

Charmouth Parish Council

Council Office The Elms St Andrew's Drive Charmouth Bridport Dorset DT6 6LN



Telephone: (01297) 560826 E-Mail: clerk@charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE FORESHORE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 7:30PM ON TUESDAY 26th APRIL 2022

In attendance: Cllrs Maralyn Hinxman, Julie Leah, Katie Moore, Peter Noel, Judith Sheppard and the Deputy Clerk, Melissa Kirkby

FS11.22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR REPRESENTATIONS

There were none.

FS12.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

FS13.22 DISPENSATIONS

None were received.

FS14.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Leah reminded the members that she is part of the River Char Monitoring Group as the Council's representative.

FS15.22 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Foreshore Committee held on the 22nd February circulated to members, be signed as a correct record.

FS16.22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- a. Foreshore Assent Document has been submitted to Natural England for approval.
- b. Cllr Hinxman has found a bugler to play at the Queens Jubilee beacon lighting event.

FS17.22 PROGRESS REPORTS

- a. Instalment of hedge around reed bed

This has now been done and new growth is showing.

- b. Re-instatement of hedge – whip planting on west green

This took place on Sunday 23rd April with the help of eleven volunteers.

c. Overlays for car park sign

At the last meeting this was delegated to Cllr Sheppard who met with the Facilities Manager and they decided that it was not worth the expense of buying an overlay. The current signage is fine until the whole sign needs upgrading.

d. Beach step work

Cllr Sheppard reported that this work of installing a concrete step at the bottom of the metal steps had been done. It seemed to be working well.

e. River Char Water Quality

The Clerk had previously asked questions regarding the sampling and the answers had been circulated to the members.

- How long is it intended to take the weekly samples for?
- If this is a long period of time, are the ongoing costs sustainable and is single use equipment very environmentally friendly.
- What time of year will the sampling take place? (The Env Agency already sample West Beach weekly from 1 May-30 September.)
- What is the ultimate goal and how is it envisaged that the Parish Council will be involved?

Cllr Leah's reply was "this is part on ongoing discussions with Wessex Water about the sewage outages so I assume the sampling will carry on as long as needed until the pollution problem stops. The role of the Parish Council at this stage in terms of the monitoring is really just to allow us to do the monitoring and it is more a case of we can help the P/C if we identify a problem".

The members wanted to hold the water companies to account for indiscriminate sewage release.

The members agreed to give permission for the River Char Monitoring Group to take samples from the river.

FS18.22 HAZARD & INCIDENT REPORT

There were none reported.

FS19.22 NEW ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. Blue Badge Scheme – Parish Council Parking Policy

Cllr Sheppard reported that as mentioned at the full council meeting, Dorset Council are changing their parking fees to be consistent across their car parks. She asked if the committee want to change the existing Parish Council policy of no concession at the foreshore car park for Blue Badge holders. In the last eight years there has only been the one complaint about parking charges which were from a couple who wanted a concession for being elderly which has already been discussed at least twice by the committee. The members decided not to change the current parking charges.

b. Beach Hut Replacement

Cllr Sheppard reported that the Clerk had been advised that the possible reason for the green hut floors being very wet is because the Green huts from 10-20 are not on a concrete plinth. The Facilities Manager has been asked to obtain, firstly for a replacement hut price from alternative suppliers and secondly, for the laying of a concrete plinth like the one for huts 1-9. This may also require planning permission. Since the advice the Clerk has now been told that the likeliest reason for the damp huts is the quality of the huts' construction. The members agreed to wait for a second quote for beach huts and their build quality specification before making any decisions.

c. Seasonal Beach Attendant

Cllr Sheppard reported that George Lugg has been offered the above position, which he has accepted.

d. Paid for Fossil Walks

The letters confirming permission have been sent for this year. Melanie Harvey has confirmed that she is no longer taking walks and Chris Pamplin has moved to France. So, there are two spaces for walk leaders.

e. Review of Policies

The policies requiring review were previously circulated to the members. It was agreed that the Beach Attendant's Office Policy (Appendix A); Casual Launching of Microlight Aircraft Policy (Appendix B); Guided Fossil Walks Code of Practice (Appendix C) and the Privately Arranged (Not for Profit) Fossil Walks – Policy Statement (Appendix D), be referred to full Council for approval. The Firework Displays on Council Land Policy is to be changed by the Clerk/Deputy Clerk to be clearer on what is allowed and then referred to full Council for approval.

