

**WEST MOORS PARISH COUNCIL****MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

held on **WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2018** at St Anthony's Church Hall, Pinehurst Road,  
West Moors at 7.40pm.

**PRESENT:**

Cllr Mrs P Yeo - Chairman		
Cllr J Bartley	Cllr M Hawkes	Cllr P Holden
Cllr Mrs C Holmes	Cllr J Lewis	Cllr C Octon
Cllr Mrs J Octon	Cllr R Smith	Cllr K Wilkes

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mrs Judi Weedon – Clerk  
Mrs Amie Fawcett - Assistant to the Clerk  
East Dorset District Councillor A Clarke  
East Dorset District and Dorset County Councillor D Shortell  
PCSO James Marsh  
20 members of the public

Prior to the meeting Dr Colin Davidson, from the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, gave an interesting talk on the future of the NHS in Dorset with an integrated care system. He also provided information on the challenges faced by General Practice in West Moors. Dr Davidson answered questions from the audience.

## **1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Cllr Mrs Penny Yeo**

Another year has passed and I am again reporting to you on your Parish Council. I'm delighted to be able to tell you that we are, at last, up to strength with the co-option of three new councillors this year.

The chairmen of the various committees will be giving their reports so I am not going to go into details about everything we have been doing – just about the things that we are particularly pleased with. First of these is the Jean Ware award, given to a young person living in the village who is doing exceptionally well at a sport or in the Arts and who would benefit from financial support as they continue to train and participate. This year's winner is Charlotte Ayton, who has represented her school, her county and her region in the long jump, culminating in the English Schools Athletics Association finals. She is a member of Wimborne Athletic Club where she shared the 2017 Award for outstanding female athlete. Charlotte's event of course is not a winter one, so I cannot report on her progress since the award was made at Christmas time, except to say that she trains three or even four times a week regardless of the weather and while still in full time education. Previous winners of the Award have also continued with their training and their successes and the name of West Moors is now being seen far and wide as the winners carry our logo with them. I think we have been the 'first ever' sponsor for all our winners, and I hope they remember us as we remember them. I mention the winners of the Award but all the applicants have been truly impressive and we have had real difficulty in making our decision. We wish all of them the success they deserve in the future.

Financial help is also available to young people in apprenticeships or vocational training to meet some of the cost of tools and equipment essential to their course. Two awards have been made since the scheme started, so if you know of anyone who might benefit from our help in this area too, please do pass the word.

Thinking of the young people of our village, I want to mention our three schools and indeed the pupils who have move on to Upper Schools or Colleges outside the village. Young people get a bad press sometimes, but **our** young people really don't deserve to be included in that sort of comment. They attended our Commonwealth Flag Raising and

listened to the Commonwealth Affirmation; they took part in our Keep Britain Tidy litter pick; they designed the Christmas card for the Parish Council and took a very prominent role in the Carols on the Petwyn service where they read the lessons between the carols. They took part in the Remembrance Day Service when all the schools and many of the youth organisations laid wreaths. In fact they are not only an asset to our village but they are indeed our future and I am very proud of them. I thank their schoolteachers and their youth leaders for the work that they do.

You will, I'm sure, have heard about the forthcoming changes in Local Government when the County Council and the District Council both cease to exist and Dorset will become two Unitary councils. This will happen in twelve months' time and we will all be affected by it. We in West Moors will come under the new Dorset Council. We are busy right now working out what this will mean in practice, but I can assure you that the Parish Council will remain in place and will continue to try and help if you have problems.

I'm hoping you all know that this is the third time I have reported to you as Chairman of the Parish Council, and on the other occasions I have thanked our Clerk, Judi, and her Assistant Amie, for their work. I think it's time I told you what they actually do, because it's rather important.

Amie is Judi's Assistant and has been with us for three years now and has become the Minutes Clerk to the Planning Consultative Committee. She helps Judi with many administrative tasks including the cemetery and the Fryer Field and the events that take place there. She seems to have taken the Newsletter as one of her special projects, and I thank her for that. Another of her 'special projects' is the way she seems able to persuade the strangest people to give us things! Time and again I've gone into the office to find an 'experience' such as a day at Farmer Palmer's or afternoon tea at the Hilton that Amie has acquired for our Multi-Activity Day in July or some other village event. I'm not sure what she does or how she does it, but she is successful at getting people to do things they didn't necessarily want to do. Of course, this ability causes me some extra anxiety as I'm not sure, when the phone rings, if it will be just information or if it will be action that she wants from me!

Judi is the Clerk to the Parish Council. She takes the Minutes and gives advice at our meetings but she is very far from being a secretary or merely a pen-pusher. She is in fact the council's Proper Officer, which is a Statutory Office and her role is "to protect the council by providing competent professional advice on making lawful decisions and also to carry out any decisions the council may make". Judi is also the council's Responsible Finance Officer, which is another Statutory Office. Statutory Office means that the position is set out in law. Having said that, the Clerk - ie the Proper Officer and the Responsible Finance Officer - is an employee of the council and is accountable to the council. So it's a slightly complicated role of being required to correct the council and councillors individually if we are going in the wrong direction, but also of carrying out our instructions as decided in council meetings. Judi treads that line very well indeed, and I thank her wholeheartedly for the way she has of suggesting a better way of doing things and saving us from doing something unlawful. As the Responsible Finance Officer she has made sure that we are viable and able to face the future, whatever it may bring.

