



**MINUTES OF THE BERE REGIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY  
13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 AT THE DRAX HALL, NORTH STREET, BERE REGIS,  
COMMENCING 7PM**

**Present:** Cllrs L Fairhurst, M Mathers, B House, P Wharf, R Pitcher, P Morgan, S Munnings, C Packham  
B Benjafield

**Chair:** Cllr I Ventham

**Clerk:** Mrs A Crocker

**Also present:** 15 members of the public, Richard Brown and Zoey Ingerfield of the Dorset National Park Team  
and Amy Yeats

The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Dorset National Park team who gave a brief presentation on the proposal for a National Park for Dorset, after which there was a short Q & A session:

Cllr Benjafield – Is the £10m funding from Defra likely to reduce? No, it will be in addition to the funding Dorset Council already receives. This means money that would have been spent in this area is freed up for use elsewhere within Dorset Council.

Cllr Pitcher – Is Bere Regis within the boundary of the proposed National Park? It is not within the AONB, but it is up to the Parish to decide if they wish to be included in the first instance. Ultimately it will be Natural England who decide the boundary.

Who makes the final decision? Central Government will make the final decision, based on the recommendation of Natural England, but it will go out to consultation and communities would invite Dorset Council to support the National Park.

We already have a very over-complicated planning process. This will add an additional level and make things even more complicated.

The South Downs developed its own local plan which replaced those of the original Local Plans and the basis for this was the Neighbourhood Plans. National Parks are under a duty to respond proactively to local council needs.

The Dorset Council has a range of activities it has to undertake. A National Park has a focused agenda and is not subject to Central Government housing targets. It builds bottom up. The NPPF states that areas with a national park set their own housing targets. The housing need target for Dorset is around 80,000, the local need is about 50,000 and the National Park will respond to the 50,000.

Cllr Wharf said that Natural England are unlikely to review this until about 2023. There will be a National Park overarching body which will cover Devon and Dorset so it will impose another level of bureaucracy. He suggested waiting to see what NE suggest when they undertake their review as they will decide the border and the budget distribution. The housing need outside the National Park will stay as per Central Government and this could lead to an increase in the housing requirement outside of the National Park.

East Devon are less keen that they should be in the National Park. The pressure is for a Dorset National Park. In planning law AONB and National Parks have the same status. There will be no additional displacement if you just upgrade the AONB to a National Park.

### **Public Participation**

19.215 Sports Club update – Andy Kent thanked the Parish Council for their support by way of the 2020 calendar which sold a total of 161 copies, giving a profit of £461 going to the Ed Kent Trust. The Sports Club has completed the purchase of the southern end of the sports field. The next objective was to ensure both parts of the sports field held the same status and Fields in Trust were contacted with a view to registering the new piece of land. However, they said they had amended their guidelines and were now passing land back to local ownership. The intention is to put the land into local custodianship. Fields in Trust will put the land into a Deed of Dedication to secure the land and protect it in perpetuity. It was noted that the Drax Estate

had cut the hedges at the end of North Street, but the area now needed tidying up. The Lengthsman will be asked to pick this up.

A number of residents living in White Lovington then put their concerns regarding the proposed planning application for the extension of the White Lovington estate before members. All objected to the application, highlighting the scale of the development and its design, the impact it would have on the surrounding properties, the fact that some of the proposed dwellings would be overlooking existing properties and the impact the additional traffic is likely to have on the road. Residents felt the proposal was contrary in every respect to the Neighbourhood Plan and is not in conformity with the Plan. The scale and character is not in line with the Neighbourhood Plan. White Lovington is an area of large 4 or 5 bedroom detached houses. The initial proposal was for 12 dwellings of a similar nature to those already there with a contribution to affordable development elsewhere in the village. The present proposal is for 17 properties and is of a higher density. The planners indicate that the PLP is out of date and the new plan has not been adopted and does not provide adequate housing for the area. This has led them to state that the Plan need not be followed and thus the Neighbourhood Plan need not be taken into consideration.

