

**Minutes OF LYTCHETT MATRAVERS
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday January 17th 2011 at 7:30 in the Village Hall**

PRESENT were Cllrs: M Gracey (Chairman), A Bush, M Colvey, J Dyball, D Gillard, K Norris, P Talbot, J Taylor, E Wilson and the Parish Clerk (T Watton).

County Cllr Drane and five members of the public were also in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed those present and suggested that item 15 – dealing with the DCC proposals for funding cuts to local services – be taken immediately after item 11, for the convenience of the members of the public who had attended for that particular item. This was agreed.

1. APOLOGIES from Cllrs Miller and Munford were received and noted.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION. (Standing Orders suspended).

Mr Ken Morgan explained about a project he is working on for the Rockley Estate in conjunction with Chichesters Land Agents – to establish a polo club on Rockely Estate land between Huntick Road and Wimborne Rd. The details of the proposal, as presented by Mr Morgan at the meeting, are set out in the document attached at Appendix A to these minutes. He explained that his purpose in presenting this to the Parish Council was to build awareness of it and to seek questions councillors may have.

The Chairman then invited Mr Graham Lee and Mr David Newman to speak - representing the Friends of the Lytchett Matravers Library and also as key members of the county-wide group fighting the DCC proposals for the closure of libraries.

Mr Lee explained that a meeting had taken place recently of Friends Groups of threatened libraries across the county and an association had been formed of which he had been appointed Chairman. The meeting had also been attended by County Cllr Fred Drane and Annette Brooke MP. At the meeting it had been resolved to write to the Dorset County Council Audit and Scrutiny Committee complaining that the Library Service had not engaged in purposeful negotiation or consultation with the public - via the Friends Groups – about the future of the libraries. A response to this from Dorset County Council had advised that the complaint had been forwarded to the Chief Executive's office and would be brought up at the Overview Committee and 10 minutes have been allowed at the next meeting for a brief presentation to be made on this subject by representatives of the association. The intention is to convince the committee that the current avenue being taken towards closures is the wrong one.

Mr Lee referred to a report produced by Dorset County Council and which had been sent to Parish Councils but not to Friends Groups. He pointed out weaknesses in the report such as it being one sided in that it deals only with the 20 libraries which Dorset County Council intend to dispose of rather than looking at the Library Service more holistically to identify where efficiencies can be gained and savings made whilst avoiding closures. The report also refers to alternative arrangements such as the leasing or selling of library buildings and providing some books and minimal shelving.

Mr Lee also commented on a report in the Stour and Avon Community Magazine which reported on a story – evidently leaked - about a reprieve for six of the libraries on the closure list: Upton, Corfe Mullen, Lyme Regis, Portland Tophill, Littlemoor and Sturminster Newton. When challenged, Dorset County Council stated that no decisions have yet been made.

Noting that Dorset County Council have argued that the libraries currently on the closure list are poor performing and with declining use, Mr Lee commented on the current performance of Lytchett Matravers library. Since November 2010 Lytchett Matravers library has increased its book issues by 8.5% – with 35,582 issued in the first eight months of this year.

Mr Lee advised the council that a reporter from the Bournemouth Evening Echo had visited Lytchett Matravers library on the day of this meeting and had arrived in time to see a very busy and well attended toddlers and parents session in full swing. It was hoped that an effective piece would appear in the following evening's newspaper. He then concluded by saying that the formal support of the Parish Council and the District Council are urgently needed; in the form of a resolution and a letter to Dorset County Council deploring their action to close the libraries.

In support of these comments, a resident of Old Pound Close remarked that in her view around 30% of residents she knows go to the library once a fortnight; and she has seen its use grow vigorously since the library was last under threat. All present applauded the efforts of Mr. Lee and his colleagues in fighting to protect the library, and the resident pointed out how it is easy it is for members of Dorset County Council, far away from Lytchett Matravers and other communities which rely so heavily on their libraries, to make such decisions without understanding the full consequences or impact on the communities involved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were none.

4. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS 2007.

