

CHARDSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th March 2022 – 7.00pm; meeting held in Chardstock Community Hall.

Present: Cllrs. Wilson (Chair), Greer (Vice-Chair), Eames, Hughes and Reeve (quorate).

In Attendance: Paul Hayward (Clerk) (also representing East Devon District Council)

Also, Michael Davis, Hon. Tree Warden.

1 member of the public in attendance.

	<p>Meeting started at 7.00pm. The Chair welcomed all in attendance and outlined Fire Safety precautions and CV19 compliance and safety guidance.</p> <p>Public Forum:</p> <p>i) Hon. Tree Warden asked to speak at a later part of the meeting. Agreed. No Police Officer in attendance and no crime report available.</p> <p>ii) No report to Council from Hon. Footpath Warden on P3 matters.</p> <p>iii) Reports from County & District Councillors.</p> <p>a) No report received from Cllr. Chubb.</p> <p>b) Brief verbal report from Cllr. Hayward. No public questions to Cllr. Hayward.</p> <p>iv) No public representations at this point.</p> <p>The Chair closed Public Forum session accordingly at 7.10pm.</p>
22/028i)	<p>To note members of the Parish Council in attendance:</p> <p>As listed above.</p>
22/028ii)	<p>To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence received: (LGA 1972 s.85(1))</p> <p>Apology for absence received from Cllr. Sonnenberg who was unwell. Apology and reason for absence proposed for approval by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Hughes. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Absence of County Cllr. Chubb and P3 Warden noted.</p>
22/028iii)	<p>To receive any other apologies for absence:</p> <p>Apologies received from Cllr. Iain Chubb (DCC) and the P3/Footpath warden.</p>
22/029	<p>Declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct:</p> <p>Chair declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Community Hall. <i>Chair highlighted the need for members to declare any interests that arose during the meeting.</i></p>
22/030	<p>To consider any matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:</p> <p>Chair proposed that agenda item 22/032 be considered in Part Two (confidential committee session) due to the nature of the subject matter and the associated confidential and legal issues involved. Seconded by Cllr. Greer. Resolved.</p>
22/031	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Chardstock Parish Council held on 9th February 2022:</p> <p>Approval of the minutes of this Ordinary meeting was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr. Reeve. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Signed as a true record of that meeting by the Chair.</p> <p>Matters arising from these minutes: None.</p>

	<i>Chair proposed that agenda item 22/036 c) and d) be brought forward for discussion and consideration. Agreed.</i>
22/036c)d)	<p>c) To consider proposal for Parish Council to assist with a potential Community Woodland Project; d) To receive update on the QJ22 EDDC Tree Planting Project and other matters pertaining to tree planting projects/initiatives in the parish.</p> <p>Mr. Davis (Hon. Tree Warden) was invited to speak by the Chair. Mr. Davis outlined a potential scheme for a community woodland project in conjunction with a local landowner, across an area of approximately 1 acre. Funding via grant awards was possible in cooperation/liaison with the Chardstock Eco-Group. Some reservations were raised regarding livestock access and the possible damage to the trees and risks of escape if public access provided. Mr. Davis offered to undertake some further research and report back to Council as soon as possible. He also updated members on the ongoing tree planting project with the final tranche of saplings to be planted on 19/3/22.</p> <p>With regards to the QJ22 tree offer from EDDC, the Clerk reported that DCC had given their consent for land at Broom Lane, Tytherleigh (the triangle of land adjacent to the A358) to be used as a planting location for the Oak tree being donated. A location some 4m from the hedgeline was suggested to enable the hedge to be maintained without damage to the tree.</p> <p><i>It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Hughes, that the tree be accepted with thanks and that Clerk would liaise with EDDC and DCC to make the arrangements for the planting in accordance with the scheme timetable. Resolved unanimously.</i></p> <p>Chair thanked Mr. Davis for his continued hard work and efforts in helping the Parish Council with all matters pertaining to trees, hedges and habitat. Mr. Davis left the meeting at this point.</p>
22/032	<p>Matters pertaining to Chardstock Community Shop: As resolved above, this matter will now be considered as Part Two business below.</p>
22/033	<p>To consider Parish Maintenance, Highways and Footpath (P3) matters:</p> <p>i) P3 / Parish Maintenance. Clerk raised a query as to whether the Council was happy to approve the use of reclaimed wooden sleepers for P3 bridge and step repairs, and also the use of concrete for more robust repairs to steps, banks etc. <i>Both options proposed by Cllr. Greer, seconded by Cllr. Hughes. Resolved unan.</i> Clerk was asked to chase progress on the stile/kissing gate replacement on FP28. <i>Clerk: Please liaise with landowners and P3 warden accordingly.</i></p> <p>ii) Members considered a suggestion that the Parish Council join forces with the neighbouring All Saints Parish Council to jointly purchase (and share) a Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) device to help reduce speeds in the parish. The principle of the proposal was supported by members and Clerk was asked to liaise with ASPC to determine whether they wished to co-operate in that regard. <i>Clerk: Please action accordingly and return to Council with answer and figures for further consideration at the earliest opportunity.</i></p> <p>iii) CRWS/Road safety/highway repairs. Clerk was asked to chase DCC Highways regarding the ongoing issues at Hook where the bank (and safety railings) had fallen away exposing a dangerous drop for road users. <i>Clerk: Please action accordingly.</i></p>