The arboriculture report recommends that work is carried out on trees in private gardens and recommends crown lifting is undertaken. Those residents in whose gardens the trees sit, do not wish to have any such work undertaken.

The consultant states the proposal would lead to an additional 103 vehicle movements but fails to consider the 128 movements of the existing properties and ignores the Lys Cottage movements altogether. This takes no account of all the other vehicles that visit the site, e.g. delivery vehicles, visitors, etc. Access onto the main road is dismissed as there has been no accident at the junction to date. The likelihood of accidents increases with the additional number of vehicles exiting the site should the proposal go ahead.

Rowlands Wait caravan site has been sold to a company that erects prefab housing units. This could result in up to 70 dwellings. These have not been included in the Neighbourhood Plan and will result in more stress on the village amenities.

Cllr Wharf responded saying residents need to put their objections in writing to the Planning Authority. He will invite one representative to attend a meeting with the Planning Officer and himself to go through the planning objections before the Committee meets. The Planning Committee was split over the Barrow Hill application and he recommended residents set out their objections with care as it does not necessarily mean the Committee will uphold their previous decision and find in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan.

With regard to the Local Plan, Dorset Council are expecting the Inspector to produce a letter regarding the Local Plan in the near future. Once it is agreed, it and the Neighbourhood Plan will have very significant weight. The Local Plan was agreed with a proviso that more work was required. Cllr Wharf suggested residents concentrate on the failure to conform with the Neighbourhood Plan because, if something is wrong on another site, i.e. Rowlands Wait, it does not mean it will be taken into account when the Planning Committee considers other applications.

Cllr Ventham highlighted the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan says ‘approximately 12 dwellings’, and a 40% increase cannot be seen as close to ‘approximate’. In terms of numbers of buildings, the application is for the same number of buildings as the developer originally proposed with the 12 dwellings, but some of them are now presented as semi-detached. In discussions before the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan, the landowner was given the option of limiting the numbers to 10 dwellings, in which case there would have been no requirement for affordable housing, or exceeding 10 dwellings, in which case the requirement for 40% affordable housing would have to be met on the site, or by way of a financial contribution to a development elsewhere in the village.

## **1. To receive apologies for absence**

19.216 Apologies had been received from Cllr Tony Bates.

## **2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

19.217 A copy of the minutes had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr Benjafield proposed them to be a true and accurate representation of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Fairhurst and agreed unanimously.

### **3. Matters arising form those minutes, not covered by this agenda**

19.218 Lockyer Land – the trees do need work but only two are causing problems to the boardwalk. These are very minor and will be undertaken by the Lengthsman.

Web site review – moving forward.

Lengthsman’s quarterly report – it will not be made a focus on the Lengthsman but will talk about issues that the Parish Council facilitates, e.g. the conservation group. This could be launched at the Forum in May.

### **4. To receive declarations of interest and review dispensations received**

19.219 No interests were declared and no requests for dispensations had been received.

### **5. To receive the Dorset Councillor’s reports**

19.220 Cllr Wharf reported the Council Plan is moving forward and will be agreed at the next Full Council meeting. The first major budget will be confirmed at the annual meeting next week.

The Inspector reviewing the (Purbeck) Local Plan is now scheduled to give a response by the end of February. However, a response had been due some time last year so this cannot be guaranteed. The response could be approval, rejection or partial approval with some additional work required to complete it before it can be signed off. The latter is the most likely outcome but at least it would give a properly enforceable local plan as far as it was agreed.

Cllr Wharf, the Leader of Council and the Chief Executive met with the county’s MPs recently to discuss common issues. They have agreed that they will meet regularly to ensure they can resolve any local questions and for them to understand where we need their help.

### **6. Key Topics**

19.221 Neighbourhood Plan – implementation update

The Drax Estate is still not responding despite emails and telephone messages.

19.222 Update on Dorset Local Plan Event

Cllr Wharf’s monthly report gives a summary of this event and some of the feedback gained. The next steps will be for Dorset Council to work up some proposals and items for discussion with Town and Parish Councils in response to the feedback. These will be discussed at a second series of workshops to be held in the coming months. A copy of Cllr Wharf’s report is available on the Parish Council website.

