

WEST MOORS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held on **TUESDAY 5th MARCH 2019** at St Anthony's Church Hall, Pinehurst Road,
West Moors at 7pm.

PRESENT: Cllr M Hawkes - Chairman
Cllr P Holden Cllr C Octon Cllr R Smith
Cllr P Warn Cllr Mrs P Yeo

OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs Amie Fawcett - Assistant to the Clerk
Chairman of East Dorset District Council Cllr Toni Coombes
East Dorset District Councillor A Clarke and Mrs Clarke
East Dorset District and Dorset County Councillor D Shortell
Dorset County Councillor Mike Dyer
20 members of the public

Prior to the meeting Simon Meers (Senior CHC Commissioning Manager for "NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group") and Eryl Balazs ("Commissioning Manager, over 65s & Carers" for Dorset County Council), spoke about 'The future of Domiciliary Care in Dorset and how support packages are changing to better meet needs'

1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Cllr M Hawkes

"Good evening everyone, I am Councillor Mike Hawkes and I am the current chairman of West Moors Parish Council. On behalf of WMPC I would like to welcome you all to our Annual Parish meeting. Holding an annual meeting presents quite a few positive opportunities.

An opportunity for you the residents to meet your parish councillors face to face. The opportunity for you to ask questions and get any queries you may have about the council and it's business, answered.

It also gives us the opportunity to inform you of what we have been doing as a Council along with what activities and events that have taken place over this last year.

This will be covered by presentations by Council committee Chairman a little later. I would now like to introduce our guest speakers. Simon Meers and Eryl Balaz.

This year's parish meeting is being held earlier this year, approximately 6 weeks earlier. This is because of upcoming elections. There is a period of time before the elections where councils are not allowed to engage with residents through meetings such as this. Speaking of upcoming elections, they will be different this year due to the LGR (Local Government Reform). Things are changing. To explain these changes, I would like to invite East Dorset District Councillor Alex Clarke to give you an overview of what LGR in Dorset is all about."

Cllr Alex Clarke gave a brief overview of what The New Dorset Council (LGR) is about and why it is being formed. Due to the tightening of austerity and increase of demands the joining of Councils and tax harmonisation should result in millions being saved and generated whilst maintaining frontline services.

Cllr Mike Hawkes returns

"In the past year we have had 4 parish councillors resign all for different personal reasons. By way of tribute I would like to say a few words about of each of them.

Jim Lewis

Jim had served previously as a parish Cllr and was in his fourth year of this term before leaving in 2018. Jim served and contributed on a number of committees. He was an asset

to the Council due to his business knowledge, particularly in financial matters where he paid close attention to detail basically keeping us all in check!

Carol Holmes

Carol has served several times as a parish councillor and also as Chairman. Carol was in her fourth year of term before leaving in 2018. She had served on a number of committees and working groups, always keen to get involved.

Carol could be described as one of our most passionate councillors and was quite a driving force in getting things done.

Two good examples that spring to mind are the refurbishment of the Multi Use Games Area and the renewal of the Fryer Field Children's Play Area. Both located at Fryer Field Recreation ground. Carol played a major role in getting them done.

Jayne Lovegrove

Jayne had served as a parish councillor for eight years before her resignation in December 2018. Jayne served and contributed on a number of committees and was noted for her chairmanship abilities, always being well researched and prepared.

Jayne also served as the PC's Rep at West Moors Youth Club and has been instrumental in organising a number of village events. Such as The Christmas Carol Concert event, the annual litter pick in the village, which is incidentally being held this Saturday.

Jayne also instigated the Apprentice Vocational Training Grant which was adopted by the PC. I think it is also worth mentioning that Jayne was nominated this year for the East Dorset Community Chairman's Award under the category of 'Adult Volunteer of the Year.'

John Bartley

John had served as a parish councillor for ten years before resigning in February this year. John served and contributed to a number of committees. His most notable achievements in his time was his role in the purchase of the Petwyn, the village green, the purchase of the current parish office and the investments he encouraged the parish council to make which continue to thrive.

Pete Holden

Pete joined the parish council twelve years ago and has served as chairman of the council as well as chairman of various committees in that time.

In November 2009 he became chairman of the Finance and General-Purpose committee and was instrumental, working with the parish clerk, Judi, in improving the parish council's budgeting process which led to the council being put on more of a firm and secure financial footing. It has also enabled a build-up of contingency reserves.

I asked Pete what notable achievements working alongside others, he had been involved in. The first he mentioned was saving the village library from the threatened closure, not just on one occasion but twice.

