



Clerk David Green
Email: Clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

Fontmell Magna Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 16th September 2025 Fontmell Magna Village Hall 6.30pm

In attendance: Cllr Hannah Lister (Chair), Cllr Steven Drew, Cllr Tony Bailey, Cllr Jeremy Long, Cllr Sara Powell, Cllr Christine Scott, Cllr Jane Somper (Ward Councillor), Clerk David Green and 30 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests received.

3. Approve the minutes of the PC meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 1st July 2025 were unanimously approved.

4. Consider any matters arising from the May 2025 minutes

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, introduced the new Clerk David Green, and thanked Katie Cooper for her work as Clerk. All relevant items were covered in the minutes noted below.

5. Councillor Co-option

The Council unanimously approved the co-option of Katie Cooper as a new Councillor for Fontmell Magna.

6. Unitary Councillor Report

Cllr Somper noted the recent fallen tree had been dealt with swiftly and efficiently by all concerned including SSE.

The temporary re-opening of the C13 had been necessary because of this situation. Cllr Somper has enquired with the Senior Community Highways Officer what contingency plans were in place if such an incident re-occurred during the period of planned closure for the C13, starting in January 2026.

Cllr Somper requested that if residents know of possibly suspect or dangerous trees that these are reported now in order to reduce any problems at a later stage when the closure is in full effect.

7. Dorset Local Plan / Transport Plan consultation



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Cllr Somper reported that a very useful meeting with Cllr Sherry Jespersen and some 40 attendees from 15 ward parishes had taken place at Stourpaine on 11th September. Important technical questions in relation to the large villages affected by these proposals, namely Iwerne Minster and Fontmell Magna, were raised at this meeting. A key question is who actually owns the sites that have been proposed for development, and are landowners even aware that their sites have been included in possible plans.

It was noted at the 'drop in events' held in Blandford & Shaftesbury, some Dorset Council Officers present were not familiar with the issues in some localities.

Cllr Somper advised that objections to proposed sites must be based on material grounds for objection. These include:

- Flood risks
- Transport issues
- Road Safety concerns
- Heritage issues
- Environmental concerns including impact on wildlife
- Previous refusals

The issue of the proposed 'flexible settlement policy' is a matter of great concern -this appears to open the door to the removal of village boundaries and may allow for a 'free- for-all approach' to the development in open countryside adjoining villages.

The failure to designate a new town, which would have necessitated substantive infrastructure investment, is also a concern. It is clear that while there are proposals for huge number of new dwellings, some 33,000 in total, there are no published plans for improved infrastructure – schools, medical services etc.

There is also the question of who are these new dwellings actually for – there has been no explanation why these numbers are required - or precisely how many affordable homes will be included.

The Transport Policy 2026-2041 consultation is running alongside the Local Plan Options consultation. This is highly aspirational but short on details of how the substantive improvement to, for example, bus services, would be provided.

It is expected that there will be a flood of planning applications in the autumn of 2025 in anticipation of the review of the consultation next year; It is to be noted that Dorset no longer has a 5-year housing land supply.

Cllr Drew has drawn up a local response plan for Fontmell Magna. A team is working on answering the 43 Local Plan consultation questions and consideration will be given to how residents may be best encouraged to take part in the consultation. A leaflet drop may be considered.

8. Public Session



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A resident noted the importance of the Transport consultation and urged the Parish Council to give this urgent attention; Cllr Drew observed that a group response to this did not appear to be possible, although this was disputed.

9. Parish Council Survey

The Chair noted that Smaller Councils are now being consulted by the DAPTC concerning the future relationship with Dorset Council.

There are 7 sections to the survey, these include local democracy, services, working relations with Dorset Council, local planning and future prospects.

The Clerk advised that it is clear that 'devolution' is high on the agenda, with a focus on transferring the provision of services from the unitary council to the towns and parishes. This would not appear to be very practical or workable and there is the issue of costs being disproportionately passed onto local tax payers, given that town and parish precepts are uncapped. There is a conference on 30th October being held to discuss devolution proposals.

The Parish Council agreed to submit comments to the Clerk by the end of September 2025 and he will answer the survey on the basis of responses received.

