

SYDLING ST NICHOLAS PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council held on 9th May 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, the Clerk David Green.

Members of the Public: Seven**1. Election of Chairman**

Cllr Chris Legg was proposed, seconded and unanimously appointed as Chairman and the Acceptance of Office was received.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Patricia Davies was proposed, seconded and unanimously appointed as Vice Chairman.

3. Appointment of Councillors to positions of responsibility

These appointments were confirmed:

Play Park Warden – Cllr Graham Durack

Trees – Cllr Shell Durack

Highways – Cllr Shell Durack

Footpaths – Cllr Di Tucker

Floods – Cllr Graham Durack

Planning – Cllr Steve Shears

Website – Cllr Andy Newman

4. Approval of Policy documents

The Parish Council approved edited versions of its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment.

5. Approval of Certificate of Exemption, Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts

The Parish Council **AGREED** the Certificate of Exemption, Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts.

6. Adoption of the General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011

Signed

Chairman

Date

The Council **AGREED** to adopt the General Power of Competence having met the criteria of having a qualified Clerk and being two-thirds elected.

7. Approval of Honorarium

The Parish Council **APPROVED** the payment of £ 75 as an honorarium to Claire Birch for cleaning the bus shelter.

Annual Parish Meeting

1. Chairmans Report

Chairman Chris Legg gave his report for the year:

The Parish Council tentatively resumed in person meetings in July after some 15 months using Zoom.

All were glad to see some restoration of normality following the Covid-19 pandemic although it still may be too soon to conclude that the village was completely out of the woods. The Parish Council was pleased to support the Sydling Support Network during the pandemic period which provided valuable assistance to villagers with food and medical supplies.

The Parish Council notes that many young families now live in the village and has now raised awareness of their particular needs.

The flash flood on 31st October was a great shock to the community, which rose to the occasion and handled the situation with really excellent community spirit. Many were well prepared for this event and hopefully others have been able to get their defences into order.

There were few planning applications received in the year. The application in relation to 15 High Street, Sydling St Nicholas, had been refused by the case officer on economic, social and environmental grounds, the main point being that the village does not have the infrastructure to support a development of this scale. A possible unauthorised development at South Barn has been reported to planning enforcement.

The zip wire has proved to be a troublesome maintenance issue, and following a safety report, the decision was taken to remove this equipment. At this stage no commitment can be made to replace this item of equipment; the cost of a replacement, some £ 12 -15,000, being prohibitive. The situation will be kept under review.

A major repaint of metal play park equipment took place in the year and consideration will be given to a full repaint of wooden structures this year.

The tree maintenance programme has been successfully implemented and all outstanding issues have been dealt with.

The pothole situation has been a perennial issue requiring regular reports to Dorset Highways with the quality of repairs being rather questionable. There were few footpath issues reported in the year.

The Parish now has a new councillor Steve Shears and wished to thank to former Councillor Mike Hole for his years of excellent service to the community and the PC.

Signed

Chairman

Date

The Chairman thanked all Councillors for their work during the year and looked forward to working with all in the future.

2. Q & A with Jill Haynes

Cllr Haynes noted that:

The budgetary position had improved with spending reorganisation but there was the threat of both a recession and inflation which is now running at close to 10%.

The Council is approaching complete integration as a Unitary Authority and is looking at where it wants to be in 5 and 10 years' time.

The response of Dorset Council to the recent oil tank fly tipping incident is under investigation, and has caused the Council to considering reviewing the operation of the out of hours service to achieve an improved quality of service.

Cllr Haynes was asked about the 5-year housing supply target and confirmed that this had not been met. The Council Leader had been in discussion with Michael Gove M.P. with a view to extending the period for agreement of the new Local Plan by two years.

The key issue being the lack of new infrastructure when new developments are being considered, in terms of schools and medical services, and the absence of affordable housing in many small schemes, with a high proportion of new executive type houses sales ending up as second homes or Airbnb lettings. The Showground site in Dorchester is likely to be in the new Plan as a development site but there will be significant infrastructure improvements required in terms of schools and doctors' services. 'Sustainability' is a very important issue for Dorset Council but this is not necessarily shared by planning inspectors.

There is an issue of there being no compulsion on developers to actually develop sites and a recession may provide further excuses for not proceeding with building.

Cllr Haynes is hoping that the 'duty to co-operate' with other authority areas in terms of build numbers will be dropped; the 9,000 houses required by the Bournemouth, Poole & Christchurch authority in Dorset significantly impacts the overall number (36,000) that Dorset is required to provide in the next 15 years.

Minutes of the Meeting of Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council held on 9th May 2022 at Sydling St Nicholas Village Hall

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests

None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting 7th March 2022

Signed

Chairman

Date

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:

- i) **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Coins** – 33 coins have been obtained and 31 names nominated, although there may be up to 50 required in total. Further soundings will be taken of who would like coins for their children but who have not yet sent a nomination. It was agreed that the coins should be distributed on Sunday 5th June at the Village Green by a long-standing resident of the Village.
- ii) **South Barn** – the possible unauthorised development has been investigated by planning enforcement, who have decided that the work consists of a roof replacement which does not require planning permission. Councillor Tucker said that it was clear that the work did involve property alterations including new internal walls, concrete floors and window frames. The matter will be referred to Cllr Haynes for follow up.