Next was establishing the parish council's right to introduce new byelaws, apparently this established national precedent for all other Councils in this country.

As footpath liaison officer for the PC, Pete played a key role in settling a footpath dispute that could have led to a major village incident!

Finally, Pete takes great pride in being involved with the working group that acquired and set up the village allotments which have been a great success.

I think it is fair to say that Pete's knowledge of the village, its geography and history is second to none and he will be missed.

Jean Ware Legacy Award

The Jean Ware Legacy Award is an annual award in the form of a trophy and a cash grant of £1,000

The purpose of the award is to recognise and honour the outstanding performance and achievement of a young person from West Moors who excel in their chosen field.

This year's recipient was Daniel Neild who is pursuing a career in football. Daniel has played for his school and for the County school squad. He has also played for Wimborne Town FC in their junior team.

He has recently had successful trials with Yeovil town FC and has been offered a contract.

Apprentice Vocational Training Grant

Financial help is available to young people in apprenticeships or vocational training to help meet some of the cost of tools and essential equipment to their course.

Three awards have been made since June last year. If you know of anyone who is a resident of the village and might benefit from our help, please pass on the word. Details can be obtained from the parish office.

Commonwealth Day

A Commonwealth Day celebration is to be held on Monday 11th March at 9.45am at The Petwyn. Children from our local schools will be attending and 2 Councillors will be reading an affirmation and message from the Secretary General. If you are available, we would encourage you to come along.

I would like to introduce the first of our Committee reports and so I will hand over to Councillor Mrs Penny Yeo Chairman of the Finance and Planning committee. Penny is wearing two hats tonight.”

2 COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Finance and General Purpose Committee Report – Chairman Cllr Mrs P Yeo

“This committee currently has seven members and has two main functions as you will have guessed from the title. It oversees the council’s finances and it ensures that all the council’s policies and procedures are up to date, in order to ensure efficient, effective and lawful management of the parish council. Since October 2017 it has also had responsibility for the council’s employed staff.

I am pleased to be able to confirm that the parish council is solvent with reserves which conform to the legal requirements and with earmarked funds which should assist us with our future plans. These earmarked funds include monies for repairing or replacing such things as the Christmas decorations and equipment in the two play areas, decoration and maintenance of the parish office, and several other possible future expenses. As you will appreciate from your own lives and budgeting, it is necessary to have some savings to cover the expenses when things start to wear out.

We get some of our money from the precept which is another name for part of your council tax. The precept has been increased this year to £136,673, which results in a Band D rate of £44.23 a year or just under £3.69p a month. We also get income from fees for use of the football pitches, MUGA and pavilion, which this year totalled £11,897, fees for the cemetery of £11,238, sales of kitchen caddy bags and dog poo bags £4,642 and interest from monies we have invested in the CCLA (Churches, Charities and Local Authorities) fund which to February of this year has paid us £3,432.

A lot of our income goes out to pay for things such as the upkeep of the play areas, cemetery and football pitches etc, which are the responsibility of the Environment Committee so I won’t go into details which that report will tell you. However, we also make grants to various organisations and people within the village. East Dorset Citizens Advice Bureau, East Dorset Environment Partnership, the Poppy Appeal, West Moors Memorial Hall have all be awarded grants this year to assist them with their work for the village. The West Moors Youth Club continues to support about 45 of our young people each week and we make a grant of £3,300 each year towards the club and its facilities and £10,000 towards the salary of the youth leader who is no longer funded by the county council. As the Chairman has already told you, the Jean Ware award was this year made to footballer Daniel Neild, and three Apprentice Grants have been made to Liam Griffin, Rebecca Watts and Zoe Knight. We wish all four of our young villagers every success with their futures and hope that they will remember us and let us know how they get on.

The Environment Committee report will tell us, but as it is money coming in to the council, I also am happy to let you know that we have received an award ourselves, £5,774 from the National Lottery “Awards for All” fund so that we can afford to set up a proper consultation on the future of the skatepark.

Your parish council – that’s us – is audited each year by internal and external auditors. They look not only at the accounts but also check that we run the bureaucracy and administration of the council properly and in accordance with all the laws and regulations. I’m very pleased to be able to confirm that both sets of auditors have expressed their satisfaction with our records and procedures, which reflects the continued excellent work of our Parish Clerk Judi Weedon. The management of the Parish Council remains professional and competent and great thanks go to our staff and, in particular, to Judi our Clerk and RFO for her expertise, help and support throughout the year. In all that the Parish Council does, or plans to do, every consideration at every stage is given to ensuring value for money, sound and open governance, and providing facilities that meet the needs and aspirations of West Moors residents.

