

**Minutes of Holt Annual Parish Meeting
Held Friday 18th March 2022 at Holt Village Hall 7:30pm**

Item	
	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Cllr Jonathan Cutts (Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council) Cllr Jackie Egan Cllr Peter Finney Cllr Wrettham Ladbrooke-Chartres Cllr Celia Moore (Chairman of the Parish Council) Cllr Guy Reynolds Cllr Janet Wallace Cllr Richard Walsh Mrs Lisa Goodwin (Clerk to the Parish Council) 11 members of public.</p>
01	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present.</p>
02	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Cllr Robin Cook (Dorset Councillor Stour & Allen Vale Ward) Cllr Val Potheary (Chairman Dorset Council) Mrs A Korta Mrs M Pike Mr D Morton</p>
03	<p>Guest Speaker</p> <p>The Chairman introduced Mr Mark Neathy, Curator for the East Dorset Museum who kindly gave a very interesting presentation on the history of the Museum in Wimborne and answered questions. The Museum welcomes both new and historical artefacts to join the collection that are specific to East Dorset and would be of benefit to future generations.</p>
04	<p>Good Citizen Award 2022</p> <p>The Parish Council is pleased to have presented this year's award to Mrs Brenda Burt for her valued contribution toward the community firstly as a 'pupil' midwife arriving in Gaunts Common in 1966 and for all her involvement in community groups in Holt. Brenda received a certificate and a voucher to spend at Stewarts Garden Centre.</p>
05	<p>Confirm the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held 15th March 2019.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Janet Wallace and seconded by Cllr Wrettham Ladbrooke-Chartres that the minutes of the last meeting held 15th March 2019 are confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman. Agreed.</p>

06	<p>Matters Arising from the minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>None.</p>
07	<p>Annual Report of the Parish Council (which will be published on the website and Village Voices magazine) by Vice Chairman Cllr Jonathan Cutts</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Holt Parish Council – Annual Report 2021 / 2022</u></p> <p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Throughout the year, the Council has continued to meet on a monthly basis. During COVID 19 the meetings were restricted to being online but since June we were pleased to be back meeting in person in the Parish Hall.</p> <p>This also enabled us to welcome back residents and it was good to see members of the public regularly attending and contributing towards the meetings.</p> <p>During the year we have also seen some changes to the Parish Councillors. In February last year both Susan Frost and Norman Willis stepped down after many years of service and we'd like to thank them once again for all they've done for the Parish and Community. Richard Lonsdale also stepped down but has continued to support and help the Council.</p> <p>Consequently we were pleased to welcome new Councillors, Jackie Eagan, Richard Walsh and Guy Reynolds to the Parish Council.</p> <p><u>Planning</u></p> <p>Planning remains a substantial part of the Parish Councils work and during the year we received approximately 54 planning applications.</p> <p>Although some of these are more contentious than others, the Council always strives to support the right balance between appropriate development and the preservation of our rural Parish.</p> <p>Based on the public response, arguably the most contentious application this year came for the change of use at Walston Poultry Farm. In addition to numerous written comments a large number of residents also attended the Council meeting in September, which meant an unusual change of venue to the Village Hall to accommodate everybody. A final ruling on this application has just been made and we understand the application has currently been refused.</p> <p>In response to the draft Dorset Local Plan, in March the Parish Council submitted its own comments. A copy of this document is available on the Parish Council web site and the latest updated draft from Dorset Council is also now available.</p> <p>Planning enforcement has also been an issue that has regularly been brought to the attention of the Council. In some cases, the apparent lack of proper enforcement around planning and development has been a real concern and in response to this the Parish Council has recently set up a separate working group to look into this further and will be in dialogue with Dorset Council about this in due course.</p>

Highways and Traffic

Traffic within the Parish remains a constant item on the Parish Council's agenda. We receive regular feedback and issues from residents and it is an area of serious concern.

The separate Traffic working group, which was set up about 18 months ago, continues to be in direct dialogue with Dorset Council on a range of matters and possible measures. This is very much ongoing and documents and correspondence relating to this are available on the Parish web site.

There has been some progress including Broomhill crossroads where measures are being introduced to improve visibility and some road line painting.

As part of our dialogue we will be submitting our latest proposals to Dorset Council shortly, which includes the latest set of traffic data collected from the 3 speed indicator devices. This correspondence will be available on the Parish web site in due course.

In summary we are very aware of the speed and volume of traffic passing through the Parish, which continues to increase and we will continue working with Dorset Council to look at various realistic measures to try and improve this.

Dorset Community Governance Review (CGR) – Parish Boundary

As part of the Dorset CGR, the Parish Council was invited and has contributed to the ongoing discussion with other stakeholders and Dorset Council about possible changes to the parish boundary.

In particular this has included the lobe of Furzehill possibly joining Holt Parish and based on our own discussions and the clear feedback from Furzehill Parish residents we have given this our support.

This will be an ongoing topic and further details, including Dorset Council's full draft CGR recommendations can be found on the Dorset Council web site. As of February 2022, a summary of Dorset Council's current draft recommendation is: -

" to make a change to the current governance arrangements to pass the "the Lobe" of Furzehill currently in the parish of Colehill to the parish of Holt, and also to change warding arrangements for Colehill and Holt'.

Telephone Kiosks

We were sad to see the theft of one of our historic red telephone kiosks at Holtwood but we are pleased to say that steps are being taken to have it replaced. The telephone kiosk at Broomhill has also been refurbished and we are grateful to everyone who has helped with this.

The Council is open to suggestions about their use but we are currently decorating the Broomhill kiosk with flower boxes.

Village Green

In conjunction with the National Trust the Parish Council continues to look after the Village Green. We hope this continues to be a peaceful and enjoyable open space for the all the community to use and enjoy. Occasionally we do have to manage pony grazing on the Green and we continue to keep an eye on this.

We'd like to thank Eleanor Eagan the Countryside Manager at the National Trust for the kind donation of 3 cherry trees. We will be planting these shortly and also installing the 'Tommy' remembrance figure.

Public Footpaths & Rights of Way

In conjunction with the National Trust and other landowners we have continued to monitor the network of footpaths and rights of way across the parish.

The Council will endeavour to keep the paths and bridleways accessible but we are always looking for new volunteers to help with this and if you are interested in lending a hand then do please let us know. Thanks to those of you who have already come forward with offers of help.

Cemetery

The Parish Council continues to have responsibility for the management and maintenance of the Cemetery. This includes cutting the grass and looking after the boundaries and memorials. We would like to thank Charlie Hiscock and Mike Clifford for their continued help with this.

During the year there have been 12 burials.

Donations

A donation of £300 was made to Citizens Advice to help with all their work.

Additional thanks

The Parish Council would like to thank all other members of the community who continue to help and contribute towards the Parish.

This is not exhaustive but just to mention: -

Cllr Robin Cook - we continue to be represented at Dorset Council by Cllr Cook and we would like to thank him for the time that he gives to the Parish together with all his support and advice.

Richard Lonsdale – since stepping down as a councillor Richard has been a great help on the highways working group and also mending noticeboards and lending a hand with the telephone boxes.

Ann Korta – for her help in running the Neighbourcare Car Scheme and to her and the rest of the Parish Hall Committee for looking after the Hall.

Les Gordon – for kindly doing an excellent job painting the Broomhill telephone box and to the local residents who are going to keep an eye on it so it hopefully doesn't meet the same fate as the one at Holtwood.

Ian Mulliner – for his efforts keeping the moles under control in the cemetery.

Susan Frost – who after her time as a Councillor is acting as our representative on the St Margarets and Stones Almshouses in Wimborne.

Lisa Goodwin, Parish Clerk - The Council would simply not function without all the continued hard work of Lisa and we would like to thank her for all that she does on all our behalf.

<p>08</p>	<p>Matters arising from the Annual Report.</p> <p>Richard Lonsdale is pleased to see that the stolen BT Box will be replaced in its prime location in Holtwood by the Parish Council and suggested groups could apply for lottery funding for renovating the Furzehill BT Box which Mr Lonsdale suggests will require a lot of work. Pre-empting the next Parish Council meeting, Mr Lonsdale asks if the Parish Council would be minded to support the Furzehill Residents Association to prepare a funding application for the box. This is a matter for the Parish Council to discuss but the Clerk advised that an organisation could apply for funding separate to the Parish Council but any works would require the permission of the Parish Council. This will be discussed by the Parish Council at their next meeting on 13th April 2022.</p>
<p>09</p>	<p>Audited Accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2019, 2020,2021</p> <p>The audited accounts for the years ending 31 March 2019, 2020 and 2020 were displayed for members of the public to view and have been available to view on the parish council website www.holtparishcouncil.org.uk</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Dorset Council Annual Report from Cllr Robin Cook</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DORSET COUNCILLORS REPORT FOR HOLT PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FRIDAY MARCH 18th 2022</u></p> <p>Good evening to all.</p> <p>Firstly let me apologise that I am unable to be with you in person, but sadly I am decidedly under the weather at the moment. However I am pleased to present an annual report as your ward member. This will be a first from Dorset Council which came into being in April 2019. Since your last annual meeting in March 2019 who knew just then what lay ahead for the world with first a pandemic declared in early 2020, the effects of which are still very much with us, and now a war in Europe.</p> <p>For Dorset Council the pandemic presented a major challenge on how to continue providing services throughout lockdown and with numbers of our own staff absent due to COVID, and how to support our communities, focusing on the vulnerable as a priority. The employees rose to the challenge, and I personally received many positive comments from residents to say how much they appreciated the help given.</p> <p>From a councillors perspective we were also no more immune from the effects than anyone and some of us were shielding and unable to be 'on the ground' in a way that they would normally conduct their business, but there was a plus side. This was the introduction of 'virtual' meetings which enabled all of us to continue the business of local government. This was an ideal opportunity for us to be part of meetings and business that, in normal times, we would or could not be because of time or location restraints. Whilst 'talking heads' on a screen is not ideal it was a means to an end and will stay with us in a hybrid format which will make the democratic process more accessible for a much wider audience.</p> <p>In this report I have tried to focus on the points from the year that I think affect this parish and are probably of the most interest.</p>

Dorset Local Plan

The draft Dorset local plan started public consultation from 18th January 2021 and ran for 8 weeks till 15th March. There were a number of methods that were used to inform, consult, and involve others such as: Publicising consultations through press releases, our website, public notices in the local press, posters, leaflets, and social media, plus emailing or writing to appropriate organisations, community groups and individuals directly.

