**SYMONDSBURY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of Symondsbury Parish Council held on Thursday 11 January 2024 at 7pm at Symondsbury School, Symondsbury

**0001: To receive and approve apologies** **for absence:**  **PRESENT:** Cllrs – S Ralph, P Colfox, V Kavanagh and A Streatfeild. In attendance: Natalie Bealing, Clerk, and one member of the public. Cllrs T Cox, P Hartmann and S Evans sent their apologies.

**Democratic Half Hour during which members of the public are invited to raise matters of interest and Information from DC Councillors and Dorset Police:**

Democratic Half Hour: Mr Selwyn Holmes explained that he was there to hear a couple of the agenda items. He also asked whether the fuller minutes were now being produced. The Clerk confirmed that they are now being posted to the website with the abridged version going on noticeboards.

Mr Holmes went on to highlight a second point that was on tonight’s agenda regarding the lack of facilities at Eype Mouth. He felt that there would be little support for any new facilities due to a number of factors, including light pollution. Cllr Ralph explained that the item would be moved to the February meeting due to Cllr Hartmann not being present (who had a related action).

The police report was noted: On 26December, there was an alarm activation at Symondsbury school. This turned out to be a fire alarm and was all in order.

For information, there were several Road Traffic Collisions over the Christmas period. I would like to take this opportunity to advise people to be careful on the road and consider planning journey’s ahead of time, particularly around the severe weather we have been having. The more common factors that cause collisions are often easy fixes drivers can take. Firstly, adjust your driving to the conditions.  When the road and weather are clear and dry, you should allow a 2 second gap between you and the driver in front, this should double to 4 seconds, when conditions are wet, or increase to 10 seconds in ice and snow (you can check the highway code for further details on braking distances). Many people fail to adjust to conditions and do not allow adequate stopping distances. Secondly, consider road positioning. Many people will often take a “racing line” around a corner, cutting over the white line. This can often put you in the way of oncoming traffic and mean taking evasive action (especially if you come across a large vehicle).  In lanes with no road markings, it becomes even more important to consider positioning. Finally, speed. Many people do not adjust their speed for the conditions. Simply remembering to slow adequately before a corner will allow better reaction time, if you come across oncoming traffic, or even other road users, such as horse riders, or cyclists. Keeping a lower speed will also mean better traction when driving through larger puddles/floods, or when driving over mud/grit washed from the fields and verges.

I do not mention this to teach anyone to suck eggs, but usually the cause to collisions are very simple errors that can be avoided.  Please be safe on the roads.

**0002 Disclosures of Interests and Dispensations:** To **receive** disclosures of personal and prejudicial interest from Councillors and employees on matters to be considered at the meeting**:**  None declared.

**0003: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023**: The minutes were approved.

**0004: To** **resolve** payments and receipts for December 2023: a) Clerk’s salary, b) CPRE. **To** **update** on online banking: Current account £3,108.86; Savings £26,528.06. The Council agreed to increase the payment to CPRE to £60 to support tree and hedgerow surveying, laying and planting. Proposed by Cllr Streatfeild, seconded by Cllr Kavanagh.

A request had come in from Life Education, a charity supplying lessons into Primary Schools, for £155 to cover the shortfall for a session to be delivered at Symondsbury School. The request was approved by Cllr Streatfeild and seconded by Cllr Colfox on the understanding that the Clerk would follow up with the Head, Emma Roberts, to confirm that this would be value for money.

A further request for funding had come in, for new display boards for St John The Baptist Church, to enable Symondsbury schoolchildren to display some of their work. The cost of £235 was approved by Cllr Streatfeild and seconded by Cllr Kavanagh.

**0005:** **Planning matters:**

There were no planning applications submitted this month.

Tuckers Cottage was discussed briefly as there appeared to be ongoing work. Cllr Hartmann would be asked to prepare an email to Dorset Planning to understand the latest position.

**0006:** **Final budget review and Precept for 2024**:

The Council agreed to keep the 24/25 Precept figure at £14,910. Approved by Cllr Streatfeild, seconded by Cllr Kavanagh.

**0007: ‘Home watch’/emergency communications**

The Council discussed making better use of the village WhatsApp groups to communicate issues of a suspicious nature as well as emergencies. The Clerk would prepare an article for the ECV magazine.

**0008: Sandbags**

Cllr Streatfeild explained that the Council had previously discussed storing sandbags but long term storage was not viable due to the bags degrading over time. As part of the Resilience Plan, the Council discussed keeping a small stock of empty bags at the New Inn or collecting some full ones at the start of bad weather for delivery to vulnerable parishioners.

**0009: Eype Mouth facilities**

This item was deferred to next month.

**0010: Reports from Lead Councillors**

Local Reports

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| 1. **Footpaths SR** | 1. **Resilience AS** | 1. **DAPTC PH** |
| 1. **BLAP Steering Group AS** | 1. **BLAP Parish Liaison NDB** | 1. **Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan – JCC PH** |
| 1. **Tree Officer/Ancient Monuments SR** | 1. **Community Governance Review PH** | 1. **Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan – Steering Group PH** |
| 1. **Symene CLT AS** | 1. **Symene Voice NDB/VH** | 1. **Coastal Matters TC** |
| 1. **Allotments TC** | 1. **Lengthsman Link SR** | 1. **Climate and Waterways SE** |
| 1. **Foundry Lea PH/AS** |  |  |

a} Cllr Ralph reported that there had been little progress on the new footpath/cycleway at Chideock since the last meeting. The Clerk updated the Council on the support that the Council-led Public right of way applications around West Cliff are getting.

b) Cllr Streatfeild confirmed that, as a result of an email question about evacuation routes through Wes Cliff, that Highlands End could be used as an emergency escape route.

k) Cllr Streatfeild reminded the Council that we will still plan to produce a short newsletter to welcome new parishioners to Symondsbury. Still awaiting definitive addresses for the boundary changes.

**0011: Items for future meetings**: Eype Mouth

**0010: To confirm date of next meeting** Thursday 8 February 2024, Symondsbury School, Symondsbury

Meeting finished at 8.15pm.