



## **Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Alderholt Parish Council held at 7pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in the Committee Room at Alderholt Village Hall.**

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

**In Attendance:** 3 members of the public and Nicky Ashton, Parish Clerk.

**42/25 Welcome from the Chairman:**

Cllr Hibberd welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**43/25 To receive and accept apologies for absence:**

There were no absences.

**44/25 To receive declarations of interest and/or consider the granting of dispensations:**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests received.

**45/25 To confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 as a correct record of that meeting:**

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

**46/25 Chairman's Announcements:**

Cllr Hibberd reported that the works to the culvert on Ringwood Road by the recreation ground had been completed.

**47/25 To receive a written report from Dorset Councillor Dave Tooke:**

Report is attached to these minutes.

**48/25 Public Forum:**

A member of the public spoke to raise a question addressed to Cllr Tooke regarding the state of the road from Cripplestyle down to the Church.

**49/25 Committees and External Bodies Representative Reports:**

**DAPTC Meeting** - Cllr S Butler gave a report on the DAPTC meeting for Towns and Larger Parish Councils he attended on 7<sup>th</sup> March. A report has been drafted highlighting issues with relationships between Dorset Council and Towns and Larger Parish Councils. The removal of district councils impacted communication between the now Unitary authority and Town and Parish Councils. Looking at possibility of Relationship Committees similar to those adopted by Cornwall Council.

**Plumley Wood Liaison** – Cllr A Butler reported on meeting attended which covered how the area has been developed and putting it back to farming. Obtaining an extension from HCC for works. The area is being well run and will be productive again in the future.

**50/25 Clerks Report:**

- Letter of thanks received from St James Church for agreeing to increase the grant for the next three years.



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- Dorset Council's Climate and Nature Survey has been completed.
- Road Closures:  
Reminder that Sandleheath Road, Alderholt outside Hill Cottage Farm Caravan Park closed on 14<sup>th</sup> March and Edmondsham Road, Verwood between Westworth Farm and Eastworth Road closed on 18<sup>th</sup> March between 9:30 - 15:30.  
Dorset Council has received an application from Openreach to close Fordingbridge Road, Alderholt between Sandleheath Road and the Hampshire boundary from 9:30, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025 until 14:30, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Also received an application from DDC (Agents for National Highways) to close Verwood Slip Road to carry out various survey works to commence between 21:00 - 06:00 from 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 until 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025.
- Duty of Care renewal completed for the dog bins.
- Unfortunately, Cllr Logan wasn't chosen to be a guest at the Buckingham Palace Garden Party (names are drawn from a hat).
- Birchwood Drive bin is still being monitored.
- Email received addressed to various parties regarding state of the bridleway between Verwood and Alderholt. Dorset Council has responded to say they will investigate.
- Bus usage figures have been received.
- Email received confirming our Dorset Community Transport Grant application was successful and we will be receiving £5000.
- Two members of the public have been in contact regarding issues resulting from the Surplus Stores development site. Currently dealing with these on their behalf, not a PC responsibility.

### **51/25 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 Logan was appointed as the authorised councillor for payments until the next meeting.
- To receive the bank reconciliation for February:  
Members received and noted the bank reconciliation for February.
- To review the earmarked reserves for 2025/2026:  
Members **RESOLVED** to earmark an additional sum of £2500 (£500 for bin replacement and £2000 towards other future asset replacement).

### **52/25 To receive an update on Planning Application HCC/2024/0755 (Midgham Farm) and to agree attendance at any future HCC Planning Meetings and attendance at the Dorset Council Strategic and Technical Planning Committee being held on 31<sup>st</sup> March:**

There have been approx. 357 objections to the application. HCC will now be making the decision on this application as Dorset Council has decided to delegate authority for the entire application to them as the majority of the site falls within Hampshire and only they receive the planning fee. However, they will be commenting on the application and the response will be discussed at their Strategic and Technical Planning Committee. It was agreed that Cllr Logan attend this meeting and should HCC refer the decision to their Planning Committee, Cllr Logan will also attend that meeting.

### **53/25 To review and agree the future maintenance of the AHRG:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the new quotation submitted by the ARA and to approve the new contract for the works which will replace the current SLA agreement.



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### **54/25 To review the following:**

- **Asset Register:**

The SID purchased in 2016 together with three poles and solar panels were disposed of when new SIDs purchased. Grit bin on Park Lane has been removed. Members **RESOLVED** to remove these items from the Asset Register.

- **Risk Assessment and Internal Controls:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended Risk Register and internal controls.

### **55/25 To receive the quarterly play inspection report and agree any actions:**

The report was noted and Members **RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact the inspector to query what materials would be deemed suitable to address the ground erosion under the cableway.

### **56/25 To discuss the replacement of the dog bins at the AHRG:**

Members **RESOLVED** to replace the two dog bins with Retriever 50 dog waste bins and approved J Powell to carry out the installations.

### **57/25 To discuss a request for a pedestrian crossing:**

Members **RESOLVED** to support the request for a pedestrian crossing near the Churchill Arms and to engage with the village to gather feedback on the proposal and other possible site suggestions. It was agreed that Cllr Emberson, Cllr Stone and the Clerk would compile a document to put out to all residents seeking their feedback. The ultimate decision to install a crossing will be Dorset Council's.

