



BERE REGIS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH MAY 2025 AT THE DRAX HALL, NORTH STREET, COMMENCING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Present: Cllrs G Curtis, S Bardwell, T Bates, L Fairhurst, B Benjafield

Chair: Cllr Jon Park

Clerk: Mrs A Crocker

Also present: No members of the public

1. Elections

25.027 Election of the Chairman

Cllr Curtis proposed Cllr Jon Park for the role of Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously. Cllr Park signed his Acceptance of Office in the presence of the meeting.

25.028 Election of the Vice Chair

Cllr Park proposed Cllr Walker for the role of Vice Chair. Although not able to attend Cllr Walker had confirmed his acceptance of the role, should he be nominated. This was seconded by Cllr Curtis and agreed unanimously. He will be asked to sign the Acceptance of Office at the next meeting.

2. To confirm roles for Councillors for the coming year

25.029 A list of all roles will be issued to members for consideration and brought to the June meeting. The list will include who is in the role at the moment.

3. To receive apologies for absence

25.030 Apologies had been received from Cllr Walker (family commitments), Cllr Percy (holiday) and Dorset Cllrs Laura Beddow and Mike Baker (Dorset Council meeting).

4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th April 2025

25.031 A copy of the minutes had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr Park propose them to be a true and accurate representation of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously. The minutes were signed by the Chair in the presence of the meeting.

5. Matters arising not covered in this meeting – for report only

25.032 No matters arising that are not covered on the agenda.

6. To receive declarations of interest and review dispensations received

25.033 No interests were declared, and no dispensations had been received.

7. Key Topics

25.034 To agree the grant request from Bere Regis Youth Football Club for £600

Cllr Park proposed the grant is made. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

25.035 To consider the next step regarding the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the NP Review

This is a requirement of Dorset Council who, up until now, would have undertaken the work and covered the cost. However, they currently do not have the capacity to do the work and we must now look at undertaking it ourselves. Our consultants, Andrea Pellegram, are able to do the work at a cost of approximately £2,000. Cllr Curtis proposed we accept their offer of undertaking the work. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed.

25.036 To receive an update on the Communibus

The new bus has been purchased and the old one sold. The bus will be taken to the garage this coming week for an initial service which will include new break pads. It will then be ready to start work. The spare seat and set of keys will be forwarded from Nordcat and a new first aid kit has been purchased.

Members were sent a possible schematic for the bus. Hardy Signs have offered to do this for £150 if we are happy for them put their logo on the bus. Cllr Fairhurst proposed we go ahead with the signage, including the Hardy Signs logo. This was seconded by Cllr Curtis and agreed unanimously.

Section 19 – The old bus was covered by a section 19. Without it, not only would we be liable for road tax, each driver would need a Public Service Vehicle licence. Cllr Park proposed we stay with the Section 19. This was seconded by Cllr Curtis and agreed unanimously. The Clerk will get the Licence updated.

ACTION: CLERK

8. Finance

25.037 To approve the monthly expenditure

The following payments had been requested:

AG Tree Services	Stump removal at cemetery	BACS292	1,674.00
BR Youth Football	Grant for French exchange	BACS293	600.00
Edge IT	Accounts support year 1 of 5	BACS294	783.00
BR Scout Group	Lunch Club hall hire	BACS295	60.00
A Meaton	NeighbourCar trips	BACS296	89.10
Lloyds	Account charges	DDR	7.34
P Etheridge	Ecological survey	BACS297	300.00
JoJu Ltd	EV charging points connection	BACS298	4,493.17
DC Pension Fund	May 2025 pension contributions	BACS299	321.20
CloudyIT	May 2025 support, backup	BACS300	104.28
123Reg	Domain name renewal .org.uk	D/C25-01	15.59
DVLA	Road tax for new bus	D/C25-02	171.00
NORDCAT	Purchase of new bus	BACS301	11,000.00
Gallagher Ins	New motor insurance	BACS302	854.28
Glasdon	Grit bin for Southmead	BACS303	159.73
A Lynam	Lunch Club food	BACS304	65.41
BRAPC	VE Day full page advert	BACS305	22.50
A King	Lengthsman – April 2025	BACS306	2,795.63
A Crocker	May 2025 salary + expenses	BACS307	1,033.50
HMRC	May 2025 PAYE & NIC	BACS308	343.05
R Morrall	NeighbourCar trips	BACS309	58.50
Darkin Miller	Internal Audit Ye 31.03.25	BACS310	401.94

J Franklin	NeighbourCar trips	BACS311	80.10
DAPTC	Subscription 2025/26	BACS312	935.05
123 Reg	Domain name .co.uk	D/C25-03	15.59
J Kuewejewska	NeighbourCar trips	BACS313	15.00
Whitehorse Training	First Aid course	BACS314	385.00
RAB	Donation from calendar sales	BACS315	200.00
Items raised by Internal Audit as spent on the debit card but not confirmed by previous minutes:			
28.02.25	Amazon	Stationery	60.52

The total amount requested from the Precept is £27,044.48.