Consultation documents were available on the Dorset Council website and at local libraries for click and collect or other public locations, as deemed appropriate, where possible and Covid safe. There were displays in windows of empty shops and Tourist Information Centres in some town centres. There was also a phone line that people could call to ask questions.

In addition to all the above, webinars where everyone was welcome to attend and ask questions were held.

All of this produced a tremendous response with more than 9000 responses with over 60,000 comments. I held a various virtual sessions with residents groups and the parish councils across the ward, and there was a lot of constructive feedback from those.

The target date for production of the plan is 2023 which is a very tight time frame for such a huge piece of work and following detailed examination of those consultation responses the council leader Cllr Spencer Flower has written to Michael Gove asking him to consider several radical alternatives. I have highlighted these below.

- allow Dorset to pilot a radically different approach to Local Plan making
- break the link between the housing land supply numbers and the Duty to Cooperate – i.e. the requirement for Dorset Council to accept unmet housing need from neighbouring councils
- allow Dorset an extension of two years until April 2026 to give more time for the new Dorset Local Plan to be developed and approved. During this extended period of plan preparation, Dorset should be protected against speculative housing development by suspending the five-year land supply requirement or by other means necessary
- fully recognise the climate and ecological emergency in the planning system, including new building regulations.

This action does acknowledge the extent of feeling about the future of housing provision in Dorset. Publication of the revised draft plan will be later this year and will go out for further consultation.

Planning service

I think it goes without saying that, since the formation of the unitary council, the planning service has had a bumpy ride and the service was not performing well. This was due in part to the pandemic which, because of the working from home rules, made the planning officers job challenging. In addition, during the COVID crisis the number of planning applications went through the roof as so many people decided they wanted to expand their home due partly to the rise in home working, the difficulties around house selling and buying and the need for more living space around them.

This was exacerbated by the need to converge the systems from the previous five district and borough councils which is a very complex operation. That work is now almost complete, and together with additional resources, the system is working much more efficiently and much of the backlog and delays which were so frustrating for all of us have been reduced.

Council budget

The strain on council finances during the pandemic was huge and we were looking at an eye watering deficit at one stage during that period. However some government money combined with prudent financial management meant we were able to maintain our services, albeit with a slightly limited offer for some periods.

I am pleased to say that for the coming financial year 2022/23 we have produced a balanced budget and the headlines for that are

- **adult social care** – a 10% increase (equating to £13 million, taking the total budget to £141 million) to fund the rising need for social care in the local population and rising costs

***note:** Social Care takes 59% of our total budget.

- **children's services** – a 4% increase (equating to £2.7 million, taking the total budget to £74.5 million) to fund improvements to support children in care and children with special educational needs and disabilities
- **climate and ecological emergency response** – £10M capital investment over the next 5 years to help fund the delivery of the council's action plan
- **housing** – an extra £0.75 million to support the development of more new homes with our Registered Providers and the supply of better value temporary accommodation from the private rented sector.

Highways

I am very conscious about highway concerns around the ward, in particular within Holt. Located where it is it suffers much from the overspill of traffic from the more urban areas of Wimborne and Colehill particularly, and the detrimental effect it has on our rural roads, together with the quality of life. This is recognised as an important issue by our highways teams. The parish council has been actively seeking urgent attention to this matter and is currently working closely with officers seeking solutions. Some of what is being asked is a long way off, if it ever happens, but there will be some quick wins that will come out of this I am certain.

I fully support your parish council in their endeavours to improve things, and they have certainly highlighted this subject with the decision makers and moved it higher up the agenda within Dorset Council.

There is so much more I could report on, here I have only just scratched the surface, but tried to give you a flavour of the things that I get most queries about from residents. If you have a particular issue about the above or any other council related business then please do contact me, details below. Sadly it is not always possible to give you the answer you want to hear, but you will always get an answer from me.

CLlr Robin Cook

Stour and Allen Vale Ward

cllrrobin.cook@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

11	Open Forum Mrs S Frost asked about the future of Holt St James Church as a lot of people are interested in particular with what will happen to the contents of the church and burials in the church yard. The Clerk advised that the Church Commissioners have not yet placed the Church on the open market and will check back to previous correspondence in respect of the contents/graves and forward to Mrs S Frost. It is understood that once a suitable alternative use has been found for the Church, a public consultation will be held.
-----------	---

Meeting Closed at 21:02

These minutes are to be signed by the Chairman after approval at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

Signed;..... Date:.....

DRAFT