



## **Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Alderholt Parish Council held at 7pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025 in the Committee Room at Alderholt Village Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr A Butler (Chairman), Cllr S Emberson, Cllr A Hibberd, Cllr G Logan, Cllr M Smethers and Cllr D Tooke.

**In Attendance:** 5 members of the public and Nicky Ashton, Parish Clerk.

**180/25 Welcome from the Chairman:**

Cllr A Butler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**181/25 To receive and accept apologies for absence:**

Apologies were received from Cllr S Butler. Cllr A Butler informed Cllrs that Cllr R Stone was not present as he has resigned from the Council – she has received written notification of his resignation.

**182/25 To receive declarations of interest and/or consider the granting of dispensations:**

Cllr Hibberd declared an interest in agenda item 199/25 as he is a trustee of the village hall and left the room whilst the item was discussed.

**183/25 To confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025 are a correct record of that meeting:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a correct record and they were signed by the Chairman.

**184/25 Chairman's Announcements:**

There were no announcements.

**185/25 To receive a written report from Dorset Councillor Dave Tooke:**

The report is attached to these minutes.

**186/25 Public Forum:**

There were no questions or statements.

**187/25 Representative Reports:**

**Bleak Hill Liaison Panel – Cllr Logan**

Report given on recent meeting attended where works at the quarry were discussed. The next meeting of the panel will be held in January.

**ARA Quarterly Management Meeting – Cllr Smethers**

Meeting attended in September with no issues to report.

**188/25 To receive the minutes of the following Committee meetings:**

- **Planning** – The minutes were noted.

**189/25 Clerks Report:**

- Daggons Road – there has been a change to the proposed dates of the planned closure for maintenance works, road will now be closed between the 20<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.
- As discussed at the last meeting the police have been informed about parking issues raised by a member of the public at top of Earlswood Drive.



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- Council insurance renewed but due to new conditions and increased excesses it was only renewed for one year rather than 3yr LTA.
- Wrote to local MP and new secretary of state for housing, communities and local government regarding the withdrawal of funding for Neighbourhood Plans. Our local MP responded, "We are aligned on the importance of this and I wanted to let you know that I have already raised it with Minister McMahon".
- Internal audit taking place on 27th October and will be conducted by Lightatouch due to our internal auditor still being unwell.
- AHRG Agreement annual review meeting with the ARA is due to take place in November.
- Recreation ground has been booked for next year's Fete.
- Attended East Dorset Clerk's meeting at Verwood Town Council, another meeting will be held on Thursday 15th January.
- Applied for the Dorset Community Transport Grant for the sum of £5000.00. We have been awarded £2500.00 – this was due to our application being classed as a revenue grant, not capital.
- Attended a free training session re Assertion 10, this is a new assertion to be added to next year's AGAR which we must comply with starting this financial year. Future agendas will include items to ensure we are compliant.
- Attended AI training – ChatGPT.
- Attended free training session regarding Local Council Award Scheme.
- DAPTC Towns and Larger Parishes Zoom meeting on Friday 17th October at 10am.
- NALC 2025 Governance Elections open now until 31st October.
- Letter and surveys received from Age Friendly Dorset informing they have joined the UK Age-friendly Network and they are asking people over 50 to complete surveys to help them understand what's working well and where they need to focus. Link has been put on our website and FB page.

### **190/25 Finance – to discuss and agree the following:**

- To approve the monthly payments as listed in the schedule (i) and agree to delegate an authorised Cllr for online banking payments:  
Members **RESOLVED** to approve the payments and Cllr Hibberd was appointed as the authorised councillor for payments until the next meeting.
- To receive the Sept bank reconciliation and confirmation of quarterly check (Qtr 2):  
Members received and noted the bank reconciliation. Cllr Smethers confirmed he had completed the quarterly check with no issues being identified and has signed the bank reconciliations to confirm they were correct.
- To receive report showing expenditure against budget for Qtr 2:  
Members received and noted the expenditure against budget with all expenditure being within the agreed budget allocations.

### **191/25 To approve the response to the Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation 2025 as proposed by the Planning Committee:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the response and thanks was given to Cllr Logan for the work she carried out.