### **7. Finance**

19.223 To approve monthly expenditure

The following payments had been requested:

AG Tree Services	Work on Ash tree by Scout Hut	BACS076	294.00
DAPTC	Clerk’s seminar- reinput	BACS083	25.00
DC Pension	February Pension contribution	BACS077	242.00
A Crocker	February wages + expenses	BACS078	847.72
HMRC	February PAYE & NIC	BACS079	82.34
BR School	Cost of Christmas decorations	BACS080	40.00
Humphries Kirk	Interim account re land transfers	BACS081	1224.00
A King	Lengthsman – January 2020	BACS082	2276.25

Total to be paid from the Precept is **£5,031.31**

Lunch Club & NeighbourCar (Both these schemes are self-funding with no costs coming from the Precept)

			£
I Ventham	January Lunch Club	SPLC022	72.88
Dorset Council	Minibus inspection scheme – reinput	BACS014	70.80
A Nicholson	Reinput from October	NC014	9.00
A Meaton	NeighbourCar July’19 to Dec’19	NC024	135.86
Total to be paid from schemes’ balances			<b>£288.54</b>

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

**ACTION: CLERK**

19.224 To confirm reconciliation of accounts and position against budget

A copy of the reports had been given to all members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr Mathers requested a more detailed breakdown of the contingencies. This will be provided at the March meeting.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**8. Planning & Housing**

19.225 To consider planning applications

6/2020/0001 59-60 West Street  
Replace 3 first floor windows on front elevation in same style and design as existing

The PWP recommended no objections.

6/2020/0013 Land at White Lovington  
Erect 17 dwellings, create an access and associated parking & landscaping

The NP steering group had met and discussed this application. Cllr Munnings reported that, whilst we were pleased an application had come forward, we were disappointed that the application was not in accordance with the NP. The NP requires developers to discuss their proposals with the Parish Council before submission, which they have not. It suggests 12 dwellings on the site, but a higher figure has been submitted. There should be a recreational area which there is not.

The case that is being made by the developer is that PLP is not sound, therefore, although our NP is sound, it is made not sound by the fact that PLP is not finalised. We feel this is incorrect as the Planning Committee have already made reference to the NP in previous applications and found in favour of it, which clearly shows it is deemed sound. We should object to this application but need to be a little careful as we do not wish to appear to be objecting to every planning application that comes up. We are in favour of development but only in conformity with the NP. Regarding the affordable element, the numbers shown in the proposal are correct. Should the overall number be reduced, then it will mean the number of affordable will be reduced. It was also noted that the original number of 12 dwellings was in fact suggested to us by the developer and that is why this number taken into the NP and consulted upon. Had the developer suggested a higher number, we may have included and consulted on that.

The Steering Group, therefore, recommended objecting to this planning application on the grounds that:

- The number of dwellings (17) grossly exceeds the NP figure of ‘approximately 12 dwellings’
- There was no consultation with the Parish Council prior to submission of the application as required in the NP
- No mention is made in the application of provision of a recreational area, as required in the NP

Members voted on whether or not to object to the application:

Objections – 8

Cllr Wharf took no part in the vote.

For future reference, and until the procedure is amended, all planning applications that cannot be brought before the Parish Council will be reviewed by email and all councillors will be asked to respond.

19.226 To consider tree work applications

TWA/2020/002            The Old Post Office, North Street  
T1 Birch – crown reduce; T2 Ash – crown reduce; T3 Ash – crown reduce

TWA/2020/014           St John’s Church, Church Lane  
T1 London Plane – pollard at a height of approx. 15-20’

Cllr Bates recommended no objections to the work.

Cllr Munnings seconded the proposal of both the PWP and Cllr Bates and this was agreed unanimously.

**ACTION: CLERK**

Amy Yeats raised the issue of the church yard being ‘over tidied’. It is a valuable place for wildlife and perhaps it could be less tidied and more wildlife friendly. She will meet with the PCC to discuss this.

