

# SUTTON WALDRON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - held at The Village Hall.

## MINUTES

### **Present –**

**Chair:** David Smith

**Councillors:** John Ellis, Iain McNeil & Sandy Millard

**Dorset Councillor:** Jane Somper

**Clerk:** Sam Smith

**Residents:** Gill Samways, Jane McNeil, Dick Hood, Walter Steward, Mike Asher & Tony Asher.

**06/03/01 Apologies for absence:** Barbara Asher & Manya Steward

**06/03/02 Declarations of Interest:** None

**06/03/03 Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6th of December 2023 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

**06/03/04 Matters Arising:** No matters outstanding from the last meeting.

### **06/03/05 Correspondence/Other Parish Matters:**

**a. Report from Dorset Councillor** Cllr Jane Somper had circulated her report in advance to Cllrs by email. On the 10 & 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 an **air show will be taking place at Compton Abbas Airfield**. The number of potential spectators is estimated at 10,000. Parking will be at Clayesmore School, with minibuses ferrying visitors to the airfield. Disruption for local residents will hopefully be kept to a minimum. All authorities, including Dorset Council, are involved in the organisation and safety of the event. Some footpaths will be closed during the event for safety reasons.

### **Dorset Council Named Best Unitary Council in the Country for Recycling -**

DEFRA has confirmed that Dorset Council is the #1 Unitary Council in the country for recycling. We recycle 59.1% of the waste we collect, against a 43.4% national average.

### **Grants For Community Tree Planting -**

A new grant scheme aimed at supporting local communities to plant and care for trees in their area is now open for applications. Funded by Dorset Council and managed by the Dorset National Landscape team, the fund is open to community organisations in the Dorset Council area. This includes parish and town councils, as well as schools and other established community groups interested in planting and caring for trees in their patch.

### **Council Tax Premium on Second homes in Dorset -**

Dorset Councillors have approved proposals for a council tax premium on second homes and an amendment to agree an earlier commencement date for the existing Long Term Empty Homes premium, under the new flexibilities for councils provided in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which received Royal Assent in October 2023. For those properties classified as long-term empty and unoccupied a 100% premium will, from 1 April 2024, be applied after one year rather than the existing 2 years. The introduction of the 100% council tax premium on second homes will come into effect on 1 April 2025, making a total council tax charge of 200%.

### **DC budget & council tax –**

Dorset Council's budget of £377 million for 2024-25 has been approved by councillors at the Full Council meeting on 13 February. This continues the council's commitment to maintain frontline services, without the need for cuts to balance the budget. Dorset Council is not in the same financial position as many other councils across the UK, some very close to Dorset. To continue to provide services well, council tax will increase next year by just under 3 per cent and the adult social care precept by just under 2 per cent. The increase is equivalent to £1.82 extra per week for a Band D property.

**b. Inspection of The Spinney, Bus Shelter & Telephone Box** In accordance with the Risk Management Policy the Chairman confirmed the Spinney, the Bus Shelter and the Telephone Box had been inspected. The books in the telephone box are again taking over the available space. Cllrs Smith & McNeil will get together to remove some and take them to the charity shop.

**c. Community Speed Watch:** Gill Samways reported that only 1 session of Speed Watch has taken place since Xmas taken due to the bad weather. More volunteers are still needed to join the group.

**d. 2024 election process:** Dorset Council elections will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2024. Any resident wishing to vote at the SW village hall will need to show approved ID on the day to the attending Polling Clerk. Forms of acceptable ID can be confirmed at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk) There are currently 5 vacancies for Cllrs on the PC, a PC election will, only be held if more than 5 residents put themselves forward. All 4 current PC Cllrs have filled in nomination forms to serve another term on the PC. Any resident wishing to put themselves forward should contact the PC Clerk.

**06/03/06 Planning Applications:** No new building applications have been received. A number of tree applications have been received/agreed since the last PC meeting. The recent application to fell the tree at the School House was withdrawn by the applicant. The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan is in the process of being updated. An open session is planned for the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 in the Fontmell village hall, all residents are invited to pop along have a look at the plans. Cllr Smith will visit on behalf of the PC and report back. Completion of the long awaited Dorset Local Plan has been moved forward to 2026.

**06/03/07 Finance:**

**a. Bills to be paid** It was agreed that the following should be paid:

- S Smith **£137.80** (January 2024 salary & expenses)
- S Smith **£137.80** (February 2024 salary & expenses)
- S Smith **£152.20** (March 2024 salary & expenses)

The clerk will check the PC records to see how much we owe the village hall for 2023 room hire. The clerk will then bank transfer the amount owed into the village hall bank account.

The reconciled bank and cash balance as of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 was **£4,375.76**  
Our spending this year has been within budget with a small surplus retained.

**06/03/08 AOB:** Nothing raised. The Fontmell Magna Spring Fair is on April 20<sup>th</sup> in the FM village hall.

**06/03/09 Reports:**

**a. Church** Cllr Millard read her report as follows – estimates have been received for external re rendering of the church tower. Breakfast Club will continue for another 6 months to see if the numbers attending picks up. The first Breakfast Club will be on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 9.30am in the SW village hall. Events are planned for Lent. Easter Sunday service will take place on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March at 9.30am.

**b. Village Hall** Jane McNeil reported that the Village Hall new roof is now completed. The work came in within budget. The money for the repairs was fund raised and the balance made up by village hall reserve funds. Village Hall Treasurer Gill Samways has contacted HMRC re gift aid for the Village Hall but has yet to receive a reply.

**c. Footpaths** Dick Hood reported that the gateway/footpath by church is very muddy. It was felt that the main culprit is the horses, making the ground worse by congregating at the gate. The horses are fed at the gate, and this has allowed the area to become very muddy and impassable. Dick will follow this issue up with the landowner People are put off walking that way due to the mud and the horses (in a herd) can be intimidating to people not used to horses.

**Date of next meeting:** the next meeting will on the 22nd May 2024 @ 7.30pm.  
Sutton Waldron Village Hall.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

**Signed by the Chairman .....** **Date.....**