5. Update from the Chairman

The Chairman noted:

- The phone box is looking rather dilapidated and possibly needs a repaint.
- Diamond Alley near the Greyhound is overgrown with weeds and a working group will be organised to clear this.
- The Chalkstream newsletter is looking for funding assistance; the Council agreed to make a donation of £ 100.
- The tenant of the Poor Lots had contacted the Chairman to enquire if the Parish Council had any objection to the formation of a 'farm cluster' with other landowners to consider how best environmental improvements could be carried out. There were no objections to this proposal.
- He has spoken to the mowing team regarding the issue of leaving daffodils on the Village Green; it was proposed that 3 or 4 areas on the Green should be used exclusively for daffodils in the future. The reported problem of tyre marks on the Green is not serious and most have disappeared.

6. Democratic discussion period

Planning application – Cutlers Close

A member of the public expressed concern regarding the likely congestion that the development would cause to Back Lane and the issue of overspill parking in nearby lanes. It was mentioned that there may be an obligation on the developer to improve access along Back Lane but this was not confirmed. It was noted that the new scheme was little different to the scheme refused by Dorset Council in 2020, with only 11 parking spaces allocated for four 5-bedroom properties, a completely unrealistic provision.

Signed

Chairman

Date

Planning Appeal - 15 High Street

A number of those present expressed concerns regarding the statements made by the appellant in the reasons for appeal.

Although minor changes to the scheme had been made, it was commented that the annexes effectively increased the numbers of bedrooms from 4 to 6; there was a lack of clarity concerning the functioning purpose of the workshops/offices and a distinct likelihood that the ultimate purpose of the annexe buildings would be for start-up businesses and B & B.

Concerns were also expressed regarding the true flood risk of the whole of the site, particularly given the village flooding incident on 31st October; the Council understands that the eastern part of the site is in Flood Zone 2 or 3, and not 1 as stated by the applicant.

7. To receive a report from the Unitary Councilor

A written report had been received prior to the meeting; this was taken as read. Cllr Haynes provided an update in the Annual Parish meeting.

8. Planning

i) Planning application P/FUL/2022/02326

Demolition of existing agricultural barns and erection of 5 No. dwellings together with access, parking & landscaping. Erection of a replacement barn.

Location: Land and buildings north of Cutlers Close Sydling St Nicholas

The Council concluded that this is a very similar proposal to that considered by the PC in late 2020, the only changes being minor in appearance and layout, and that little else had changed:

- Parking – still extremely limited there being only 11 parking spaces for 5 x 4-bedroom properties, regarded as wholly inadequate and likely to lead to overspill parking. It was felt that there would be a likelihood of congestion along Back Lane.
- Sewage system – that applicant has failed to address how foul sewage would be dealt with.
- Affordable housing in the scheme – the absence of any affordable housing in the scheme with the likely use of these large properties as second homes and for Airbnb purposes

In addition, the flooding incident on 31st October, had highlighted the issue of overflowing springs which are likely to be a concern at this site.

The Council agreed by a majority to **OBJECT** to the application.

ii) Planning application: WD/D/20/003088

Appeal Reference: APP/F1230/W/21/3289639

Appeal re 15 High Street, Sydling St Nicholas – refusal decision

Signed

Chairman

Date

The Council noted that the applicant's reasons for appeal relied substantively on criticism of Dorset Council's decision-making methodology and reasoning.

The Council wished it to be noted that the applicant's statement that the site is in Flood Zone 1, rather than Zone 2 or 3, is factually incorrect, it being clear that the eastern part of the site is in Flood Zone 2.

The Council unanimously agreed to support Dorset Council's decision making and to make an appropriate submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

iii) Dorset Council Planning Update for Town and Parish Councils meeting on 27th May 2022 – Cllr Shears will be attending this event on behalf of the PC.

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 good, with the bank account standing at £ 9,004.50 and the general reserve at £ 5,524.43.

The precept and VAT repayment have been received.

i) **The following retrospective expenses were approved:**

Date	Name	Method	Amount	Reason
30/03/2021	David Green	SO	£189.28	March 2022 pay
04/04/2022	Elite Playground	BACS	£48.00	Qrtly inspection
07/04/2022	HMRC (PAYE)	BACS	£142.60	PAYE
11/04/2022	Dorset Council	DEBIT	£282.88	Waste bin renewal
19/04/2022	Sydling Village Hall	BACS	£13.50	Hall Hire
26/04/2022	J P Consultants	BACS	£70.00	Internal Audit 2021-2022

ii) The Clerks expenses of £ 23.66 were approved.

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

Play Park

The issue of the zip wire is still under review.

Footpaths

Cllr Tucker noted that a couple of footpath issues had been resolved: a bridle path problem at Sydling Court Farm and an issue with a gate at the bridle way near the sawmills.

Highways

Cllr S Durack reported that:

Signed

Chairman

Date

- A fly tipping incident of dumped plastic bottles was reported to DWP but no action was taken – the Chairman has agreed to deal with this.
- The lack of road sweeping following the flooding incident in October has been reported to DWP, subsequently escalated by the Clerk, and a response from DWP is awaited.

Trees

Cllr S Durack has investigated the acquisition of cider trees for the Spinney, although these will not be recorded under the Queens Green Canopy initiative until planted.

Cllr Durack is considering several varieties of cider apple, including 'Cattistock Red', which is an old English apple and these can be obtained for £ 22.00, and other varieties 'Kingston Black' and 'Frome River'.

Flooding

Cllr G Durack advised that the report relating to the 31st October incident is awaited, and confirmed that a 'drop in' event will take place on 18th May in the Village Hall.

The Chairman has removed a very large willow tree that fallen into Sydling Water.

12. Items for Next meeting

Daffodils decision

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Monday 4th July 2022 at 7.00 p.m. at the Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:30 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Date