

Stinsford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14 December 2015 at 7.00pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College

Present: Dr Andy Stillman (Chairman), Mr George Armstrong, Mr Michael Clarke, Mr Chris Hext, Mr Will Molland, Mr Kim Payne and Mr Richard Wheel

Also in attendance: Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

149. Chairman's Welcome

149.1 The Chairman welcomed all those present and opened the meeting of the Parish Council.

150. Apology for Absence

150.1 An apology for absence was received from Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes (Dorset County Councillor),

151. Declarations of Interest

151.1 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

152. Dorset County Council Matters

152.1 In the absence of Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes, the Chairman moved to the next item on the agenda.

153. West Dorset District Council Matters

153.1 In the absence of Cllr Patrick Cooke, the Chairman moved to the next item on the agenda.

154. Public Participation Time

154.1 No matters were raised under this item that were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

155. Minutes

155.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record, subject to the following amendment:-

Minute 140.2 – to read “... *individual properties within the parish to be affected by TV interference due to the application ...*”

155.2 Further to minute 140.5, Mr Hext reported that he had investigated the weight limit signs. He explained that these were situated on the West Stafford bypass but no ‘ghost signs’ were placed to indicate the end of the limits. He suggested that the County Council be informed that the signs need to be realigned.

Action by: Mr Hext to provide Clerk with details to pass on to Dorset County Council.

156. Finance

156.1 There were no items of expenditure to be considered by the Parish Council.

156.2 The Clerk requested that any councillors who had not yet completed the process to become signatories to the Council's bank account do so at their earliest convenience.

157. Superfast Broadband

157.1 The Chairman reported that the meeting with Oliver Letwin MP held on Saturday 5 December 2015 had been productive and he hoped that there would be some progress made on the provision of superfast broadband to Higher Bockhampton and the improvement of broadband speeds in Lower Bockhampton.

157.2 Mr Molland reported that he had received details of the speeds from a number of residents within Lower Bockhampton and he would collate these and pass them onto the Clerk for onward transmission to Dr Letwin.

158. Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre

158.1 Mr Wheal reported that he and the Chairman had met with Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes, Dr Phil Sterling (coast and Countryside Service Manager) and Mr Giles Nicholson (Dorset Countryside Area Manager – West and North) to discuss the Parish Council's request that action be taken in relation to the Visitor Centre over the winter months in readiness for the onset of the 2016 visitor season which had proven to be positive. He drew particular attention to the commitment made to address the state of the bridleway surface alongside the Visitor Centre. Whilst this was likely to be a temporary arrangement in the first instance, costings for a more permanent solution would be investigated and shared with the Parish Council. The parking and congestion issues had been acknowledged and progress was being made on plans for the alleviation of this in the future, including the introduction of a parking charges and the provision of overflow parking elsewhere. There had also been a commitment to installing signs in the passing places to prevent their use for parking.

158.2 The Chairman added that he considered this to have been a positive meeting and formally expressed his gratitude for Cllr Mrs Haynes, Dr Sterling and Mr Nicholson for their time.

158.3 The Parish Council welcomed the engagement on the issues relating to the Visitor Centre but agreed that it was necessary to ensure that progress was made as quickly as possible and that regular contact should be made with the officers to offer any assistance and provide feedback.

158.4 The Parish Council's attention was raised to the fact that the Visitor Centre would be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day and concern expressed that this was contrary to the originally declared purpose of the building, particularly during a peak leisure season.

159. Traffic Management and Road Safety

159.1 The Parish Council noted the increasing amount of advertising signage placed at Bockhampton Cross, which now included a small green bicycle. Concern was expressed that this was not only unsightly but illegal without appropriate permissions in place and potentially affected the safety of road users. It was therefore proposed that, as these signs were situated on the highway verge, a complaint should be made to the County Council as Highways Authority and their removal requested.

159.2 However, it was noted that this signage promoted small businesses within the parish, predominantly those situated within Higher Bockhampton, and the Parish Council reiterated their wish to support their viability. It was proposed that the opportunity to advertise on the Parish Council's website could be offered as an alternative. The Clerk advised that it would be necessary to seek the agreement of HugoFox, the

company who provided the platform on which the website was based, to ensure that this did not contravene their free of charge community offer.

159.3 It was therefore **resolved** that:

- (a) a complaint be submitted to Dorset County Council requesting removal of any signage erected without permission and, depending upon the response received, the Enforcement Officer at West Dorset District Council;
- (b) the action taken by the Parish Council be included in the next monthly article in The Pilot; and
- (c) businesses within the parish be offered the opportunity to advertise on the Parish Council's website (subject to agreement from HugoFox).

