

SYDLING ST NICHOLAS PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the Meeting of Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council held on 7th March 2022 at Sydling St Nicholas Village Hall****Members Present:**

Councillors C Legg (Chairman), P Davies (Vice Chairman), G Durack, S Durack, S Shears and D Tucker.
Unitary Councillor J Haynes (JH), the Clerk David Green.

Members of the Public: None**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Newman.

2. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests

None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting 3rd January 2022

These were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

4. Issues arising from the last meeting

The Chairman noted:

- South Barn Farm – a report to planning enforcement had been acknowledged but no further information had been received.
- Report of barbed wire across footpath s46/6 and s13/22 report - had been investigated by Cerne Valley PC but no sign of the barbed wire had been found.
- Queens Platinum Jubilee – a committee has been formed within the village and activities are planned for the weekend of events in June. The Chairman will light the beacon on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Tucker raised the question of whether commemorative coins for village children could be considered as in the past; the Clerk will investigate and report back.

5. Update from the Chairman

No update required.

6. Democratic discussion period

There were no members of the public present.

7. To receive a report from the Unitary Councilor

A written report had been received prior to the meeting; this was taken as read.

Signed

Chairman

Date

Cllr Haynes, under the Risk Management portfolio, has been looking at the impact of recent storms and what the appropriate emergency response should be in the future. The storms had been very disruptive, impacting electricity supplies which had meant that mobile phone networks and private water supplies were not operational.

The implications of the power cut for vulnerable people was the main issue, when for example, adjustable hospital beds and oxygen supplies in peoples' homes would not work. A list of vulnerable residents cannot be kept, without the consent of those involved, under GDPR rules. The situation became very complicated when a Power of Attorney is involved. The main issue was not so much that vulnerable residents were not being assisted by their neighbours but that the relatives of those affected did not know what was happening. The main issue is to understand the lifestyles of those affected and what is actually required in terms of assistance. Cllr Haynes will report back in due course with recommendations.

Cllr Haynes also noted that the supply of electricity throughout Dorset is a major on-going issue; there is simply not enough capacity to supply the demand within the county.

8. Recent Storms – village support co-ordination

The Chairman noted the disruption the power cuts had caused, with communication being the main issue, residents being unable to use messaging or email. It was noted that the generic email advising that power would be restored by 11 pm (which did not in fact happen) was a major concern. Cllr Haynes will be taking this up with the network provider.

The Sydling Support Network would be meeting to discuss how best to provide assistance in the future.

9. Annual Parish Meeting arrangements

The Chairman noted that Annual Parish meeting had been a major event in the past, with societies and speakers involved; however there is little enthusiasm at present. It was agreed that the meeting would be held after the Parish Council Meeting in May.

10. To receive a finance report and to agree action in response to proposals and payment approvals

The Clerk advised that the financial position was fair, with the bank account standing at £ 5,637.15 and the general reserve at £ 2,157.08. The invoice for the legal work in relation to the Poor Lots lease has still yet to be received.

i) The following retrospective expenses were approved:

DATE	Name	Method	Amount	Reason
04/01/2022	David Green	BACS	£32.40	Expenses
07/01/2022	Elite Playground Inspections Ltd	BACS	£48.00	Qtrly inspection
12/01/2022	HMRC PAYE	BACS	£133.00	PAYE
21/01/2022	DAPTC - Planning (S Shears)	BACS	£39.00	Planning intro course

Signed

Chairman

Date

24/01/2022	DAPTC - New Cllr (S Shears)	BACS	£35.00	New Councillor course
31/01/2022	David Green	SO	£189.28	Pay January 2022
02/02/2022	DAPTC - Planning (S Shears)	BACS	£39.00	Role of Local Councils in planning course
07/02/2022	DAPTC - Planning (S Shears)	BACS	£39.00	Important planning concepts course
08/02/2022	Sydling Village Hall	BACS	£13.50	Hall hire
17/02/2022	Mike Hole	BACS	£214.99	Mower service
28/02/2022	David Green	SO	£189.28	Pay February 2022

ii) **Clerk's expenses** - £ 16.20 approved

iii) **Clerk's pay rise**

The national pay increase for Local Government employees for 2020/2021 has now been settled. The Clerk will calculate the back-dated increase.

11. To receive a report on the following matters in the Parish and to agree action in response to any proposals:

Planning

There were no new applications to consider.

Old Chapel House – P/HOU/2021/05557 – no objections had been received and suitable consultee comments had been made on the planning portal.

The Clerk had not received any further information received in relation to the 15 High Street appeal.

Cllr G Durack noted that accessing the planning portal was now more difficult with registration being required.

Cllr Shears had completed some 6 hours of planning training courses, which had been very useful, and offered to condense these into a PowerPoint presentation if required. The Chairman felt that it was helpful that the Council now had a planning expert on board.

Cllr Shears noted that it was clear that a Neighborhood Plan was not appropriate for the village which remains largely protected within the AONB, but noted that there are problems elsewhere in Dorset, in Shaftesbury for example, where development has gone ahead without the approval of the Town Council.

Play Park

The Chairman noted that the zip wire had not yet been removed but hoped to deal with this in the near future.

Signed

Chairman

Date

The Clerk noted that Dorset Council had launched a new capital project funding scheme which could provide up to 20% of the cost of new play equipment but this still required the recipient to find 80% of the capital cost. With a replacement zip wire costing upwards of £12,000 it would be difficult to find the funding for 80% of the cost. The Clerk suggested that the issue of replacement equipment is left in abeyance for the time being.

Cllr S Durack noted that there was little point in replacing the monkey bars on the multi-play, when this is in poor condition, and will also inevitably require replacement.

The Chairman noted that the Half Marathon will take place in June and that he may ask the organisers for a donation towards new play equipment.

Footpaths

Cllr Tucker noted that the recent storms had resulted in a couple of blocked footpaths but these had now been cleared.

Highways

Cllr S Durack reported that:

- 6 potholes had reported in January/February
- a very large pothole along Back Lane had been reported
- an incident of fly tipping near the Ford had been reported but not yet cleared
- the 'Dorchester Road' sign on the side of the Village Hall has disappeared
- the footpath up Waterside Lane from the flow meter to the bridge is badly eroded and requires resurfacing

Cllr Tucker noted that there were two large stones in the Ford and therefore, when approaching from the Maiden Newton direction, it was best to stay on the right to avoid vehicle damage.

Trees

Cllr Durack reported that the Parish had fared relatively well in the storms, with only one tree near the substation down.

Cllr Durack proposed that the decision of the Council in July 2021, not to proceed with planting additional trees under the Queens Platinum Jubilee Green Canopy initiative, should be re-visited.

It was suggested two new fruit trees could be planted on the Spinney, and being agricultural, these would not require permission to prune. It was agreed that two self-pollinating cider trees would be the right choice, being limited in height. Cllr Durack will record the proposal on the official register.

Flooding

Cllr G Durack advised that there was little to report. The official report from the Environment Agency and Dorset Council, in relation to the 31st October flood, is expected by the end of March. The date for the 'drop in' event in the Village Hall has not been confirmed at this stage.

12. Items for Next meeting

Signed

Chairman

Date

Annual meeting of the Parish Council: Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Monday 9th May 2022 at 7.00 p.m. at the Village Hall, to include the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, the Parish Council meeting and the Annual Parish meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19:47 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Date