In accordance with paragraph 12(2) of the Revised Code, to hear any representations or answers to member's questions or evidence provided by any members of the Council having a prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at this meeting. There were none.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Cllr Gracey called for one minute's silence in remembrance of former Parish Cllr Peter Evans, whose funeral had taken place on the day of the meeting.

The Chairman remarked that despite the petitioners concerned about the Foxhills Play Area asking the council to respond at this meeting to some specific points they raised at the Environment & Amenities Committee meeting on 10th January, no one representing the petitioners was in attendance.

6. THE MINUTES of the Council meeting on 20th December 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

7. MATTERS ARISING & UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS.

- a. **Full Council 19th July, minute 18 Cllr training:** The Parish Clerk has yet to scan and distribute the notes of the New Cllrs Seminar – **CARRIED OVER.**
- b. **Full Council 20th Sept, Minute 14 – condition of Club Hall:** The Parish Clerk reported that the work to remove the double doors and replace with a treated timber frame and marine ply cladding, and also to removal of bolts from the back door and replacement with a lockable panic bar had now been completed. As reported to the Environment & Amenities Cttee there has been a contact from the Lighthouse Family Church concerning general ineffectiveness of the storage heaters and Paul Fay is arranging for a colleague to examine these and provide an estimate for servicing and / or repair. The Parish Clerk added that he had recently been contacted by Phil Game to report two further roof leaks. The Parish Clerk indicated that he would approach a contractor to investigate these.
- c. **Full council 22nd November, minute 17: requests to install grit bin in Dillons Gardens.** The location of this grit bin was agreed by DCC Highways and it has been installed. Similarly the location of the bin in Loop Farm Rd has also been agreed. However, it is uncertain if the residents are yet ready to purchase the bin. It also needs to be determined how the necessary groundworks and concrete base will be funded.
- d. **Full council 22nd November, minute 18: follow-up action to football foundation support meeting.** It was noted in Cllr Miller's absence no update was available on progress with the sports club on before items listed in the above minute. **CARRIED OVER**

- e. **Full council 22nd November, minute 19: fields in trust application.** The Parish Clerk reported that the recreation ground has now been registered with the Land Registry – title number DT383227. The Allotment fields (title no DT383258) and the cemetery (title no DT383290) have also been registered.
- f. **Full council 20th December, minute 11b: Recreation ground drainage scheme planning application.** Peter Ashton has contacted the Parish Clerk to advise that the plans have now been adjusted by Ron Salinger of Such, Salinger Peters – however it seems Mr Goater has not yet given a his view in writing regarding the capacity of the pipework etc under Eldons Drove and beyond to take the expected peak flow of drained water. The Parish Clerk has therefore asked Mr Ashton to contact Mr Goater to get his written input on this specific point before the Council reconsiders the application.
- g. **Full council 20th December, minute 11b: September Cottage, Deans Drove.** A letter has now been sent to Mr Bird, Senior Planning Manager at PDC asking him to speak to the developers regarding a possible S106 contribution towards the cost of the path. The survey by officers from PDC is due to be carried out on 19th January.
- h. **Full council 20th December, minute 12 – budget and precept 2011/12** This has been sent to PDC on the usual forms, and receipt has subsequently been acknowledged by PDC.
- i. **Full council 20th December, minute 13 – Land at rear of Hann Gardens.** A letter has been sent to PDC advising that the Parish Council does not support the sale of this land as proposed.
- j. **Full council 20th December, minute 14 – half year accounts.** These have not been received from Mr Peacock. Cllr Dyball expressed concerns about the continued non receipt of the half year accounts. Other Cllrs shared this concern, and so it was agreed that the Finance and Policy committee should consider the situation for the future. *Action: Parish Clerk to add this to the agenda of the next Finance and Policy Committee meeting.*

8. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

Dist Cllr Colvey reported that the most significant matter which the District Council is giving its attention to currently concerns the cuts in its budgets. A workshop took place on the afternoon of this meeting at which District Council members considered possible areas for funding cuts. Deliberations are ongoing and the specifics are not yet ready to be announced, but the amount of money by which Purbeck District Council's funding has been cut is larger than anticipated in the June and October budget reviews. Staffing reductions are expected but it is hoped that this can be achieved without resorting to compulsory redundancies.

9. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

County Councillor Fred Drane commented on the difficulties DCC are having trying to create a budget that will not impact on services more than the public can withstand. He commented on the Highways budget by saying that DCC have acknowledged that this is very important to maintain due to the direct effects it has on business and the public, as well as the long term impact if the roads are not maintained in a timely way.

Cllr Drane urged the Parish Council to encourage residents to report direct to DCC any shortcomings in County Council services – to help ensure they are put right promptly.

He also commented on the need to work hard to retain School Crossing Patrols and the Libraries, and he assured the council that he would be working on behalf of both Lytchett Matravers and Upton with the aim of retaining both libraries – such as at the DCC meeting on 20th January.

With regard to the fight to save the school crossing patrol, he suggested that Lytchett Matravers follows the same course of action as Upton and asks the DCC Road Safety team for a safety survey to be undertaken on the need for a crossing patrol.

The chairman thanked Cllr Drane for his report and advice.

10. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

There were none.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES:

(a) Environment & Amenities (see minutes of 10th January 2010).

Cllr Wilson reported on the following recommendations:

- That Full Council authorises the purchase of a dog bin and litter bin for installation near the play area on the public open space adjacent to Fosters Spring. **AGREED**
- That a minimum of two volunteer Cllrs be sought to walk the proposed route of the revisions to footpaths 11 and 16, and to report back in time for a response to be sent to DCC by 16th February. **AGREED**

(b) Planning Committee (see minutes of 6th January)

The Parish Clerk reported that there were no recommendations to bring forward.

It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes of both of the above meetings.

12. RECEIPT OF HALF YEAR ACCOUNTS

The Parish Clerk explained that the accounts documents had still not been received from Mr Peacock.

13. UPDATE – FOXHILLS PLAY AREA PROJECT

The Parish Clerk reported that the frameworks for nearly all of the play equipment are now in place. Completion is on schedule for within the next 2 weeks.

14. DCC PLAN FOR PART NIGHT STREET LIGHTING – (SEE EMAIL 24TH DECEMBER)

The council discussed the contents of the letter from Mr Rod Mainstone, Principle Engineer, Dorset Engineering Consultancy, Dorset County Council, which informs the Parish Council that DCC intend to arrange for almost all street lights and in rural and urban areas to be switched off between midnight and 5:30am as a cost saving measure. It was noted that and the county council do not intend to directly consult or inform residents of this change, but are seeking the views of local councils regarding any areas where special consideration may be necessary – such as roads which are heavily used after midnight, high crime areas, or serious safety concerns.

Referring to the Parish Plan, members observed that the public had expressed mixed views on street lighting. In response to the specific issue raised in Mr Mainstone's letter it was **AGREED** that the only particular area which may benefit from all night lighting is around Tescos and the Pharmacy, on grounds of security and crime prevention. *Action: Parish Clerk to respond to Mr. Mainstone's letter accordingly.*

15. RESPONSE TO DCC'S REPORT ON ITS BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2011/12

The discussion considered two issues of significant impact and concern to the village:

- **The impact on the library:**

The Chairman opened this item by expressing the council's thanks for the hard work undertaken by Graham Lee and other members of the Friends Group. With regard to the suggested letter to Dorset County Council deploring the library closures, Cllr Colvey explained that he and Cllr Norris had been working on a draft letter to this effect. Copies of this were passed round and discussed. Cllr Bush suggested that it was not necessary to compare library performance at Lytchett Matravers with Colehill and Upton, because this is a distraction from the performance of Lytchett Matravers Library itself, which is clearly improving as usage is continuing to grow strongly. It was **AGREED** to amend the letter accordingly and address it to Mike Lovell Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Dorset County Council, with copies to Paul Leivers and Steve Gifford. *Action: Parish Clerk to amend the letter, sign it on behalf of the Chairman and forward to Dorset County Council.*

Graham Lee and David Newman then commented further on how Dorset County Council could take a more holistic view of the library service to increase its efficiency and reduce costs and thus avoid

library closures. They talked about the potential to reduce service to some extent at the big libraries not on the closure list to help fund the smaller / rural ones – thereby spreading the impact more equitably. They suggested that merely targeting twenty rural libraries for closure is unfair treatment. Graham Lee described the operation of Book Clubs across Dorset and the idea of charging Book Club members – with this money then being used to help keep libraries open.