FS20.22 CORRESPONDENCE

a. Refill App

An email was received from Litter Free Dorset inviting us to include the water tap at the Beach Office on the Refill App scheme, which the Deputy has done. This was noted.

b. Filming of Dance display at foreshore

An email was received from Anna Golding, Fingerprint Dance, requesting permission to make a short community dance film about the health benefits of dancing outside and connecting to the landscape. She provided a risk assessment and public liability certificate. The dates for filming were March 15th, 29th and April 5th from 10am to 3pm. There are 11 dancers plus her the film maker. Due to the timescales the Deputy asked the Chair and Clerk, who agreed permission as similar requests had previously been granted by the committee. This was noted.

c. NCI Weather station

An email had been received from Colin Horlock the Station Manager for the NCI requesting permission to install a weather centre. On meeting with the Facilities Manager, it was decided that the best location would be on the toilet block and so permission was asked and given from Dorset Council who are the lease holders for the building. This was noted.

d. River Cottage foraging days

An email had been received from River Cottage requesting permission to hold foraging days at the foreshore on 22nd April 2022 and the 11th May 2022. As the first date was before the meeting the Deputy asked the Clerk and Chair who both agreed as previous foraging days have taken place over the last few years without problem. The amount charged to remain the same as last year.

River Cottage then asked if they could have a permission for provisional dates in September of 12th September 2022, 13th September 2022, 27th September 2022. They would let the Deputy know the exact number nearer the time.

CLLr Leah asked about foraging on an SSSI. The Deputy Clerk said that the foraging days were run by a professional and only took place a few times a year. She would contact the event organiser and ask for further details about their knowledge of what was good practice etc. The members agreed to give permission for a further two days foraging in September.

e. Library Book Sales

An email has been received from Bob Hughes. He is hoping that the Parish Council will allow the Charmouth Community Library to sell books again in the summer. As in previous years they would like to have four Sundays between the last Sunday in July and the first Sunday in September. They would set up opposite the Charmouth Heritage Centre. They will have two people in attendance. He asks if it can be agreed in principle, he will advise you of planned dates closer to the time. The members agreed to give permission to this request.

f. Nordic Walking permission request

An email has been received from Melanie Harvey requesting permission to carry out trial Nordic walking sessions on foreshore land. This would be for the purpose of giving basic instruction on how to do Nordic walking. The actual walks would take place elsewhere. The members agreed to give permission to this request.

FS21.22 IN COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business in view of the likely disclosure of confidential matters about information relating to an individual, and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

a. Lease issues

- i) Lease 3 - Agreed to propose to Finance.
- ii) Building maintenance – Agreed to accept quote from MAC Builders for £550 from Factory Maintenance budget.
- iii) This was not yet due to be discussed.
- iv) Lease 2 - Agreed to propose to Finance.
- v) Lease 6 - Agreed to propose to Finance.

b. Old Cement Factory metal shutter quotes

The members discussed the difficulties in fixing shutters to the Old Cement Factory Building due to the nature of the building and the location. It was agreed not to accept any quotes and leave as is unless there are further issues when the subject can be looked at again.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed

Dated

Referred to Full Council

FS19.22 e. Review of Policies:

Beach Attendant's Office (Appendix A)

Casual Launching of Microlight Aircraft (Appendix B)

Guided Fossil Walks Code of Practice (Appendix C)

Privately Arranged (Not for Profit) Fossil Walks – Policy Statement (Appendix D)

Firework Displays on Council Land – To be changed to be clearer on what is allowed.

Referred to Finance Committee

FS21.22

i) Lease 3 review

iv) Lease 2 review

v) Lease 6 review

APPENDIX A

Policy Statement

Use of the Beach Attendant's Office by Persons Not Employed by the Parish Council

1. Introduction

The use of the Beach Attendant's Office at the Factory Building by others* creates unacceptable property and thus financial risks to the Parish Council.

However, there are events at the Foreshore where it would be advantageous to the community if access was available for various reasons including access to various facilities e.g. electrical power supply, hot water, etc.

2. Access Arrangements

In the event that an organisation wishes to have access to the Beach Attendant's Office, they shall apply in the first instance to the Parish Clerk detailing their requirements, hours of access, etc.

If the proposed period of use is when the Parish Council's employed Beach Attendant is not in attendance, access will only be permitted if a Parish councillor can be in attendance through-out the whole period of use. If a Parish councillor is not available, then access will not be permitted.

3. The Clerk to the Parish Council

The Parish Clerk is in law the Responsible Financial Officer for the Parish Council and has to be totally satisfied with proposed arrangements before consent may be considered by the Parish Council.

**The term 'Other' refers to any person not either the Clerk to the Council, in direct employment of the Parish Council, or a member (councillor) of the Parish Council. It also includes any other organisation, public authority or limited company*

APPENDIX B

Policy Statement – Casual Launching of Microlight Aircraft

1. Introduction

It is Charmouth Parish Council policy, as land owner, to state the conditions on which it would allow the launch or recovery of microlight aircraft whether amphibious or not and whether it is a fixed wing or a rotary winged aircraft of any size carrying a person or people from the Foreshore at Charmouth. (See the Parish Council's policy statement for unmanned aerial vehicles.)