So that's my report for the past year. There were many successes and a few minor disappointments and one major concern, but overall I hope you think it has been a reasonably successful year. If you don't agree, I would remind you that there will be elections in May 2019 and we would be seriously pleased if some of you would consider being candidates and hopefully becoming Parish Councillors. There are big changes coming, with the formation of the Dorset Council. I do think these changes will be very interesting and it will be up to us, your council, and also up to you, our community, to try and ensure that the village plays its full part in helping to make a success of it all.

## a) Finance and General Purpose Committee Report – Chairman Cllr Pete Holden

The Finance & General Purposes Committee looks after the day to day expenses of the Parish Council, staff matters and council facilities. It also gets involved in other matters, which are not dealt with by the other committees.

The Parish Council receives money from the public by way of a precept, which is a proportion of the Council Tax levied on all households. Band D is used to indicate the average costs. This last financial year the precept was £120,578. On a Band D property this amounted to £39.30, which was a £2.13 increase on the previous year.

For the next financial year (2018 -2019) the Parish Council's precept is £125,275, which means the cost to a Band D household increased to £40.10 (= 80p increase for the year).

The Council also raises money through sales, hire charges and investments. All this goes toward funding the Fryer Playing field, 2 Children's Play Areas, the Multi Use Games Area, the Skate Park, the Allotments, the Pavilion, the Cemetery, the Petwyn, the Christmas Lights, 19 Public seats, 4 bus stop shelters, the Parish Office, the payroll for staff and contractors, plus the community grants that the Council award from time to time.

In respect of grants, the Parish Council made awards to the West Moors Memorial Hall, West Moors Youth Club, Oakhurst First School, the Royal British Legion and the Citizen Advise Bureau.

The Parish Council also supports individuals via the Jean Ware Award and the Apprentice Scheme. Charlotte Ayton was successful in her application for the Jean Ware Award. There were no successful applicants for the apprentice scheme.

The Parish Council also gratefully received grants from other bodies in order to completely refurbish the Fryer Field play area. A huge thank you to East Dorset District Council, Sturts Farm and Tesco's "Bags of Help" scheme for their very generous grants of £50,000, £100 and £2,000 respectively.

The Parish Council invests £100,000 in the CCLA (churches, charities and local authorities), which manages a portfolio of properties. Due to continued strong performance, this last financial year saw the Council's investment return dividends of £4,818 (previous year £4,203.51).

Income from the Fryer field and associated bookings amounted to £16,064. The sale of kitchen caddy bags and dog poo bags realised £4,006 and £322 respectively. The income from the cemetery was £18,990.

At the end of the financial year there was a surplus on the budget of nearly £25,000. This was due to income surplus of around £13,000 mainly derived from extra sporting activities. There were also a number of underspends.

I can confirm that the internal and external auditors have expressed their satisfaction with the books, which reflects the continued level of excellent work by the Parish Clerk, Judi Weedon, who as the Responsible Finance Officer carries great responsibility. Many thanks go to all the staff for their great work and valuable support and, also, thanks to all the other Councillors for keeping West Moors Parish Council on a healthy financial footing.

**b) Planning Consultative Committee Report – Chairman Cllr John Bartley**

Hi, I am John Bartley and the chairman of the Parish Council Planning Committee.

It is important to understand that the Parish Council acts only in an advisory role to East Dorset District Council, who make the decisions. The process now is that a bright yellow planning notice will be posted on a telegraph pole, or similar, adjacent to the property concerned. Adjoining properties may be advised in writing, but this is not guaranteed. We, the Parish Council, will get a notification of every application and you are very welcome to attend our meeting to make your own representations.

Nowadays the plans and associated paperwork are all held on the District Council web site. (Dorsetforyou- click on East Dorset, then Planning). You will need the application number, or the address to access these. Unfortunately, we no longer get a hard copy to examine in detail.

Following our meeting we submit our comments, but as I say, the actual decision is with East Dorset. If you feel strongly about an issue my advice is to ask for the matter to go to the Planning Committee, otherwise the District Planning Officer may make the decision alone. Also try to attend the actual East Dorset Planning Committee meeting where you will get a chance to make your own representations.

Now for the statistics. Last year the Parish Council considered 62 applications, which coincidentally was the same number as the previous year. We lodged an objection in 10 cases compared with 8 the previous year. Of the 10 objections- EDDC agreed with us in 5 cases, disagreed in 2 cases and 3 applications are still in process. It should be noted that occasionally an EDDC decision is taken to appeal and on a couple of occasions in the past twelve months they have been over ruled by the Planning Inspectorate.

The recent Government emphasis on providing new homes is bound to have a bearing on future planning decisions but hopefully we can retain the character of West Moors.