Finally Graham Lee advised that a petition was being started at the coming weekend. It will have a closing date well before the critical date of the 17th February and the results will therefore be in time for the key Dorset County Council meeting on that date.

- **The school crossing patrol:**

The Chairman commented that parents of children at Lytchett Matravers Primary School now seem to have become aware of the threat to the school crossing patrol. He has received courtesy copies of letters from parents to Dorset County Council.

County Cllr Drane confirmed that Dorset County Council have already made the decision that they will definitely not continue to fund school crossing patrols and that redundancy notices have already been issued. However he reiterated his advice that the community should ask for a road safety survey to be carried out at the school crossing point.

The Chairman pointed out that both the school crossing patrol person and the Parish Council have already raised with Dorset County Council very serious issues concerning crossing safety for children in Wareham Rd and have worked with the police on the traffic congestion and parking difficulties which contribute to this. He reminded the council that it had been agreed that the matter would be brought to this meeting to clarify what the council is being asked to do, and by when. Reviewing the various communications from Dorset County Council it is evident that the Parish Council is not being asked to do anything. Instead DCC have written to head teachers of all schools with crossing patrols and suggested that they proactively work with their communities to consider whether there is scope to raise the funds locally to retain their school crossing patrol person, or to seek community volunteers willing to do it without remuneration.

Cllr Colvey reported that Lytchett Matravers Primary School's view is that the school is responsible to safeguard children only whilst on school premises, and as they have no money to pay for the school crossing patrol they will not be doing so. Cllr Norris pointed out that DCC have clearly stated that this is a discretionary service so there is no mandatory requirement for them to provide it.

Cllrs felt that there may be a role for the Parish Council to act as a conduit to talk to the school and to involve the parents and the PTA to get some action underway. Cllr Bush referred to the end of the letter from DCC to head teachers which concludes with the phrase "...where we can continue to work in partnership...". He felt that there was a need to pick up on this point and encourage the local school to do this. The Chairman pointed out that the Lytchett Matravers public will expect the Parish Council to promote some action on this matter. The following actions were **AGREED:**

1. A letter to be written to Dorset County Council expressing the Parish Council's dismay and objection to the unilateral way in which DCC have made the decision to withdraw funding.
Action: Cllr Bush agreed to prepare this letter.
2. To seek further views from the school as to how they intend to respond to the letter from Dorset County Council with regard to community funding of, or seeking community volunteers for, the continuation of the school crossing patrol. *Action: Cllr Colvey agreed to speak to Mr France to find out their views about the letter and having a meeting with the Dorset CC Road Safety officers.*

16. COUNCIL POLICY ON GRIT BINS

The members present were reminded that a draft policy had been discussed at the November Full Council meeting and in response to a request from Councillor Taylor it had been agreed to reconsider the matter at

this meeting to ensure all members had had the chance to speak on it. Cllr Taylor explained that his concern about the proposed policy relate to possible unfairness of the scheme to support community purchases of grit bins – on the basis that this may this disadvantage some groups of residents with limited resources.

The council was reminded that there is no specific legal power for Parish and Town Councils to spend money on highways matters; this being the responsibility of the highway authority. Consequently DCC’s support and encouragement for community purchase self-help schemes for grit bins is a useful option. The relatively low cost of purchasing grit bins was also noted. After some further discussion it was proposed and seconded to formally accept and adopt the draft policy as set out in the minutes of the Full Council meeting in November 2011. This was **AGREED** by a majority (7 votes for, one against, and one abstention). The policy is attached as Appendix B to these minutes.

17. NOMINATIONS FOR LYTCHETT MATRAVERS PRIMARY SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Colvey explained that due to a change in his personal circumstances it was necessary to stand down as Parish Council representative to the Lytchett Matravers primary school, and as a school governor. The Parish Council therefore needed to identify a member willing to take over as representative, and possibly also as a school governor. Cllr Bush volunteered to take on this combined role. The Chairman offered the thanks of the council both to Cllr Colvey for his hard work in this role and to Cllr Bush in volunteering to take over. Cllr Colvey indicated that he would communicate this change to the school governors and head teacher.