2. Charmouth Parish Council Owned Land

Parish Council owned land at Charmouth Foreshore as follows:

- the foreshore from the cliffs, carparks and promenade to the mean high water mark (MHWM) from the boundary with Lyme Regis Civil Parish to the boundary with Stanton St. Gabriel;
- the land between the MHWM and the mean low water mark (MLWM) from the boundary with the Civil Parish of Lyme Regis to the boundary with the Civil Parish of Stanton St. Gabriel;
- Evans Cliff (that is the land from the lower edge of the cliffs to the boundary with land owned by Manor Farm and from the banks of the River Char to the boundary with the Civil Parish of Stanton St. Gabriel);
- the Car Park, the Overflow Car Park, the Boat Park, the reed bed, the lands from the Reed Bed to the banks of the River Char and the lands from the Reed Bed to Lower Sea Land including the footpath alongside Lower Sea Lane, and
- the land from the Car Park to the cliffs, including the Factory Building (aka: the Heritage Centre) to the east as far as, but not including Cliffend.

3. Policy Statement

No aircraft whether amphibious or not and whether it is a fixed wing or rotary winged aircraft of any size carrying a person or people may be launched from the Parish Council owned lands without prior written consent from the Clerk to the Parish Council.

The Clerk to the Parish Council will require with any written request for consent the following:

- (i) risk assessment covering not only the handling of the aircraft over the Parish Council's owned lands but also for the launching and recovery of the aircraft;
- (ii) a valid certificate or other acceptable documentation of public liability insurance; and
- (iii) the intended dates for launching of the aircraft.

The decision of the Parish Clerk as to whether to allow or not is final.

4. Fee

The fee for launching and recovery of any aircraft from the Foreshore is the same as the casual boat launch fee.

APPENDIX C

GUIDED FOSSIL WALKS CODE OF PRACTICE

The Parish Council as owners of the Foreshore within the Parish of Charmouth grant permission to carry out fossil walks on and across its beaches. The beaches in question stretch from the "Vine Yard" below the head of Evans Cliff to the East (at the present fall) to Canary Ledges in the West "Black Ven".

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions set out below:

- That the Council reserves the right to withdraw its consent if the conditions set out below are not adhered to, if the policies in reference to fossil walks on its beaches are altered, or if the Council feels it necessary for any reason.
- This Code of Practice is reviewed every 12 months.
- The walk organiser/leader must hold an insurance indemnity for public liability, proof of which must be shown to the Council.
- The Council will determine where the walk leader meets the clients when permission is granted.
- Before any walk, health and safety instructions should be given to clients along with information about the Code of Responsible Fossil Collecting within the World Heritage Site.
- That good practice should be carried out at all times in the use of appropriate tools.
- That the walk leader and his/her clients should respect other users of the beach at all times.
- That the walk leader and his/her clients should consider the status of the site.
- Groups should be no more than 20 people per walk leader at any one time in the interest of both safety and value for money (with the exception of school parties who have their own staff to ensure staff to pupil ratio).
- All fossil hunting walks sessions need to start their beach activities 3 hours after high tide and finish an hour either side of low tide, unless express permission has been sought from the appropriate landowners.
- With regard to adverse weather, leaders should carefully consider the state of the sea, which can affect the height of the tide and the state of the cliffs in terms of rainwater, which causes landslides and rock falls.

Permission must be applied for in writing with proof of public liability insurance and is only valid on receipt of a confirmation letter from the Parish Council confirming meeting point etc.

APPENDIX D

Privately Arranged (Not for Profit) Fossil Walks – Policy Statement

Introduction

This policy statement defines the Parish Council policy about private groups arranging not for profit fossil walks on the Foreshore in Charmouth.

Definition of ‘Not for Profit’

For the purposes of this policy statement the term ‘Not for Profit’ excludes:

- (i) Organised on the basis of ‘gain’ or ‘loss’, whether by way of exchange of cash, other monetary order, credit, cheques, debits, sponsorship, gifts or any other form of exchange;
- (ii) The raising of funds whether money, gifts or other reward for Charities or other like organisations; or
- (iii) Where the cost of the fossil walk is included within a trip cost that includes other events, including travel.

Nevertheless the term ‘Not for Profit’ does not exclude:

- (a) School parties,
- (b) Groups of university students undertaking field trips, or
- (c) Family groups.

Background

Charmouth Parish Council owns the foreshore and unusually the foreshore between the mean high water (MHW) and the mean low water (MLW) from its parish boundary with the town of Lyme Regis in the west to the parish boundary with the parish of Stanton St Gabriel in the east.

The Foreshore Committee has previously considered this matter and agreed that although the Parish Council, as the land owner, has a duty of care to those who use the foreshore, it was of the opinion that to attempt to introduce a policy statement would be:

- (i) Difficult to enforce as although the foreshore, in law is private land, it has unrestricted public access;
- (ii) Difficult to enforce because of the informal manner that such group arrive at the foreshore; and
- (iv) Possibly incur adverse reaction as the policy statement would be seen as possible over-regulation and possibly protectionist of the commercially operated guided fossil walks.

Policy Statement

The Parish Council has no policy to restrict access to the Foreshore at Charmouth for ‘Not for Profit’ fossil walks, although if asked, groups will be directed to consult the Fossil Code (available at the Heritage Centre) and also the tides for the time of the visit.