10. Collyer's Brook – Review of Options

The Chair noted the Parish Council had been approached in November 2024 concerning the erosion of the wall at Collyers Brook. It should be noted that this is not Parish Council land and the PC has no legal responsibility in this situation.

It has been confirmed by the Environment Agency that a permit for this work is required as it is a main watercourse. The application forms for a permit are complex.

The grass verge alongside the Brook has continued to be cut right up to the edge despite advice not to do so.

In summary, the options for dealing with the issue are:

- Rebuilding the wall in stone
- Mitigating the flow using natural materials and planting the bank to improve soil structure
- Taking no action

it was stated by a resident that due to village fundraising, the contribution required from the Parish Council would be minimal.

The Chair advised that preferred option of the Environment Agency is a natural programme of using faggots and replanting. Dorset Wildlife Trust has also encouraged a similar approach. The Clerk noted that no advice from Dorset Councils Conservation Team had been received in relation to how to deal with the issue.



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Residents expressed the view that rebuilding of the wall was their preference and that there was a risk of invasive species growing further if left unattended. A resident offered to undertake the completion of necessary forms and submission of these to the Environment Agency. This suggestion was accepted by the Parish Council.

11. 20 Mph speed limit application

The Chair, confirmed by Cllr Somper, noted that this was still under consideration although it is behind around 14 other applications in the queue with Dorset Council.

12. Planning Review

Cllr Drew updated the meeting in relation to applications per the separate report.

13. Finances

Retrospective Payments approved:

Date	To whom	Description	Amount
01-Jul-2025	Clerk	Salary payment	£ 377.72
18-Jul-2025	Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£ 4.25
28-Jul-2025	Landworx	Grass Cutting	£ 100.00
28-Jul-2025	DM Payroll Service	Parish Council expenses	£ 72.00
28-Jul-2025	Clerk	Salary payment	£ 29.98
28-Jul-2025	HMRC	PAYE	£ 91.80
31-Jul-2025	Clerk	Salary payment	£ 469.60
12-Aug-2025	Fontmell Magna VH	Hall Hire	£ 56.25
12-Aug-2025	Landworx	Grass Cutting	£ 100.00
12-Aug-2025	Vision ICT	SSL website	£ 60.00
12-Aug-2025	Clerk	Reimburse IT costs	£ 75.00
18-Aug-2025	Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£ 4.25
28-Aug-2025	Clerk	Salary payment	£ 331.60

The Clerk confirmed the bank balances at 31 August 2025:

Current AC	£ 3,509.50
Deposit AC	£ 9,903.49
TOTAL	£ 13,412.99

A precept instalment of £ 6685 is expected at the end of September 2025. There is an amount of VAT from 2024/2025 which will be reclaimed after the end of the financial year April 2026 and thereafter any VAT incurred will be claimed annually.



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14. Website domain & gov.uk email

The Clerk has proposed that the Parish Council changes website provider. This will be considered in due course.

The Clerk advised that the PC must now adopt a 'gov.uk' email address because of the revision of Accounting Standards in 2025. The Council unanimously agreed that this should now take place.

15. Defibrillator update

Cllr Scott confirmed that the defibrillator is operational but it requires some emergency numbers to be displayed.

16. Manhole issues

Cllr Bailey advised that a previously reported noisy manhole issue had now been resolved. A resident reported another problem manhole near Middle Farmhouse. This is apparently a BT hole; Cllr Bailey offered to take up this issue with BT on behalf of the resident.

17. Footpath issues

Gill Darwell reported that most walked routes are accessible at present and thanked walkers for keeping paths clear. There are issues with a landowner keeping a 'bull in field' notice in place when there is actually no livestock in a field. The rule is that it is possible to walk around a field where there is an 18-month old bull, with cows and calves, but not through a field.

There is also an issue concerning an electric fence which has been installed across a field path where cows are present; it seems as though this action was taken because on one occasion dog waste had been left on a path, causing a cow to abort. Dorset Rangers have been advised concerning these issues but there is little action that can be taken.

18. Any other business

Cllr Bailey reported that there are poplar trees in Mill Street in poor condition. It seems as though these are scheduled to be cut down.

19. Next meeting date

This will be held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 6:30 pm in the Village Hall. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:00.

David Green
Clerk