Cllr Tooke left the meeting at 8.22pm.

### **58/25 To agree to the setting up of a direct debit for the payment of future allotment water invoices:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the setting up of a direct debit.

### **59/25 To receive an update on previous actions agreed regarding the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day and agree any further actions:**

Clerk confirmed she had contacted both the Chapel and the Church. Chapel has some events planned but at the current time the Church has nothing planned. A post has now been put on the Council's FB page asking for suggestions. Members **RESOLVED** to purchase a VE Day flag to raise on the day to mark the occasion. This will either be placed at the Church or the Village Hall subject to permission being granted.

### **60/25 To discuss arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting:**

It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the village hall. The Full Council meeting will be held prior to this at 6.00pm in the committee room.

### **61/25 To discuss nominations for the Fordingbridge Rotary Citizen of the Year:**

Members **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Logan for her work on the Dudsbury Homes Planning Inquiry and the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **62/25 To approve the amended Dignity at Work Policy:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended policy.



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## **63/25 To discuss arrangements for the Great British Spring Clean:**

It was agreed that Cllrs should inform the Clerk which areas they will cover prior to the end of the month.

**With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.43pm**

**Date of next meeting – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

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

<b>Payable To</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Details</b>
TW Lane	245.00	0.00	245.00	PAT Testing
Elite Playground Inspections	60.00	12.00	72.00	Quarterly Play Equipment Inspection
Alderholt Parish News	14.00	0.00	14.00	Feb News Article
St James Church	400.00	0.00	400.00	Maintenance Grant
Alderholt Village Hall	2882.00	0.00	2882.00	Office Rental 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2025 – 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025
J Powell	985.00	0.00	985.00	Painting of Office and Committee Room
BT	191.85	38.37	230.22	Telephone Services
G Logan	35.00	0.00	35.00	Cllr Travelling Expenses
Source for Business	52.29	0.00	52.29	Allotment Water
Assist Business IT	147.15	29.43	176.58	IT Support
Staffing Costs	5127.62	0.00	5127.62	Feb Staffing Costs
Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd	598.50	119.70	718.20	NP Project Work (Final Invoice)
J Powell	145.00	0.00	145.00	Works to Noticeboard
Viking	82.24	16.45	98.69	Printer Cartridges and Stationery

# **250310 Dorset Councillor Report for Alderholt Parish Council**

## **Economic Growth Strategy**

Dorset Council is developing a new economic growth strategy and is seeking input from local businesses. Engagement events are scheduled in Wool, Bridport, Wimborne, Shaftesbury, and Portland between March 14 and March 25. The strategy aims to address slow economic growth by leveraging digital technology, investing in advanced manufacturing, and capitalizing on Dorset's natural advantages.

Dorset Council's Economic Growth Strategy focuses on fostering clean, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth across the region. The strategy aims to improve living standards, quality of life, health, and well-being for all Dorset residents. Key priorities include:

- Enhancing Dorset as a business-friendly location to attract investment.
- Supporting the creation and growth of sustainable businesses, leading to high-quality job opportunities.
- Improving transport and digital connectivity across the area.
- Boosting aspirations and skills to enhance social mobility.

The strategy is structured around six foundations for sustainable growth: digital infrastructure, people and skills, business environment, innovation, place, and transport infrastructure. It also emphasizes the importance of balancing productivity growth with environmental protection<sup>2</sup>.

## **Countywide Parking Review**

A comprehensive review of parking across Dorset is underway, including the suitability of on-street parking permits. This initiative responds to long-standing issues, such as holidaymakers leaving vehicles near transport hubs for extended periods. Recommendations from the review are expected later this year.

## **Budget Challenges**

Dorset Council continues to face budgetary pressures, particularly in children's and adult services. Overspending in these areas is attributed to demand-led services and external care providers. Efforts are being made to improve early intervention and build internal capacity to manage costs more effectively. Dorset Council is grappling with significant budgetary challenges. Key pressures include:

- **Rising demand for social care services:** Dorset has a high proportion of older residents, leading to increased costs in adult social care. The council is also facing growing demands in children's services<sup>2</sup>.

- **Overspending:** The council has consistently exceeded its budget in demand-led services, such as care for vulnerable children and adults<sup>2</sup>.
- **Dependence on council tax:** Due to limited government funding, Dorset relies heavily on council tax to fund essential services. A recent increase in council tax aims to address some of these pressures<sup>4</sup>.
- **Inflation and national financial challenges:** Rising costs, including higher National Insurance contributions and inflation, are straining the council's finances<sup>4</sup>.
- **Efforts to manage costs:** The council has developed a transformation plan to streamline operations, reduce third-party spending, and improve efficiency. However, these measures will take time to yield significant savings.

### **Interim Chief Executive**

Following the resignation of Matt Prosser as chief executive of Dorset Council, Sam Crowe, director of Public Health Dorset, has taken up the role until a permanent successor is in place.

Prosser is to become chief executive of Wellington City Council in New Zealand.

More than 130 people have applied for the role at Dorset Council and shortlisted candidates will face a rigorous assessment process including technical exercises and stakeholder panels. A Staffing Committee made up of councillors representing all political groups on the council will recommend the appointment of the next chief executive, and the final decision will be made at a meeting of the Full Council on 10 April.