

PURSE CAUNDLE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Zöe Godden; 26, Warren Way, Sherborne. DT9 4FS

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Draft minutes of a meeting of the PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 11th March 2025 at St Peter's Church, Purse Caundle.

Present: Councillors Elkins (Chair), Knight, Vincent, White and Yates.

Also present: Dorset Councillor Legg and Parish Clerk Zöe Godden

There were no members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

The meeting started at 19:19.

1. Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1))

No apologies were received because all Councillors were present.

2. Declarations of interest

Members to declare any interests, including disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any written requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 s33 (b-e) (This does not preclude any later declaration).

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of previous meeting(s) (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1))

To consider approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2024.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes as presented.

4. To receive a report from Dorset Councillor Legg.

Councillor Legg reported that council tax in Dorset would rise by 4.99% in 2025-26, which was in line with many other counties and was necessary due to the almost total removal of funding from central Government. Councillor Legg said that around 85% of Dorset Council's spending was now funded by council tax. In response to a question about the switch to unitary status in Dorset, Councillor Legg noted that any savings realised from the removal of the district councils were plugging the gap caused by the reduction in Government funding, rather than resulting in an increase in available funds in Dorset.

Councillor Legg went on to report that the first meeting of Parish Councils to discuss local issues of mutual importance, had taken place. The topic of the meeting had been Highways and it was found that many parishes experienced similar problems, such as pot holes and dangerous junctions. The second of these meetings was due to take place in April and would deal with the issue of flooding.

Finally, Councillor Legg reported that developers of a proposed solar farm, to be located at Wyke, had yet to submit a planning application.

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5. Finance

To consider the following payments for approval and to sign cheques accordingly:

Supplier	Details	Amount
Staff	Salary December 2024 and January & February 2025	£149.04
Dorset Council	Election fee	£50.00

Councillors noted that there had not been an election in Purse Caundle in May 2024, so instructed the Clerk to query this invoice with Dorset Council.

The Clerk reported that only £44.53 remained in the bank account and, as such, she would be willing to wait to receive her salary payment of £149.04 until the first half of the 2025-26 precept was received on 30th April.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the Clerk's salary payment and that this would be paid when the first half of the 2025-26 precept was received on 30th April.

6. To agree that one of the current bank signatories will work with the Clerk to add her to the bank mandate for receipt of bank statements and order a new cheque book.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that Councillor White would work with the Clerk to add her name to the bank account mandate, to source a new cheque book and to set up internet banking for the Council.

7. To consider switching to Unity Trust Bank.

The Clerk reported that Unity Trust Bank had a good reputation in the Local Government sector in terms of understanding how parish councils needed to manage their bank accounts. However, there would be annual fees of £72.00 liable to be paid as service charges, so it was **agreed** not to pursue opening an account with Unity Trust Bank.

8. To agree to renew the Council's insurance with Community First on a three-year agreement basis at a cost of £189.63 per year.

The Clerk informed Councillors that they needed to have relevant insurance in place. It was again noted that the Parish Council did not have enough money in its bank account to cover the costs of the insurance premium. Councillor White volunteered to pay the premium from his personal bank account, and it was **agreed** that Councillor White would be refunded when the first half of the 2025-26 precept was received on 30th April.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to renew the Council's insurance with Community First on a three-year agreement basis at a cost of £189.63 per year and that Councillor White would pay the premium and be refunded when the first half of the 2025-26 precept was received on 30th April.

9. To discuss the options for installing a defibrillator into the ex-BT telephone kiosk.

The Clerk presented information from three sources regarding a suitable defibrillator that could be installed in the ex-BT telephone box. However, the only grant available to cover the costs was from the British Heart Foundation and was not open for applications until summer 2025. It was **agreed** that Councillors would consider local fundraising options and that the Clerk should look to apply to the British Heart Foundation for a grant when applications were

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accepted in summer 2025. The Clerk was instructed to add this matter to the next agenda to review progress.

10. To note any highways issues for reporting to Dorset Council.

It was noted that the largest of the potholes just off the A30 had been repaired but two remained outside Home Farm. Councillor Vincent volunteered to report these to Dorset Council via its website. It was further noted that the BT covers at the bottom of Toomer Hill frequently became dislodged from the road.

11. To note any business for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting.

- Follow up on funding for a new defibrillator.

12. To agree the date for the next meeting.

It was **agreed** that the next meeting would take place on 20th May.

Zöe Godden
Parish Clerk
12th March 2025