Cllr Curtis proposed the payments are made. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

25.038 To accept the reconciliation of accounts and position against budget as at 30th April 2025

Both reports were issued with the agenda. It was noted that income for the year to date is £66,957.24. This is due to the receipt of the first half of the annual Precept at £39,050, the grant of £10,000 for the Community Bus and a grant of £13,010.61 for the installation of the EV charging points. Expenditure for the year to date is £21,134.93 giving a balance of £248,727.75 in hand. Cllr Fairhurst proposed the reports are accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Curtis and agreed unanimously.

25.039 To agree the Annual Governance Statement

A copy had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. Each statement was reviewed and individually acknowledged. Cllr Curtis then proposed that the Annual Governance Statement is accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Bates and agreed unanimously. The Statement was signed by the Chair and RFO in the presence of the meeting.

25.040 To agree the Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025

A copy of the full set of accounts had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting, together with the Annual Accounting Statement. Cllr Park proposed the accounts are accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously. The Accounting Statement was signed by the Chairman in the presence of the meeting.

25.041 To consider the Conflict of Interest statement for the External Auditor

Members confirmed that there was no conflict of interest with BDO and the form was signed by both the Chair and the RFO.

25.042 To review and agree the Internal Auditor's report for the year ending 31st March 2025

A copy of the report had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting.

The following points had been raised by the auditor:

- (i) The fidelity cover should be increased to £210,000 to remain in line with the Council's holdings. The Insurance Company have been informed and this should take effect from the 1st June 2025.
- (ii) An amount of £60.52 had been spent on stationery purchase, but this had not been recorded in the minutes. This has now been rectified.
- (iii) The meeting on the 13th May 2024 was recorded in the June minutes as being held on the 14th May 2024

Cllr Fairhurst proposed the internal audit is accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Park and agreed unanimously.

2.043 To confirm the Parish Council's eligibility to hold the General Power of Competence (GPC)

The Parish Council remains eligible to hold GPC as the Clerk is qualified and more than two thirds of members were elected.

9. Statutory Reviews

25.044 To confirm the New Model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

A copy of both reports had been issued to members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr Curtis proposed the Financial Regulations are accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

25.045 To agree the Risk Assessment and Asset Register

A copy of both reports were issued to members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr Park proposed the Asset Register is accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Curitis and agreed unanimously.

Cllr Fairhurst proposed the Risk Assessment was accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Park and agreed unanimously.

25.046 To review and approve a 3 Year Long Term Agreement with the Council's insurance provider

The insurance is due for renewal on the 1st June and the provider has offered a 3 Year Long Term Agreement with the premium being held at its current level – unless new assets are purchased or anything happens that would vary the present position. Cllr Park proposed this is accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Bardwell and agreed unanimously.

25.047 To review and approve the internal auditor for the year ended 31st March 2026

The current internal auditor is Darkin Miller Ltd who have been reviewing the council's accounts since 2016. Cllr PARK proposed the internal auditor remain for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

10. Planning

25.048 To consider planning applications received

P/HOU/2025/02317 Blackhill Cottage, Shitterton – demolish outbuilding and erect a replacement.

The PWP suggested a neutral stance and accept the Dorset Council Planning Officer's advice. The proposed replacement is 1.2m lower and will project above the fence by about 0.9m so could be acceptable.

However, the Planning Officer's advice is that any replacement building will be refused as it is in breach of the original grant of garden permission. Cllr Park seconded the recommendations of the PWP and this was agreed unanimously.

11. Parish Amenities and Rights of Way

25.049 To approve the quote for phase 2 of the treeworks noted in the Visual Inspection and Health Appraisal

The report noted that this work should be undertaken within three months of the survey being conducted – this would mean the work should be undertaken in June. Cllr Park proposed the quotation for £2,450. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

25.050 To consider a response to AG Tree Services following the ecological management advice

The comments from the Ecologist were noted and it was agreed that reference to dogs having recently treated with flea treatment not going into the stream will be included in the Parish Magazine report.

12. To receive the Clerk's report and Councillors' reports on items not covered by the agenda

25.051 Clerk's Report

A copy had been issued with the agenda. The contents were noted.

25.052 Parish Councillors' Reports

Cllr Curtis reported that she had met with the Estates Officer from Aster. The grass cutting has improved but it is too late to have the cherry trees cut and shaped.

Health and Hygiene certificates for Salt and Pepper and Pop In. Cllr Curtis will send the Clerk the details and this will be put on the June agenda.

Cllr Fairhurst asked if there is a demand for broadband fibre to the premises in the village. This will be included in the Parish Magazine report.

Cllr Bardwell raised the issue of the footpath from Court Farm to Doddings. Whilst Dorset Wildlife Trust have cut paths across their land, the definitive path is very overgrown. Cllr Walker has reported this to Dorset Council who have said they will cut it but are unable to give a timescale.

13. Items for the Parish Magazine

25.053 The following items will be included in the Parish Magazine:

- Community Speed Watch
- Communibus
- dogs in river with fleas
- Wessex internet

14. Date of the next meeting

25.054 The next meeting will be on Thursday 12th June, commencing 7pm at the Drax Hall. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be passed to the Clerk by the 4th June.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.32hrs.