22/034	<p>Planning matters to be considered:</p> <p>a)i) To consider planning applications received prior to agenda publication: No applications received for members to consider.</p> <p>a)ii) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication as per supplementary agenda circulated to all members. No applications received for Council to consider.</p> <p>b) Determinations/Decisions advised by LPA: None advised.</p> <p>c) Tree (Planning) Matters: No applications received for Council to consider.</p> <p>d) Appeals lodged/in progress: None advised.</p> <p>e) Planning correspondence received: None received.</p> <p>f) Planning applications to be considered at forthcoming EDDC Planning meetings where the Parish Council may wish to make a representation: None advised.</p> <p>g) Planning Consultations pending/in progress; to agree response from the Parish Council (if appropriate): None advised.</p>
22/035	<p>Financial Matters to be considered:</p> <p>a) It was proposed by Cllr. Greer, seconded by Cllr. Reeve, that Council payments for February 2022 be approved (£1044.05). Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>b) RFO Report for March 2022 received and noted.</p> <p>c) No questions to the RFO on the report or finances in general.</p> <p>d) To consider proposal to delegate to the RFO (in conjunction with the Chair of Council) the authority to make payments as required up until the end of March 2022 to bring the Council's current financial year to a closing position; all payments to be reported to Full Council in April 2022 with reports. Proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Reeve. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: please note and action accordingly, reporting back to Council in April as necessary.</p> <p>e) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve Council's Annual Risk Assessment Review. Approval proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer. Resolved unanimously. The condition of the noticeboards was highlighted as a matter of urgency. Clerk also suggested that a Reserve Fund be considered for future Auditing Charges. Chair suggested this matter be brought back to Council in April. Clerk: Please provide Internal Auditor with the substantive approved Risk Assessment as part of the forthcoming AGAR2 process for 21/22.</p> <p>f) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve Council's Internal Financial Control Review (IFCR). Approval proposed by Cllr. Greer, seconded by Cllr. Chair. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: Please provide Internal Auditor with the substantive approved IFCR as part of the forthcoming AGAR2 process for 21/22.</p> <p>g) To consider items of expenditure authorised under Chair's/Clerk's Delegated Authority (Financial Regulations May 2021 s4.1 and within Delegation Appendix) None to be reported to members.</p> <p>h) To consider proposal to close Lloyds Bank account: Closure of account proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly and arrange for any direct debit instructions for Lloyds to be amended as soon as possible to prevent any payment processing issues arising. Chair asked that a proposal to add further bank mandate signatories for Unity Trust Bank be added to April's ORD meeting agenda. Noted</p>

Initial:

	Business to be considered:
22/036a)	<p>a) To consider and agree upon possible speakers for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on April 13th 2022 (immediately prior to the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council):</p> <p>It was agreed that, in light of the amount of business on the primary ORD agenda that same evening, and recognising the rising infection rates for CV19 in the SW, no speakers would be invited to the APM but that Council would reconsider this matter in December 2022 with a view to arranging the 2023 event. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p>
22/036b)	<p>b) To consider submission of articles to Parish Newsletter for the April 2022 edition:</p> <p>Potential article submissions: Chard area flood mapping project volunteers sought. Parish First Aid training – seek resident’s feedback/interest. Celebration of QJ22 Oak Tree planting at Tytherleigh. Potential provision of VAS device in the parish to reduce speed. <i>All other content delegated to the Chair to submit on Council’s behalf.</i> Chair: Please submit appropriate article to the Newsletter Editor.</p>
22/036c)	<p>c) To consider proposal for Parish Council to assist with a potential Community Woodland Project:</p> <p>See above.</p>
22/036d)	<p>d) To receive update on the QJ22 EDDC Tree Planting Project and other matters pertaining to tree planting projects/initiatives in the parish:</p> <p>See above.</p>
22/036e)	<p>e) To consider whether members of the Parish Council wish to participate in an induction/training session arranged by the Clerk for the benefit of newly co-opted members:</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that such a training event would be very welcomed and helpful to all members. Format, date and time to be agreed upon. Clerk: Please arrange accordingly.</p>
22/036f)	<p>f) To consider whether Council wishes to submit a formal response to the EDDC Code of Conduct Consultation:</p> <p><i>It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer, that the Parish Council did NOT wish to submit a formal “collective” response to the consultation. Resolved unanimously.</i> Noted. No further action required.</p>
22/036g)	<p>g) To receive update from Clerk on Playground Inspection matters and to consider a proposal to utilise bespoke Inspection Reporting/Recording software to ensure inspection/governance compliance:</p> <p>After review of the report from the Clerk, it was agreed that Clerk should obtain quotes for software of this nature and bring those quotes back to Council for further consideration: Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p>
22/036h)	<p>h) To consider proposals for longer term maintenance, repair and replacement of parish play equipment; Clerk to provide report on options available:</p> <p>Members agreed that additional equipment in the play area would be welcomed and appreciated by residents but, at this stage, the funding of such equipment was uncertain given other major items of expenditure in the pipeline. It was agreed to discuss this matter again later in the year.</p>

