

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF CHARMOUTH
HELD ON TUESDAY 16 MAY 2023 AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WESLEY CLOSE

8 electors, 6 Councillors, Dorset Councillor Belinda Bawden, guest speakers/stand holders were present.

1. The Chair, Peter Noel, welcomed Charmouth parishioners to the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting.
2. Apologies were received from Cllrs Judith Sheppard and Andrew Lightfoot.
3. The Chair explained that the meeting had been advertised in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 using the Statutory Notice.
4. The Minutes of the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting had been displayed on the website and were also available around the room. The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
5. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
6. Peter Noel introduced the 6 Councillors present (Jane Bremner, Melanie Harvey, Julie Leah, Katie Moore, Peter Noel and Martin Sayers).
7. Guest Speakers gave presentations:
 - Tamara Bellew from Dorset Council Fostering Team talked about how people could get involved with Fostering and detailed the upcoming events related to Fostering Fortnight from 15-28 May. Tamara also had a stand for people to browse and would leave leaflets for distribution in the village.
 - Dorset Councillor Belinda Bawden, spoke about current issues topical to Charmouth including the fact that the footbridge across the river at the Foreshore had now been repaired; as part of the DC 20 is Plenty Campaign, a speedwatch group is being established and that national funding is required to try and bring the beach stepped ramp to fruition. She thanked Citizen's Advice for all its support and commented how wonderful she thought Charmouth community is;
 - Jane Bremner spoke briefly about gambling harm and how if this is taking up more time or more money than an individual wants it to, this could be a problem. Jane highlighted a campaign being run by Citizen's Advice in conjunction with Gambling Aware where people can be pointed in the right direction to get help.
 - Carly Wyman from Jurassic Fibre was in attendance with a stand about the roll out of ultrafast full fibre broadband in Charmouth currently.
8. Charmouth's Community Resilience Plan – Melanie Harvey explained the Community Resilience Plan which had recently been adopted by the Council and is designed to "hold the fort" in a large scale incident before the emergency services arrive. Other than another pandemic, the most likely incident for Charmouth would be a weather event. It would be very helpful to have a bank of volunteers similar to during Covid that can be called upon in an emergency and if anyone would be willing to be added to a list, please contact the Parish Council.
9. Reports from Chairs of Parish Council Committees:
 - Foreshore Committee (Katie Moore, Vice Chair) – Katie spoke about how lucky the village is to have the Foreshore and that for the last two years, Dorset Council has helped to fund an evening beach attendant during the high season to help with enquiries and litter clearance. The Parish Council is to continue this service for the coming season. The following projects had been undertaken or are imminent:
 - Tarmac patching and re-lining of the Foreshore Car Park;
 - Replacement of 7 beach huts with significantly upgraded buildings;
 - Bigger bins to help avoid the accumulation of rubbish;
 - Swim buoys to help make the immediate swimming area in front of both beaches safer for swimmers, kayakers and paddle boarders;
 - Increased environmental awareness regarding the reed bed and anthills;
 - Upgraded information plaques;
 - New tractor to ensure efficiency and safety on and around the beach area.Katie thanked the Coastguard and the volunteer Poo Patrol as well as the Council's maintenance team who all do a marvellous job.
 - Playing Field, Cemetery and Street Management Committee (Martin Sayers, Vice Chair) – Martin talked about the current changes at the cemetery which although isn't a tourist attraction, is very well kept and a very pleasant space:

- Re-roofing of the Victorian Chapel;
- Due to the retirement of the previous grass cutting contractor, this contract would now be undertaken “in house”.

With regard to the Playing Field, the following has recently been undertaken or is imminent:

- Replacement of the wooden multi play equipment with the help of a National Lottery grant of £10,000 which would be dedicated to the Coronation of King Charles III;
- Planting of trees for the Queen’s Green Canopy as part of the Platinum Jubilee and more latterly a Community Orchard also dedicated to the Coronation.

As part of the Street Management aspect of the Committee, Martin spoke about the recent campaign by Dorset Council to introduce more 20mph limits and how this is a personal crusade of his as although people don’t currently break the speed limit, 30pmh feels too fast. Feedback on this issue would be welcome.

Jane Bremner informed parishioners that the South West in Bloom competition was entered for the first time in 2022 and won a silver gilt award. With more support from local businesses, a portfolio is being prepared for this year’s entry. She urged everyone to help make Charmouth look the best it can.

10. Report from the Chair of the Parish Council – Peter Noel, Chair, spoke about:

- How the Parish Council is totally non-political and that members work together as a team and speak with one voice;
- That there are still three unfilled places on the Parish Council and how this is a very good time to apply to be co-opted as it gives a good idea of what is involved before the elections next year;
- A new bench has been installed outside the Elms which encourages people to sit and chat. The bench is made from recycled materials and Peter encouraged people to take a look at this new type of street furniture which deteriorates less and therefore needs less maintenance.
- The part of Barrs Lane past the playing field had been levelled again and is awaiting 10 tonne of hardcore to improve the surface further.
- The Council continued to support holding of outreach post office facilities in the Library and the Hollands Room.
- Julie Leah mentioned the Council’s support for the Café during the winter to help fund a warm space.

11. Q&A Session – for residents to address the meeting in respect of any matter relevant to the Parish as a whole

Q. Bill Burn asked about the concrete sea defence steps and the policy of “no active intervention”. Peter Noel talked about how the proposed stepped ramp could help overcome many of the issues faced.

Q. Terry Sweeney, an Uplyme resident, stated that he is always very impressed with the ‘tight ship’ running at Charmouth and that the SSSI work is very good.

Q. Jan Coleman asked again about the state of the boundary fence of Charmouth Beach Car Park adjacent to the path which runs from Lower Sea Lane to the bridge. It was confirmed that CPC had contacted the owner of the Beach Car Park and this issue should now be directed to Dorset Council footpaths department (Action: Belinda Bawden, DC).

Q. Jan Coleman asked about the replacement of the notices which warned of rockfalls. This sign used to be situated by the small footbridge at the end of the promenade onto west beach. It was confirmed that the Foreshore Committee are looking at replacement signage.

11. Peter Noel thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm. Coffee was served.