SYMONDSBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2026 – 7.00pm; meeting held in Symondsbury School, Symondsbury.

Present: Cllrs S. Evans (Chair), S. Ralph, P. Hartmann, B Hamblett, R. Elwes & P. Colfox (quorate).

Also Present: Cllr Paddy Mooney, Dorset Council, Bridport Ward.

In Attendance: Danielle Gilpin (Interim Clerk)

There were no members of the public present

7.00pm	**The Chair welcomed all in attendance and outlined Fire Safety precautions.**
	Public Forum i) No Police report received. ii) No P3 (footpath) report received. iii) a) Cllr Mooney, Bridport Ward Councillor, was not yet present. iv) There were no members of the public present. **The Chair closed Public Forum session at 7.05pm.**
7.05pm	**Meeting Commences**
26/001 i)	**To note members of the Parish Council in attendance:** As listed above.
26/001 ii)	**To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence received: (LGA 1972 s.85(1))** None.
26/001 iii)	**To note members not present and to receive any other apologies for absence:** None.
26/002	**Declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct:** There were no declarations of interest at this time. Noted that this did not preclude declarations of interest being made at any point in the meeting that they became apparent.
26/003	**To consider any matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:** None.
26/004	**To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of Symondsbury Parish Council held on 9th July 2026:** Resolved to approve.

Initial:

26/005	**Planning matters to be considered:** **a) i) To consider planning applications received prior to agenda publication:** 2 planning applications (P/HOU/2026/03606 and P/HOU/2026/04037) were considered and responded to during the Symondsbury Parish Council summer closure, 1 of these was supported and 1 of these had no objections raised. Cllr Colfox advised that he believed that he was on the Planning Committee. Clerk to check the minutes of the ACM and confirm. **a) ii) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication as per supplementary agenda circulated to all members:** P/HOU/2026/04792 received 9th September 2026. Resolved to discuss via email and issue a report following these discussions. **b) Determinations/Decisions advised by LPA:** None advised. **c) Tree Matters:** None advised. **d) Appeals lodged / in progress:** Tuckers Cottage is to be fully demolished / put back to the previous state. Whilst there are no further planning appeals, a legal appeal is still a possibility. **e) Planning correspondence:** A meeting was requested by Cllr Hartmann with Bridport to review the responses to 9 questions by the Examiner following the initial response through Dorset Council. He reminded the meeting that the review was light which did not require public consultation. The JCC met and reviewed the responses to the questions and a letter was prepared during the meeting which was forwarded to Dorset council and the Examiner separately. The updated Neighbourhood Plan should be in place by the end of the year. This is important as the current Dorset Local Plan is in its early stages of consultation and will not be available until late 2029. The Neighbourhood plan should take precedence over the Local Plan until it is lawfully in place. Dorset Local Plan comment. The new National Planning Policy Framework is changing the planning law considerably and is still changing itself. There will be greater National decision making policies which should not be deviated from or duplicated in Neighbourhood and Local Plans. A key point is the following: Policy S4: development within settlements – a 'default yes' to development, unless its benefits are substantially outweighed by adverse effects. Following the publication of the NPPF the Dorset Local Plan has recommenced drafting with a view to aligning with the new NPPF. Consultation commences this September, however the final lawfully correct plan may not be in place until late 2029.

Initial:

	f) Ward planning applications to be considered at Dorset Planning Committee meetings: None advised.
7.19pm	**Cllr Mooney arrived**
26/006	**Financial Matters to be considered:** **a) To note approval by the Chair of the Council's Payments for April, May, June, July and August 2026:** Resolved that Council payments for April 2026 (£4,266.03), May 2026 (£3,763.31), June 2026 (£0.00), July 2026 (£0.00) and August 2026 (£0.00) to be approved. **b) To receive and note RFO report for April, May, June, July and August 2026:** Clerk reported April, May, June, July and August 2026. **c) Questions to the RFO on accounts / financial reports:** None. **d) To note items of expenditure authorised under Chair/Clerk delegated authority: (Financial Regulations May 20215.4.1 and Delegation Appendix).** None. **e) To confirm the outcome of the AGAR audit:** Clerk read out section 3 of the AGAR audit confirming successful completion. Notice of conclusion of audit to be posted on Parish Council Website. Resolved to pay the BDO LLP invoice.
	Cllr Evans invited Cllr Mooney to speak: Cllr Mooney confirmed that Tuckers Cottage had been advised to demolish / return to previous state on 3rd August 2026 and that the owners had 12 months to comply. Confirmed, as per the earlier discussion, that a legal appeal was a possibility and that this is just a matter of process. Cllr Mooney confirmed that he had followed up on the request regarding the closure of the A35 and requesting that the closure time be pushed back. It was agreed that this would be pushed back by 30 minutes but was subsequently told that this was not enough time, He advised that another Cllr had taken over on this matter. Cllr Mooney reminded Cllrs that there is a meeting on 17th September at Miles Cross Roundabout. Cllrs Evans and Ralph had confirmed their attendance, and Cllr Elwes requested to also attend this meeting.