18. REPORTS OF ANY TRAINING ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN IN THE PAST MONTH

There were none reported.

19. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES (by exception)

The following reports were made:

PACT: Cllr Gracey reported that the PACT meeting had been moved from week commencing 16th January to the beginning of February.

Carnival: Cllr Talbot expressed some concern that the carnival committee seems to be in danger of collapse due to lack of volunteers. He confirmed that he would keep the council informed on this matter.

School liaison: Cllr Colvey reported that the new school hall is now completed and is taking bookings – either for the school hall on its own, or for the hall plus the kitchen.

Village Hall: Cllr Wilson reported that the new kitchen for the village hall is now being installed. In response to a question she was not clear if the problem with the wifi access has been resolved.

20. COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PAYMENTS ALREADY MADE:-

<u>Inv</u>	<u>To Whom</u>	<u>For What</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
905	HMRC	PAYE and ENI (06/10/10-05/01/11)	989.00	0.00	989.00

This was unanimously **AGREED**

21. COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PAYMENTS DUE :-

Inv	To Whom	For What	Net	VAT	Total
906	T Watton	Clerks salary – December	800.53	0.00	800.53
907	Novatech Ltd	Printer toner cartridge	50.08	8.76	58.84
908	T Homer	Handyman duties – December	81.00	0.00	81.00
909	Southern electric	Car park lighting – 24/09/10-23/12/10	16.47	0.82	17.29
910	D&P Warr	Trimming High St hedge. Trimming Allotment hedge	100.00	17.50	117.50
911	Brighstone Landscaping Ltd	Foxhills open space maintenance 01/10/10-31/12/10	510.72	89.38	600.10
912	Banyards Ltd	Cemetery maintenance 04/01/11	303.49	60.70	364.19
913	Lytchett Matravers Village Hall	Annual hire charges	695.00	0.00	695.00
914	Paul Fay Home Maintenance	Replace double doors with timber frame and cladding. Replace back door bolts with lockable panic bar.	480.00	0.00	480.00

These were unanimously **AGREED**.

22. CORRESPONDENCE.

The Parish Clerk reported on the following items of correspondence:

A letter from Dorset County Council Legal and Democratic Services department dated 21st December 2010 advising that the next Dorset Waste Forum will take place on Friday, 21st January, 2011 at 10.00am at the Dorford Centre, Bridport Rd, Dorchester. Cllrs were asked to advise the Parish Clerk if they wish to attend on behalf of the Council, so that a place can be booked for them.

A letter and leaflets from Dorset Community Action inviting villages to enter for the Dorset village of the year competition 2011.

It was noted that 10 letters had been handed to the council at the January Environment & Amenities Cttee meeting by the petitioners against the Foxhills Play area. Cllr Wilson had reviewed these and commented that it seemed they covered the same substantive points as those expressed by the petitioners at that meeting. It was agreed by the council that responses to the letters would be most effectively achieved by forwarding copy of an extract from the draft minutes of the E&A Cttee meeting dealing with this matter, together with a brief covering standard letter. **Action: Parish Clerk to prepare these responses.**

Cllr Gracey reported on some correspondence with a resident of Purbeck Close concerning the location of one of the new lighting columns installed under the DCC / SSE Private Financing Initiative. This matter has been referred to County Cllr Drane.

27. MATTERS OF INTEREST AND INFORMATION.

Cllr Taylor was commended and thanked on behalf of the Council for an excellent recent edition of the Lytchett Link. He acknowledged this, and asked councillors to consider what articles they might have for the next issue.

Cllr Dyball suggested the idea of a street party to mark the forthcoming royal wedding on 29th April and wondered what views the councillors have on this. It was suggested that an article might go into the next edition of the Lytchett Link.

Finally, all councillors wished to record their appreciation and thanks to the Parish Clerk for his continued excellent work and the extra efforts he had made over the last difficult month to protect the

interests of the Village and Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 10:10pm

Annotated by/on

Signed by/on