We also get notified on tree matters. In fact, we have just had a tree safety inspection which unfortunately has condemned some oak trees on Fryer Field, adjacent to the playground, as being unsafe. Being so near the play area sadly these will be felled shortly.

Remember the Parish Office in Parkway is there to help, so please call in if you wish to discuss a planning matter.

**c) Environment Committee Report – Chairman Cllr Mike Hawkes**

The Environment Committee is concerned with the Village environment as a whole including all the assets owned by the Parish Council for which it has the responsibility for upkeep and maintenance.

There are also four specific areas owned or administered by the Parish Council for the Environment Committee to oversee, these are the Petwyn (our village green), the Cemetery, Fryer Field and the Allotments at Gullivers Farm.

**Petwyn**

The decorative Christmas lights in the trees on the Petwyn were, again, a great success, with additional lights being added to those installed in the previous year. The lights and decorations provided a great backdrop for the annual Village Christmas Carol Evening.

Remembrance Day was well attended last November and the War Memorial has now become a listed Monument.

Commonwealth Day was also celebrated on March 12th this year with a flag raising event.

The upkeep of the Petwyn remains of a high standard but unfortunately there was some damage caused by lorries mounting parts of the grass verge, this has now been repaired and blocks have been installed to prevent recurrence.

### **Fryer Field**

The annual football tournament organised by Grange Football Club was again a great success.

A Multi Activity Day (M.A.D) was organised by the Parish Council and proved to be a great success, many thanks go to Council Staff, Volunteers and Councillors for the organising and running of this Village event. A similar event is being organised for this year and volunteers would be very welcome, if you are interested in helping out the please contact Amie at the Parish Office.

The new children's play area at the Fryer Field was completed last year and has been well received by the local community.

The floodlights at the Multi Use Games Area(MUGA) have now been replaced with state of the art LED low energy units, this has drastically reduced running costs as well as lowering the carbon footprint for the facility.

The tennis courts have been cleaned and white lines repainted.

A Task and Finish Group has been formed, initially of Councillors, to develop strategies for achieving the implementation of the Parish Councils 5 Year Plan for improving the Fryer Field and its facilities.

The land on which the MUGA, tennis courts and skatepark are located is currently in the process of being transferred from East Dorset District Council (EDDC) ownership to that of West Moors Parish Council (WMPC)

A tree survey carried out earlier this year on behalf of the Parish Council has identified several trees requiring work. Details of the work to be done can be obtained from the Parish Office.

### **Cemetery**

The Cemetery gate continues to be monitored and appears to be stable at present, although it still leans slightly.

The Badger Set is still present in the Cemetery but there have been no recent reports of damage due to their activities

A Working Party has been set up and is in the process of researching future utilisation and use of Cemetery space. The Working Party along with the Parish Clerk met with a representative of The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) in order to gain a professional appraisal of the Cemetery.

### **Allotments**

The allotments have proved to be a great success. The Parish Council liaises with the Allotment Holders Association through Cllr Rob Smith who gave us the following report:

“As Winter now turns into Spring and the days lengthen, I see once more the enthusiasm of our plot holders to get ready for the new season ahead, with the weather as it has been, more hard work is to come.

Over the last year it has given me much pleasure to see and meet some interesting people.

We as Council have been very surprised at what a big difference there is to when we started with just a corner of a field and also to see how well plants, etc, have been grown and to hear how pleased plot holders are.

Let's hope this year is as good and may be better than last”

### **General**

Two new bus shelters have been erected in Station Road along with a number of raised kerbs at existing bus stops

A Memorial Bench Policy has been introduced by the Parish Council, details of the policy can be obtained at the Parish Office

The Parish Council have requested 'slow down' signage to be painted on the road approaching West Moors from Three Legged Cross.

A railway information board has been installed outside Castleman Court in Station Road. The board details the early history of the railway in West Moors. Thanks to resident Eddie Prowse for his work on this project.

Another successful Village litter pick was carried out in March, they collected less material than last years effort, hopefully this is an indication that people are becoming more litter conscious.

It just remains for me to thank my fellow Councillors for all the voluntary work that they undertake to keep West Moors such a pleasant place to live. If you feel that you can help just have a word with Judi or Amie in the Parish Office.

**3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

a) A member of public asked if the Parish Council would like the Community Speed watch to run a session in Station Road in regard to speeding vehicles entering the village from Three Cross.

b) A resident asked who had placed the #Loveyourverge signs in the village. It was explained that this is a DCC initiative.

c) A member of the public asked a question about Local Government Reform and why Christchurch will now not be part of East Dorset. It was explained that Christchurch will be joining a unitary authority with Bournemouth and Poole and the rest of Dorset will be forming another unitary authority. It was noted that Christchurch Borough Council are taking the matter to a judicial review.

e) A member asked if anything could be done about cars parking on double yellow lines in Park Way, It was explained that parking matters are enforced by County Council and not the police. Parking enforcement officers are seen in West Moors regularly.

The meeting was closed at 8.23pm

SIGNED ..... DATE .....  
Chairman