	Cllr Mooney advised that there are Community Conversations meetings taking place. Cllr Hamblett has confirmed that he would like to attend. Cllr Mooney advised that the Neighbourhood Plan was being examined via a light set of questions and that the responses sent was not dissimilar from both Councils. It is hoped that it should be signed off quickly. Cllr Hartmann confirmed that he had covered this earlier in the meeting. Cllr Mooney advised that Bridport Town Council were having more productive conversations with Dorset Council regarding social housing on unused land in Bridport. Dorset Council would like to build more hours but don't have the cash or borrowing power. Cllr Mooney confirmed that he has been officially appointed on the Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee. Cllr Mooney advised that there is a reserve spending recommendation for Pyemore Village. Although the management company for the houses is in Bridport, the pond is in Symondsbury. A request has been made of the Parish Council to help with funding, Clerk to check emails to see if we have been contacted regarding this. Cllr Hamblett advised that we could give them a leaf cycle cage which produces compost at the end of the process. Cllr Hamblett has one ready to issue, just awaiting approval from Nick Grey. Cllr Mooney advised that there is a final consultation to increase Dorset Councillors from 84 to 82. He stated that he has not had opportunity to represent Symondsbury Parish Council but has received confirmation that there will not be any changes to the Symondsbury Parish currently as per the report, however, there could be a revisit in 2029. He will try to find out more but needs to be mindful as there could be a potential conflict of interest. Cllr Nick Ireland has advised that the will not be any parish or town council boundary change and that any changes will be at the next core governance review. Symondsbury Parish Council have not been formally notified by the Boundary Commission. Cllr Evans has requested that this is fed back to Cllr Ireland, requesting a formal statement to confirm this. There is a concern that we will become part of Marshwood Vale Ward which is a bigger issue. Cllr Mooney confirmed that there are no plans to be build on car parks. He advised that if any car parks are removed then other compensatory land must be given. There is nothing in the NHP regarding plans to build on car parks.
8.12pm	**Cllr Mooney left the meeting**
	Symondsbury Parish Council Business to be considered:

Initial

26/007	**"Matters of Council consideration may include public participation if so invited by Chair"** **a) Councillor Written Reports** Written reports from councillors were submitted to the Clerk in advance of the meeting. A brief summary of each report was presented, followed by questions or discussion on any matters requiring Council consideration. Reports were noted as being for information only unless a decision was required. • Cllr SR – Footpaths Many footpaths remain overgrown; Dorset Rangers will address issues when resources allow. No additional matters requiring Council decision. *"Many overgrown; Dorset Rangers will address when able."* • Cllr PH – Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (JCC); Foundry Lea / Vearse Farm The JCC met and issued a letter to the Examiner regarding minor amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan. Confirmation of changes is awaited. The Neighbourhood Plan currently carries greater weight than the Dorset Local Plan. *"Response submitted to examiner; JCC met and issued a letter."* • Cllr SE – DAPTC Western Area Committee; BLAP Members Meeting; Community Awards; Church Hub No new matters to report under these headings. • Cllr PC – Tree Officer / Ancient Monuments; Allotments No new tree applications. Ash dieback impact appears lower than expected, with many trees recovering; Forestry Commission guidance now favours retaining ash unless dangerous. Shutes Lane remains closed pending greenlane reclassification discussions. Councillor intends to step down from allotment responsibilities and is completing a final handover. *"Ash dieback impact appears lower than predicted; many trees recovering."* • Cllr BH – Resilience; Newsletter; Coastal Matters; Climate & Waterways (including CROWD) National concern continues regarding emergency preparedness; Dorset Council has issued CERP templates. Councillor seeks SPC support to consult DAPTC. Allotment fireban notices remain in place pending HMG guidance. Newsletter proposals include moving online, with savings potentially funding digital upgrades; need for a communications officer highlighted. No additional coastal or climate matters reported. *"Proposal to move newsletter online; savings could support digital upgrades."* • Cllr RE – Waste W&S Waste Management provided an overview of services. Commercial waste requires a carrier licence. Skip access by third parties is not permitted. *"Commercial waste requires a carrier licence."* **b) To consider the draft recommendations for new wards, ward boundaries, and ward names for the Dorset Council area:** This agenda item has already been discussed during the meeting. Bridport Town Council will not consult until 28th September 2026. Symondsbury Parish Council to issue a letter direct to the Boundaries Commission, copying in Dorset Council and Bridport Town Council. The issue regarding which ward Symondsbury will be part of requires further investigation.

Initial:

26/008	**Other matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair for noting only:** Chideock footpath is an ongoing issue. We need permission of the landowner so need to send a letter. Cllr Hartmann to confirm who the letter is to be sent to. Section 36 of the Highways Act advises that the land can be dedicated but that we need the landowner position.
26/009	**Date of next meeting:** The next Meeting of Symondsbury Parish Council is scheduled for Thursday 8th October 2026 at 7pm.
26/010	**"It is proposed by the Chair that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Members to agree upon matters to be discussed in confidential session, as per agenda item 26/025 above.".** RESOLVED to exclude the public (and press) due to the confidential nature of the next agenda items.
26/011	**Matters for discussion under Part Two (Confidential) business:** None advised.
	With no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.34pm

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Signed: _____ Date: 8th October 2026 (Chair)

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