number of options for the road and will come back to the PC with proposals especially as the widening of the road at Spring Meadows has added to the dangers of a blind spot for people living further down in South Street as it is now so wide that some drivers are using it as a race track with one car recently clocked doing 90mph going out of the village.

Peter Mole outlined the problems in South Street: He explained the speed watch team are targeting specific areas where there have been near misses involving children. There are largely no pavements and driving in both directions is noticeably worse. The team have noticed that when they are setting up in the Mead measuring traffic coming from the South in the 40mph limit, just as children are leaving school traffic is significantly exceeding the limits. Once every 8 minutes, a vehicle exceeds more than 35mph. This is on the back of two accidents that has taken place on the A350 in the last 10 days. The Chief Constable was interviewed on radio and stated that he now supports our campaign to reduce the speed through Fontmell Magna to 20mph. This is a significant change of heart from a person in his position. Peter indicated that he would like to set up a small working group dedicated to road safety to make this village a safer place to live. He is asking for volunteers to join the work in the coming months.

Cllr Lister also indicated that the PC are also looking for people to join the planning committee to review the neighbourhood plan and a monitoring group for planning applications so we will be putting those two groups together as one Planning Committee. Cllr Lister encouraged people to approach herself, Cllr Scott Walby or the Clerk if they were interested.

- d) **School drop off**

Cllr Lister explained that people had been hopeful that by September the drop off area would be working. Unfortunately, it is not as simple as it might first appear. The school are doing their best but whenever you have children there are safeguarding considerations that bring operational challenges as the drop off area is not immediately outside the school and taxis and buses drop children off without parental presence and now the school must logistically move these children safely down from the carpark and through the back gate of the school.

The volume of children is high with up to 20 at a time. This is a big resource issue for a small school. They need one teacher at the front of the school to collect the children off the bus and there is no lighting which in the winter will prove problematic for safety reasons. Similarly, Dorset Council has not finished the path, despite their promises. This is hampered as the developer cannot hand over the car park until the path is resurfaced.

Equally the school office is in the wrong place so parents have to walk through the school to get to the office and safeguarding cannot permit this. Debbie Brown the headmistress has informed parents, but all these issues need to be resolved and this is going to take time.

Meanwhile, a designated car park has been set up behind the school accessible via Spring Meadows. This will eventually be a space where parents will be encouraged to use for dropping off their children to alleviate the pressure on the road outside the school and separate coaches, taxis and minibuses as well as reducing vehicles parking in the neighbouring streets.

e) Compton Abbas Airfield

Cllr Lister advised that concerns had been raised about an increased number of flights happening from the airfield. They have introduced a strict flying programme for all pilots for where they take off and land. If pilots do not adhere to the restrictions imposed they will not be allowed to fly out or into Compton Abbas. Pilots have to book – they are not allowed to fly ad hoc. They are trying to work out a way to make the roads safer. They are aware of traffic parking and congestion issues. They are looking for continued feedback accessed on their website. There is only one more Spitfire session. There is a fun day also planned in November and a fireworks evening with a barbeque.

f) To agree location of reframed map of the Parish

Cllr Scott asked for recommendations for the location of the historic map to be provided to her.

10. Date of next meeting November 21st 2023 at 6pm in the Village Hall

All items for inclusion on the agenda and all items to be listed under issues arising from the previous meetings must be received by the Clerk by 9.00am on 6 November 2023.

**Ann Lee
Clerk**