### **192/25 To receive the results of the pedestrian crossing surveys for Station Road and Park Lane and to consider the alternative suggestions put forward by Dorset Council as neither site met the necessary criteria for installing pedestrian crossings:**



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Neither location was close to the level of activity Dorset Council would need to see to install a controlled (puffin or zebra) crossing. The site for the first survey was actually on Daggons Road at the location requested by the member of the public and not Station Road as stated in the results. Dorset Council has put forward an alternative suggestion of putting in an uncontrolled crossing like a build out or road narrowing for both sites and if the Council think something like this could work in one or both of the locations they will ask an engineer to assess the sites. It was pointed out that the decision to install a build out will be dependent on costs and Dorset Council prioritise schemes for funding based on the objectives set out in the Local Transport Plan. After a discussion about both sites Members **RESOLVED** to take up Dorset Council's suggestion of having an engineer assess both sites for an uncontrolled crossing like a build out or road narrowing.

### **193/25 To consider a request for a footpath from the Alderholt Nursery site onto the AHRG as part of future development of the site (Site 002 of the Neighbourhood Plan):**

Cllr Logan reported on the request received from the agents for the landowner of the Alderholt Nursery site in Ringwood Road that is one of the Council's agreed sites for development in the Neighbourhood Plan. A planning application has not yet been submitted. It was suggested by Cllr Logan that if a path is agreed, in order to cause the least disruption to users of the recreation ground and the AHRG, it be installed at the junction of these two tracts of land where the access point to the AHRG from the recreation ground occurs. Concerns have been raised by the Chairman of the ARA regarding the boundary and ditch at the site and it was agreed to investigate the points raised. Members **RESOLVED** to agree in principle to a footpath subject to a planning application being submitted.

### **194/25 Allotments:**

- **To approve the quotation for the allotment fencing:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation of £616.00 (net) for the replacement of 29 rotted posts and the reinstallation of one pedestrian gate on new posts.

- **To receive an update on the agreement for ditch clearance by neighbouring landowner.**

Clerk reported that as agreed at the last meeting an agreement was drawn up for the allotment ditch clearance at designated sites by the neighbouring landowner. The agreement has been signed by the landowner with additional wording added. Members agreed the additional wording and the Clerk to date the agreement to confirm acceptance.

### **195/25 To approve the response to the DAPTC Smaller Parish Council Survey as compiled by Cllr Logan and the Clerk (as per previous minute ref: 173/25):**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the response which will be submitted by the Clerk.

### **196/25 To review quotes and agree the next step in replacing the gym equipment:**

Members **RESOLVED** to accept Caloo's offer of replacing the existing equipment and as they were unable to repair the existing equipment they will not charge for removing it nor will they charge for the installation of the new equipment. It was agreed to request a formal quotation for the new replacement hydraulic equipment and to enquire when they would be able to carry out the installation of the equipment and to request another quote for extra pieces of equipment (hydraulic push up unit, hydraulic leg push, pull up bar and horizontal bars) which would enable people to complete a full body workout.



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It was agreed to review the quotes at the next meeting and make a final decision on equipment to be installed.

**197/25 To consider the future replacement of the Assistant Clerk's laptop due to Microsoft's end of support for Windows 10 which comes into effect on 14<sup>th</sup> October:**

Clerk reported that a request has been submitted to the Council's IT company to sign up to the extended support scheme offered by Microsoft at a cost of £25.00, to ensure the laptop remains secure until it can be replaced. Members **RESOLVED** to approve the replacement of the laptop and for the Clerk to approach the IT company for suggested replacements.

**198/25 To receive an invitation to attend the Remembrance Sunday Service and to confirm attendance and to ratify the purchase of a wreath:**

St James Church has invited Cllrs to attend the service and would like to know how many will be attending in order to reserve seats. Cllrs Logan, Smethers, Hibberd and Tooke confirmed attendance. Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the purchase of the wreath and it was agreed that Cllr Hibberd would lay the wreath at the service.

**199/25 To review the village hall rental agreement and consider if any amendments are required:**

Members discussed whether a request should be submitted to the village hall committee for the rent to be reviewed/increased every two years, based on the CPI calculation as stated in the agreement, rather than annually as proposed by Cllr Logan. Members **RESOLVED** not to put forward a request and to maintain the rent payments on an annual basis but to request that the reference to Appendix A and Clause 14 be removed as agreed back in 2017 and that the agreement is reviewed by the village hall committee and the parish council every three years.

**200/25 To consider attendance at the "Fresh Start Event – Devolving Dorset" being held on 30<sup>th</sup> October (a one-day conference for councillors and clerks inspired by the A Fresh Start report) at a cost of £75.00 per delegate:**

Members **RESOLVED** that Cllr Logan and the Clerk attend the meeting.