The Chairman has mentioned Local Government Reform and I can confirm that we here in West Moors have been working to be as prepared as possible for this event. The council is a member of the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils and councillors attend both the Eastern Area meetings and the county-wide Towns and Larger Parishes meetings, so we have not been planning in a vacuum but have been able to talk over both the good and the worrying aspects of the forthcoming change. We have also spoken with clerks and councillors in Wiltshire, who went through this process about ten years ago. We don’t know just what responsibilities we will be allowed to take on, or indeed what may be imposed upon us, but whatever happens we have been putting funds aside over the last three years and, while not complacent at all, we do think that our residents should not notice the changes and that we will be able to deliver the services you are accustomed to.”

b) Planning Consultative Committee Report – Chairman Cllr Mrs P Yeo

“This is the report of the Planning Consultative Committee, and I became Chairman halfway through the year on the resignation of the councillor who previously held the position. Those of you who have been to these Annual Public Meetings in previous years will have a pretty good idea of what I am about to say – only the figures have changed and, interestingly, the type of application has hardly changed at all. By the nature of the village, this is almost bound to be the case – the number of houses remains much the same, so the applications are for alterations to the property rather than for a number of new properties.

There are eight members on this committee which, being Consultative, does not make a decision but can and does send comments to the District Council. The Committee looks in detail at every application. We are sent the Agenda by email which has a link to the documents which have been lodged with EDDC. This is every document relevant to the application and includes the plans, site layout and even details on the colour of the bricks and roof tiles. The East Dorset Planning Portal is an open site that any of you can look at – all the information we get, you can see also. Whether you live next door, in the next street or are on holiday in Australia you can look at the website and see what’s going on. Committee members also go and see the actual property and try and work out how the changes might look, although only from the street and we don’t go onto the property. Checking the neighbourhood is important – I once looked at plans and thought the changes were far too much and it would look awful, and then I went to see it and actually they were using their neighbour’s plans, they were the last property in the street to make the changes and the whole application was a brilliant idea, not something we should advise against at all. I know my colleagues check the properties because we tend to make some up-to-date comment when in the meeting.

Now for some statistics. Since the Annual Parish Meeting in April 2018 the committee has looked at 34 applications which is just over half the number in the previous year. We had no objection to 30 of these applications but objected to four of them. One application was withdrawn after it had been considered by us, although it was not one of the four we had objected to. Three of these applications have not yet been decided by East Dorset District Council, so they have made decisions on a total of 30 since our last

Annual meeting. Of the four on which we raised objections, they permitted three and refused one, so they agreed with us once; of the 29 on which we raised no objections, EDDC permitted 27 and refused two. Three of the EDDC decisions have been appealed this year; one has been dismissed and the other two appeals, which are for the same property, have yet to be heard.

Only one Tree Preservation Order has been made this year, but there have been several orders granted for tree works.

I find the meetings of the Planning Consultative Committee very interesting and I do invite you to come and join us. The dates are on the website and notice boards, the time is 7.00pm on a Thursday (but not every Thursday) and the place is the Pavilion on Fryer Field, which you can get to either by walking down the side path which comes out at the Play Area or by driving to the car park in Bond Avenue. Our next meeting is the day after tomorrow, Thursday, 5th March when we will be considering three applications. If you do come you will see Amie who is the Assistant to the Parish Clerk and who is responsible for the administration of this committee. It is Amie who ensures that we receive all the necessary paperwork and make our decisions on time and in the correct form, and I thank her for all her work for us.”

“Finally, Cllr Chris Octon who is vice chairman of the Environment committee”

c) Environment Committee Report – Chairman Cllr Mike Hawkes read by Cllr C Octon

“The Environment Committee is concerned with the Village environment as a whole including the assets owned by the Parish Council. These include almost all the seats, bus-stops, footpaths, fences and stiles. In addition Our key and most visible assets, the Petwyn our village green, Fryer Field, the Cemetery, and the Allotments at Gullivers Farm.

Petwyn

As a lasting commemoration of the ending of the First World War we bought two ‘Lest We Forget’ benches from the Poppy Appeal organisation. A brief service of dedication was held in late October, in readiness for Remembrance Day.

We again arranged for the cleaning and repair of the War Memorial to ensure that those who come to our very well-attended Service of Remembrance could see that we take a pride in our community and maintaining our monuments in good condition

For Christmas, we were able to add to the lights in the trees on the Petwyn, we hope you all enjoyed seeing them over the festive period.