**ACTION: A YEATS**

**9. Parish Amenities & Rights of Way**

19.227 To receive quotations for replacement play park surface

Cllr Pitcher showed members some samples of proposed rubber surfaces. The cost of material at 4-5’’ depth covering both parks would be £10,824 including VAT. As the existing surface had sunk by about 4’’, it could be used as a base and the rubber material put directly on top of it. If we were to replace the current woodchip surfacing, the cost would be £1,152.00 but it would have to be done on a yearly basis. Wet pour would cost in the region of £30,000.

Amy expressed concern that we may be spending all this money only to discover that the cats will not be deterred. However, the rubber surfacing will last a lot longer and is more environmentally friendly.

Cllr Pitcher proposed that we go ahead with the rubberised surfacing at a cost of £10,824.00. Cllr Benjafield seconded the proposal. Cllr Pitcher will liaise with the Lengthsman and organise a work party for April to undertake the work.

**ACTION: CLLR PITCHER**

19.228 To receive a general update on parish amenities

Tree work has been carried out to trees along the river walk. Whilst the tree surgeon was on site, a survey was undertaken around the area. A large poplar needs to be removed and other trees need to be crown reduced and an Ash needs to be removed. A quote for £930 + VAT was given. This work needs to be undertaken due to safety issues. Cllr Pitcher will speak to the contractor and organise the works.

**ACTION: CLLR PITCHER**

19.229 Rights of Way

Dark Lane – The amended applications received to date have been returned to Dorset Council. The main map submitted by the Parish Council has also been amended and returned as requested.

19.230 Defects

- the sign on the Poole Hill roundabout has come down and Dorset Highways will be informed.
- sign top of Rye Hill.
- resident of the Aster-owned car park has sprayed numbers on the parking spaces

**10. Environment and Conservation**

19.231 To review and accept the Risk Assessment for work on the Nature Reserve

A copy of the draft assessment had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. A couple of amendments were suggested. The report will be amended and brought back to March.

**ACTION: A YEATS**

## **11. Police, Traffic and Roads**

19.232 Cllr Morgan met with Cllr Bates regarding the parking on Snow Hill. The bank has been cut back and it is possible for a car to be parked off the road. Cutting the hedge back further would enable the car to be parked completely off the road and would not obstruct any passing vehicles. The Lengthsman will be asked to deal with this.

It was noted that the green cats' eyes marking the east bound slip road into the village are no longer working. This will be reported to Highways England.

**ACTION: CLERK**

## **12. Community Liaison**

19.233 To review the agenda for the Parish Forum on the 16<sup>th</sup> May

Items on the agenda to date are:

- A presentation by Ann Brummer of the Dr Brian May Save Me Trust
- Michael Tomlinson MP
- A presentation by Dorset AONB and NE regarding Black Hill
- Volunteer awards will also be issued. At present 3 individuals have been nominated and 1 group. Citations are to be drawn up for each.

VE Day Celebrations – 8<sup>th</sup> May – the Scouts will be organising a WWII themed event in the afternoon, followed by bell ringers at 7pm, and 7.30pm beacon lighting and the church will hold a short open-air service. There may be an event happening in the evening at the Scout Hut, but this has yet to be confirmed.

Alison Bennett has asked if the Parish Council would fund an advert in the parish magazine showing the location of the defibrillators around the parish. Members largely felt that this would not be necessary as the magazine went to only a small minority of parishioners. Notices on the notice boards were suggested as a better option. The Clerk will find out the cost of the various sized adverts in the magazine and this will be brought back to the March meeting.

**ACTION: CLERK**

## **13. Children & Youth**

19.234 Nothing to report.

## **14. Correspondence received since the agenda was set**

19.235 Nothing to add.

## **15. Public Relations**

- 19.236
- White Lovington
  - Parish Forum
  - Play park resurfacing
  - VE Day celebrations.

## **16. Items for the March meeting**

19.214 Members are reminded to have any items for inclusion on the agenda to the Clerk by the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.35

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March, at the Drax Hall commencing 7pm.