Action by: Clerk

159.4 The Chairman reported that he had attempted to contact the Head of Dorset Highways in order to progress the Parish Council's concerns about road safety in the vicinity of Kingston Maurward College. To date no response had been received.

159.5 The Chairman also reported that he had contacted Highways England and had spoken to the Manager of the A35 about the Stinsford Hill roundabout. He had been informed that the speeds along the entirety of the A35 were going to be reviewed in the near future. There was, therefore, an opportunity for the Parish Council to submit their concerns as part of this review. He had also been informed that Highways England had relaxed their view on the issue of themed roundabouts along the trunk road network and were open to considering any themes submitted to them. The Chairman considered that it was worth contacting Dorchester Town Council, Dorchester BID, Kingston Maurward College and the Hardy Society about the possibility of submitting a joint theme proposal to Highways England for the Stinsford Hill roundabout.

159.6 The Parish Council **resolved** that this was worth progressing as part of a group of likeminded organisations, particularly as the roundabout was sited in close proximity to historically important, protected landscape.

Action by: Mr Armstrong to prepare a short briefing paper on how this could be taken forward.

159.7 The safety of pedestrians on Greys Bridge was also raised. It was noted that anyone arriving at the bridge from the footpaths was left vulnerable as a result of the poor visibility and lack of pavements. It was **resolved** to write to Dorchester Town Council in order to seek their support for lobbying the County Council for improvements to be made.

Action by: Clerk to write to Dorchester Town Council.

159.8 It was also noted that there was considerable encroachment of brambles onto the cycle route and pavement along Stinsford Hill between the roundabout and Greys Bridge which was dangerous to anyone traversing this route. It was **resolved** that this should be raised with the County Council as Highways Authority.

Action by: Clerk to raise with Dorset County Council.

160. Liaison with other Councils

160.1 The Chairman reported that he had recently had a conversation with the Chairman of Charminster Parish Council and it had become clear that they experienced many of the same problems as Stinsford in terms of lack of communication and response from the County Council. He suggested that it might be worth contacting the other local parish councils in the Dorchester to ascertain whether there was an appetite to establish a forum to enable collective lobbying on issues of common ground. It was **resolved** that this was a sensible idea. *Action by: Clerk*

161. Flytipping

161.1 The Parish Council expressed their concern that there would be an increase in flytipping within the parish once charges for the disposal of certain types of household waste were introduced at the Louds Mill Household Recycling Centre. It was agreed that it would be useful to establish statistics about this to evidence any increase to be raised with the District and County Councils in due course.

161.2 It was **resolved** that local residents be advised via The Pilot and the website that they should report any flytipping through the Dorsetforyou.com website but also inform the Parish Council to enable statistics to be compiled.

Action by: Clerk

162. Kingston Maurward College

162.1 The Chairman reported that he had recently met with the Principal of the College. She had updated him on current matters, including:

(i) the review of further education facilities in Dorset in September 2016 the outcome of which would affect the future financial viability of the College;

(ii) the need for more student accommodation had been raised on the College’s agenda; and

(iii) initial consideration was being given to the possibility of building a small number of houses off of Maurward Close.

162.2 The Parish Council noted the need to ensure that the College demonstrated that it was forward-thinking in relation to agriculture and associated industries in order to ensure its future viability.

162.3 Mr Payne also reported that, following a major leak in August, repairs were soon to begin in the main entrance hall. However, as part of the planning for this, Historic England had expressed concerns about the number of colours in the hall and required the reinstatement of the original monochrome scheme designed to highlight the detail of the friezes and reflect light and restore the original character. Work was due to begin during the Christmas holidays. The Parish Council noted the reason for the changes to be the colour scheme and **resolved** to formally support the work being undertaken by the College on the main entrance hall.

163. Items for future Agenda

163.1 It was **resolved** that the following items be added to the agenda for the next meeting: Cuckoo Lane traffic and parish bad weather plan (to be discussed by Mr Armstrong and Mr Payne in advance).

163.2 It was also **resolved** that the implications for Stinsford of the adopted West Dorset Local Plan be added to a future agenda and an appropriate officer from West Dorset District Council be invited to attend for this item.

164. Date of next meeting

164.1 It was **noted** that the next full meeting would be held on Monday 11 January 2016.

The meeting concluded at 9:10pm.

Chairman..... **Date**.....