Fryer Field

This is our sports area, with two full-size and one youth-size pitch and, as many of you will know, it is in constant use throughout the season by adults and younger children. Several teams use it, and it is “home” to Grange Football Club who once again ran their annual football tournament in June.

Also in constant use throughout the season is our Multi-Use Games Area where sports people of all ages can be seen, in all weathers, training and enjoying themselves on our floodlit pitch. Alongside the Multi-Use Games Area are two tennis courts, which are available for anyone to use free of charge. This year we have put up a basketball hoop between the courts on the fence line, at the request of one of our younger residents.

Close to the tennis courts is the skate park. This has been one of our major assets for many years and is in constant use. It underwent some repair and maintenance last October, and we have recently received a Grant from the National Lottery to help us start a consultation on whether we should improve this skate park, and if so, how. This consultation will take place later this year and you will definitely hear all about it then, but you have been warned that it will happen, so please spread the word – please let us have your thoughts on this topic. Just behind the skatepark is the BMX track. This has had a varied history, in fact almost ceasing to exist until earlier this year when a group of enthusiasts took it over and are repairing and improving it to bring it back to a modern, safe and usable standard. We thank Mr Cadman and Mr Daly for their time and effort

which is being given free of charge. The parish council are partially funding the infrastructure.

The children's play areas at Oakhurst School and on Fryer Field were both completely renovated within recent years and thankfully require only occasional maintenance. We have been given two picnic benches which have been placed close to the Fryer Field play area, and we thank our anonymous donor for their generosity.

Multi-Activity Day. This was organised by the parish council in July last year, and was an even greater success than the previous year. We thank all our volunteers who gave time and support on the day and during the weeks leading up to it. Over 1,000 people attended at some time during that day and we were able to donate to the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance Service.

This year there will be a similar event, but renamed "WESTIVAL" to be held on 13th July from 12.00 Noon to 4.00 pm. There will be live music all day and a wider array of refreshments and of activities. If you are interested in helping, in running a stall or just in buying raffle tickets, please contact Amie in the parish office. The raffle prizes are really special this year and I do recommend them to you.

Cemetery

The cemetery has been part of the village for very many years and we continue to improve it each year. We are concerned about future space and are already beginning to consider what to do when the cemetery is full, which may be in about 20 years. We are considering all options on this topic.

One problem, as you may know, is that there is a badger sett in the far corner of the Cemetery. This takes up land and unfortunately the badgers have caused some damage since last year. We have been in consultation with a specialist company but have only recently received their report on the full extent of the badger activity and the options available to resolve the problem. The committee will be considering this report in forthcoming meetings. If we can persuade the badgers to leave, the extra land will still take several years before it can be used for burials, but it will at least be available to us, increasing the time scale I mentioned by about 4 or 5 years.

Allotments

The allotments have proved to be a great success and we have leased 39 plots of varying sizes, and still have a waiting list of 37 keen gardeners looking forward to their chance to make use of the excellent organic soil. We have recently been able to provide six raised beds, three of which are already occupied. The Allotment Holders have their own Association with a committee and a Facebook page.

General

This Saturday, 9th March, there will be a Keep Britain Tidy Litter Pick here in the village. Why not come and join us, starting at 10.30 outside the Co-op, finish by 12.00 or earlier if you can't stay that long. Gloves, tabards and litter-picking sticks will be provided. Unfortunately we are not allowed onto the main road which is where most of the rubbish seems to be, but we still find a large amount of litter just going around the streets and grass areas.

On this subject we thank Mr Malcolm Adams and Martin Rowley who carry out their own litter picks on a regular basis and monitor areas of concern within the village, sometimes telling Judi and Amie in the office when there are problems. We are aware that other people also litter pick or look after our village in different ways and we sincerely thank you all.. If you do find areas within the village that need fixing, potholes in roads or footpaths for instance, or overhanging brambles or unpleasant graffiti, do please call the office where Judi or Amie will be happy to arrange for it to be dealt with. Thank you. "

2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- a) A member of the public commended then Christmas Tree lights at the Petwyn and congratulated the person responsible for arranging this.
- b) The Chairman Cllr Mike Hawkes was also commended on his chairmanship thus far and for this evening.
- c) A member of public expressed their disappointment in Dorset County Council not encouraging communication by telephone, only email
- d) Cllr Pete Holden suggested the next parish council quarterly newsletter to include any contact details for Dorset Waste Partnership and/or Dorset County Council.

The meeting was closed at 8.40pm

SIGNED DATE
Chairman