



Beaminster Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Public Hall, Beaminster at 7.30pm on Thursday 18th April 2024 with Councillor Craig Monks in the Chair, 3 councillors and 11 parishioners present.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman, in opening the meeting welcomed everyone to the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting, this the last Town Council meeting he would chair prior to the elections on 2nd May. During his time as Chairman he had enjoyed chairing the Annual Parish meeting.

The Chairman welcomed a group of young people from Prout Bridge and Beaminster School, attending the meeting to receive their Beaminster Youth Award.

Prout Bridge Project

Tony Street, Youth Work Manager at Prout Bridge, thanked the Town Council for once again having the opportunity to recognise those members of the Youth Club that play an important role at Prout Bridge.

Two awards were given for being part of the Phoenix Band and having the confidence to perform at live events, three awards were given for the confidence shown in organising activities and events; also eight awards were given to those who volunteered to be a senior worker at the Junior Youth Club showing confidence and flexibility, without whom the Club would not be able to operate. A special award was presented to Harry Sharp for gaining the confidence to run sports and other activities with the members of the Junior Club.

Beaminster School

The Head of year seven, Mrs Marilyn Stone presented three awards to pupils from Year seven; the awards were given to two pupils for raising funds for local and national charities also one award for medals won at the County Swimming Championships including 8 personal best times.

The Chairman offered his congratulations to all the Beaminster Youth Award recipients, all very deserving and welcomed Chris Loder MP to the meeting.

Mr Loder offered his congratulations to the Award recipients and expressed his pleasure to see the young people recognised in this way. He invited those present to ask questions or comment on any key issues of concern.

A concern with regard to the condition of footpaths and pavements was raised, Mr Loder advised this was a local concern and would be better directed to Dorset Council.

A question with regard to resilience was raised, in particular the lack of information/guidance filtering down to local level from County and Central Government on resilience issues such as food security etc.

In response Mr Loder highlighted the higher risk of failure in the supply chain when relying on the main centralised distribution systems of the supermarket chains making local food production a priority.

2. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2023 were approved.

3. **REPORT FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

The Chairmen's annual reports were contained within the agenda document previously circulated.

Planning Advisory & Highways Committee

The Chairman invited questions related to planning and highways.

A question was asked with regard to the introduction of a 20mph speed limit. The Chairman advised the council had submitted an application to Dorset Council for the introduction of a '20mph town' subsequently a number of traffic speed surveys had been undertaken and a proposal put forward by Dorset Council. The Town Council had submitted its comments with regard to the proposal and a further response from Dorset Council was awaited.

In response to a question with regard to membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group the Chairman advised a meeting of the Group had taken place earlier in the week and he was hopeful that more people would join as work on the Plan progressed.

A concern was expressed as to whether the word 'advisory' in the title of the Planning Committee had a detrimental effect on the perception of the Council's input, in response Cllr Turner reiterated the Town Council were one of the statutory consultees on planning issues and had no authority.

Town Amenities Committee

The Committee Chairman, Cllr Beswarick's report was included within the Annual Report which highlighted the Committees focus during the past year in respect of the maintenance and enhancement of the Councils assets.

In the absence of Cllr Beswarick no further issues were raised or questions asked.

Finance & General Purposes Committee

In the absence of Cllr Woods no further issues were raised or questions asked.

Contained within the agenda papers the Town Clerk had shown a breakdown of the Council's financial position as at 29th February 2024.

The Town Clerk advised the end of the financial year (31st March 2024) close down had been scheduled of 13th May 2024 after which a copy of the unaudited accounts would be available from the council office.

In January 2024, in consideration of the precept for the financial year 2024/2025 the Council resolved a precept levy of £270,967 representing a 12% increase on the previous year.

4. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Committee Chairman, Cllr Goode's report was included within the Annual Report

In the absence of Cllr Goode no further issues were raised or questions asked.

5. **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE**

In the absence of a Committee Chairman, Mr Bigg's report as incident leader had been included within the Annual Report.

In the absence of Mr Biggs no further issues were raised or questions asked.

6. **ACCOUNTS OF PAROCHIAL CHARITIES TO 31.12.23**

The Parochial Charities had advised the audited accounts were not currently available, furthermore the Trustees had resolved that, as far as they were aware, it was not a legal requirement to provide the information for this meeting.

7. **OPEN SESSION**

CB3 community bus – Cllr Turner was pleased to report a replacement bus had recently been purchased and was currently undergoing decoration with the logo etc. He highlighted the need for more volunteer drivers.

Flood Warden Scheme – in response to a question as to whether the Flood Warden Scheme was still in operation the Chairman advised the Scheme had transferred to the Community Resilience Committee and continued to be active particularly in the past six months with volunteers monitoring water levels, clearing drains, gullies etc.

Discussions have, and will continue with neighbouring parishes with a view to working with them on distribution of sand bags etc.

Motor cycle parking space – had the council received a response from Dorset Council with regard to the lack of motor cycle spaces in Yarn Barton Car Park, a question that had been raised previously. The Town Clerk advised the response received had been negative however the Chairman advised it would be raised again at a future meeting with Dorset Council.

Development in Beaminster – concern was expressed with regard to the two current development sites off the Broadwindsor Road as to how the current, already stretched, doctors and dentist surgeries were expected to manage the increase of some 300+ residents.

Mr Loder MP advised CIL or Section 106 monies were paid by the developers to provide those facilities when large scale development took place however he did acknowledge the problem had a complex set of reasons behind the varying level of services in different parts of the county.

Early years funding – a question was put to Chris Loder MP highlighting the issue of early years funding paid by central government being insufficient to cover the number of free hours each child was entitled to.

In response Mr Loder MP acknowledged the issue and asked to speak to the parishioner on a one to one basis at a separate meeting.

With no further questions raised the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and wished them safe journey home.

8. MEETING

The meeting which started at 7.30pm ended at 8.55 pm

CHAIRMAN
17th April 2025