**201/25 To consider a request to light this year's Christmas tree at St James Church Christmas market being held on Saturday 29th November:**

Cllr Hibberd confirmed a tree had been obtained and it was agreed to light the tree at the market as requested. Cllr Logan confirmed she would carry out the decorating of the tree on the 28<sup>th</sup> November with assistance from a member of the public.

**With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.47pm.**

**Date of next meeting – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**

**(i) Schedule of Monthly Payments for Approval (Including In Between Meeting Payments)**

| Payable To            | Amount | VAT  | Total | Details                  |
|-----------------------|--------|------|-------|--------------------------|
| Alderholt Parish News | 7.00   | 0.00 | 7.00  | Sept Parish News Article |
| ARA                   | 70.00  | 0.00 | 70.00 | Fete Fee                 |
| Unity Trust Bank      | 9.00   | 0.00 | 9.00  | Sept Bank Fees           |



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|                               |          |       |          |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staffing Costs                | 6098.12  | 0.00  | 6098.12  | Sept Staffing Costs                                             |
| Elite Playground Inspections  | 100.00   | 20.00 | 120.00   | Cable Way Repairs                                               |
| Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance | 3495.38  | 0.00  | 3495.38  | Annual Insurance Premium (includes insurance premium tax & fee) |
| ASSC                          | 225.24   | 45.05 | 270.29   | First Aid and Bin Provision for Fete (amended invoice)          |
|                               |          |       |          |                                                                 |
| ARA                           | 725.45   | 0.00  | 725.45   | Insurance Reimbursement                                         |
| Alderholt Parish News         | 14.00    | 0.00  | 14.00    | Oct Parish News Article                                         |
| Mrs N Ashton                  | 31.50    | 0.00  | 31.50    | Travelling Expenses (DAPTC/DC Meeting Dorchester)               |
| Assist Business IT            | 152.15   | 30.43 | 182.58   | IT Support August to September                                  |
| Vision ICT Ltd                | 268.00   | 53.60 | 321.60   | Website Hosting and SSL Certificate Renewal                     |
| <b>Receipts</b>               |          |       |          |                                                                 |
| Dorset Council                | 51918.85 | 0.00  | 51918.85 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Precept Instalment                              |
| Allotment Rents               | 641.00   | 0.00  | 641.00   | 25 Allotment Rents                                              |

## 251013 Alderholt Parish Council — Dorset Councillor Report

### Recent Actions & Developments

- A heathland restoration project in East Dorset SSSIs has launched this autumn to protect rare habitats and reduce wildfire risk, potentially affecting local land management.  
The project, supported by funding from Natural England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), will focus on restoring lowland heathland - an internationally rare ecosystem that supports endangered species such as the Nightjar, Woodlark, and all six of Britain's native reptiles, including the elusive Smooth Snake.  
Work will take place at the following sites:
  - Stephens Castle, Verwood
  - Dewlands Common North, Verwood
  - Slop Bog, Ferndown
  - Parley Common, Ferndown
  - Pine Clump, Upton.

[Dorset heathland restoration project to protect rare wildlife and reduce wildfire risk - Dorset Council](#)

- Dorset Council announced expansion of energy-efficient LED street lighting, replacing about 18,500 outdated units.

[Street Lighting and Illuminated Signs Policy 2025 - Dorset Council](#)

- At Dorset Council Cabinet last week the Council announced a ten year Farms Estate Strategy which recognises the importance of supporting new entrants into agriculture, promoting sustainable land management, and ensuring that our rural holdings continue to deliver public value. It includes a £12 Million investment for urgent repairs and modernisations. Cabinet was told by Councillors for Tarrant's Hill Forts and Marshwood Vale, that the previous County Council had neglected County Farms for decades

[FINAL Farms Strategy.pdf](#)

### Upcoming Consultations / Deadlines

- Local Plan Options Consultation — deadline \*\*13 October 2025\*\* (submit views on housing, growth, land allocations). Due to heavy user demand the on-line Consultation has been working very slowly. Dorset Council has recently announced that whilst the

web page Consultation will close on the 13<sup>th</sup> (Today) contributions via email, letter etc., will continue to be accepted until the end of the month

[Dorset Council Local Plan options consultation 2025 - Dorset Council - Citizen Space](#)

- Local Transport Plan Consultation — closing date \*\*13 October 2025\*\*. This consultation will close today.

[Local Transport Plan consultation - Dorset Council](#)