22/036i)	<p>i) To receive update on recent AED/Defibrillator awareness event in the parish (Clerk to speak on this matter) and to consider request from parishioners for additional First Aid/CPT training:</p> <p>Clerk provided update on recent event. It was highlighted that attendees had enquired about additional first aid training for the parish. The Chair confirmed that she would place the subject in the Parish Magazine for April to gauge interest whereupon quote could be obtained for some First Aid events. Noted.</p>
22/036j)	<p>j) To consider arrangements for any parish celebrations in recognition/celebration of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022:</p> <p><i>It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Hughes, that an informal QJ22 Working Group be established to help coordinate and facilitate the events planned within the parish later this year. Resolved unanimously.</i></p> <p><i>It was further proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer, that Council purchase 200 quantity QJ22 badges for students at the Primary School (and members of the parish community) with the wording "Chardstock Parish" added to the badge surround. Costs to be no more than £200. Resolved unanimously.</i></p> <p><i>Clerk: Please note and arrange accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>Sections 137/144/145 of the Local Government Act 1972 apply in respect of the Council's Powers to incur expenditure in this way.</i></p>
22/037	<p>Other matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only:</p> <p>None raised.</p>
22/038	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>Next Ordinary meeting of council scheduled for 13th April 2022 7.30pm start time, to immediately follow the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm, to be held at the Community Hall.</p> <p><i>Clerk: Please prepare agenda and publicise accordingly through usual channels.</i></p>
22/039	<p>It was proposed by Cllr. Greer that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Members to agree upon matters to be discussed in confidential session, as per agenda item 22/030 above. Seconded by Cllr. Eames. Resolved unanimously.</p>
22/040	<p>Matters to be considered in committee session:</p> <p>i) i) To consider employment matters pertaining to remuneration in light of recent NJC statement re: 2020-21 pay settlement: <i>Chair proposed that Council award the back-dated sum due to the Clerk in line with the recently announced NJC settlement for 1st April 2021. Seconded Cllr. Greer. Resolved unanimously.</i></p> <p>22/032 ii) To consider matters pertaining to the ongoing proposal to assist with the purchase of the Community Shop and Post office; to consider confidential financial & legal matters relating to the proposed transaction:</p> <p><i>Continued overleaf.</i></p>

Initial:

Representatives of the Chardstock Community Shop Committee (CSCC) and the present owners/operators were invited to present their updated report to members. This material is confidential in respect of the ongoing sale of the property by 3rd parties, who have kindly shared financial data with the CSCC group. Chair thanked all parties for the clarity of the presentations and the comprehensive amount of data and information provided.

iii) To consider proposal that the Parish Council seek independent legal advice in relation to possible commercial agreements between the Parish Council and a 3rd party organisation relating to the proposed purchase of the Community Shop.

It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer, that the Council seek independent legal advice on the draft agreement(s) between the CSCC and the Parish Council. Resolved unanimously.

Delegated authority was afforded to Clerk and Chair to make the necessary arrangements to obtain said legal advice.

Clerk: Please note and liaise with CSCC accordingly to obtain draft copies of the framework funding agreements.

iv) To note ongoing referendum arrangements in accordance with the MCHLG requirements prior to the application for PWLB lending facilities:

It was noted that ballot papers/envelopes had been delivered to all parish households (413) on or around the 16th March and that the scheduled collection date was on the 23rd April. Clerk advised that, in accordance with the guidance and best practice for the counting/telling of the ballots cast, Cllr. Sarah Jackson (EDDC Ward member for Axminster) had kindly agreed to count the slips and announce the result as soon after the 23rd as possible. Cllr. Jackson was:

i) Not a resident of Chardstock.

ii) Not a member or officer of the Parish Council.

iii) Not a member of the CSCC.

Cllr. Jackson had also sworn to abide by the EDDC Code of Conduct and to abide by the Nolan Principles.

v) To consider whether Council (after taking appropriate independent legal advice) wishes to enter into a **grant funding agreement** with a 3rd party towards the costs of a possible purchase of the Community Shop rather than becoming a joint legal owner of said property; this proposal is based on the principle that the Parish Council agrees to proceed with plans to seek loan funding for the project from PWLB/MCHLG:

It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Greer, that the Parish Council would wish to enter into a grant funding agreement with a 3rd party rather than seeking to become a joint (freehold) owner of the Community Shop, subject to the Council proceeding with the loan application to the PWLB and subject to taking independent legal advice on the wording of any draft funding/partnership agreement. Resolved unanimously.

Chair thanked all members of the CSCC for their incredible efforts in rallying the community behind the project and looked forward to seeing the results of the ballot in due course.

With no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.20pm

**Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th
March 2022 – 7.00pm; meeting held in Chardstock Community Hall.**

Signed: _____ Date: 13/04/2022

(Chair)

Initial: