

# OWERMOIGNE PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF OWERMOIGNE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2026 IN THE VILLAGE HALL. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.30 P.M.

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## Public Open Forum

**Wessex Internet** – A member of the public raised the concern that a group of villagers on the eastern side of Parsons Lane were given the impression by engineers that they may not be included in the upgrades.

In response the Chairman stated that a group had been set up to liaise with the parishioners.

A representative from Wessex Internet had contacted the Chairman and had asked for contact list for those affected as a starting point.

In addition it was hoped that Wessex Internet would attend a future Council meeting, either at the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March or potentially a special open meeting in February to provide an opportunity for the Parish to hear about the plans, ask questions and ensure the upgrade is available to all.

**Trees** – It was highlighted that on the side of road trees were hanging over the garage, near the playing field. **ACTION:** The Clerk to report to Dorset Council on grounds of a safety concern.

The meeting opened at 7.40 p.m.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the newly appointed Clerk. The Clerk provided a brief introduction.

**Attendance:** Cllr Paul Warren (Chair), Cllr Andrew Buckingham, Cllr Jo Chilcott, Cllr John Chilcott, Cllr Kim House and Emma Evans (Clerk), Cllr Nick Ireland (DC Cllr) and two members of the public.

### 1 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies to record on this occasion.

### 2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests

No declarations were made on this occasion.

### 3 Appointment of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

To confirm the appointment of Emma Evans as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr Kim House, seconded by Cllr Jo Chilcott and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That Emma Evans be appointed as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Owermoigne Parish Council with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

### 4 Bank Account Mandate and Signatories

Parish Council Website: <https://owermoigneparishcouncil.gov.uk>

To approve the amendment of the Council's bank mandate(s) to remove the former Clerk and to add Emma Evans, Clerk, as an authorised officer (to include online access, payment preparation and submission of forms as required by the banks)

It was proposed by Cllr John Chilcott, seconded by Cllr Kim House and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the amendment of the Council's bank mandate(s) to remove the former Clerk and to add Emma Evans, Clerk, as an authorised officer (to include online access, payment preparation and submission of forms as required by the banks) be approved.

## **5 Co-option of up to two casual vacancies onto the Parish Council**

To consider re advertising posts

It was discussed that various methods for advertisement could be used such as DAPTC, posters, website and Facebook. It was noted there was potentially one resident interested and relevant information be sent to that resident directly.

It was **AGREED:-** That the vacant posts should be re advertised via various methods.

## **6 Minutes of previous Meetings**

To confirm, as a correct record, the minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

It was proposed by Cllr Andrew Buckingham, seconded by Cllr Kim House and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed.

## **7 Correspondence**

**20 mph - To note request received to revive application for 20mph limit through Owermoigne**

**It was AGREED:- That this item be deferred to the next Council meeting.**

**A352 speed - It was noted that this may be considered as an agenda item for a future Council meeting.**

**Wessex Internet - Further to a brief update by the Chairman it was noted that this item had been discussed under Public Participation time.**

It was noted that the Clerk would provide an update regarding any correspondence received to the next Council meeting.

## **8 Dorset Councillor's Report**

To note report from Councillor Nick Ireland

The Dorset Council Councillor provided a report noting that the current priority for Dorset Council was the setting of the Budget. Dorset Council had requested that Council Tax be increased to the maximum permitted level of 5%.

It was reported that core spending for 2026/27 was £25.9 million, of which 24.5% was funded through Council Tax. A Fairer Funding Review for rural counties had been anticipated in summer 2025; however, funding continued to be weighted towards metropolitan areas. The Revenue Support Grant for the current year was £483 million, compared to £417 million in the previous year. Due to changes in grant arrangements and accounting practices, this did not represent a

significant increase in real terms. It was noted that 55p in every £1 of expenditure was spent on social care.

It was reported that the Dorset Local Plan (DLP) site consultation had received approximately 10,000 online responses. Officers were reviewing the responses to determine the content of the draft DLP, which would be subject to further public consultation. Some policies were being rewritten and reviewed by Councillors. Consultation was anticipated in July/August, with submission to the Planning Inspectorate expected in December 2026. Based on estimated examination timescales of 12–15 months, adoption of the DLP was anticipated in late 2027 or early 2028, and it was noted that meeting the timetable was critical.

It was further noted that Dorset Council currently had a two-year housing land supply, resulting in increased pressure on planning decisions, and that planning applications were being submitted ahead of the adoption of the DLP.

It was reported that a Green Paper on transport would be presented to Cabinet, which would include increased engagement with rural parish councils and financial support for the expansion of core routes and some Saturday services.

It was noted that the Chief Executive of Dorset Council, Catherine Howe, was willing to meet with parish councils, and that grouping parishes for such meetings could be beneficial.

Councillors raised concerns regarding infrastructure provision for large developments, including water and electricity supply. It was noted that statutory providers, including Wessex Water and SSE, were responsible for these works.

A query was raised regarding fines issued to Wessex Water for sewage spills, particularly in relation to the incident on Morden Road.

It was **AGREED**:- That a Freedom of Information request be submitted to Wessex Water regarding fines for sewage spills, with specific reference to Morden Road and an agreed time period.

Thanks were recorded to Councillor Nick Ireland and Mr Nigel Baker for their work in retaining the defibrillator.

Concerns were raised regarding the condition of roads and pothole repairs, and Councillor Ireland agreed to follow up these matters.

## **9 Police Report**

Dorchester Rural East Neighbourhood Policing Team Crime Report

Anti-social behaviour incident reported in November 2025 – no other reports listed on Police website

It was noted that some reported issues were not recorded on the police report or that issues reported were not followed up. It was suggested that the Police and Crime Commissioner, David Sidwick, could be made aware of the issues and potentially invited to attend the Annual Parish Assembly.

It was **AGREED**:- That the PCSO be contacted regarding matters not included in the report and to propose a meeting to discuss the Council's concerns, with David Sidwick to be copied into the correspondence.

The Clerk will draft a letter and contact neighbouring parishes to ascertain whether similar issues are being experienced.

## **10 Matters arising**

Matters arising (not covered by this agenda) from the minutes of the last meeting

It was noted that, due to the recent appointment of the Clerk, a fuller report on outstanding matters would be presented at the next meeting.

**Article 4 Direction** - It was noted that Osmington Parish Council had rejected the proposal. The matter will be included on the agenda for future meetings.

**Wessex Water** - This item will remain on future agendas.

**Footpath – Kit Lane to the Park** - Members discussed the need to establish ownership of the footpath, which may be Parish Council owned. The Clerk was asked to review previous minutes and report back.

**Adverse Possession / Ownership Query** - It was noted that the property concerned has now been sold. Contact would be made with the new owners prior to the next meeting and clarification sought from HM Land Registry regarding the outstanding queries.

**Housing Needs Survey** - This item will remain on future agendas.

**Double Yellow Lines** - It was agreed that this matter is not currently appropriate to pursue and should be removed from future agendas.

## **11 Council Meeting dates 2026/27**

To consider dates for Parish Council Meetings:

Members considered the schedule of Parish Council meetings. The following dates were agreed:

**Annual Council Meeting:** Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

**Council Meetings:** Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, 16<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2026

It was noted that the date of the Annual Parish Assembly is to be confirmed, provisionally in April. The Clerk will notify the newsletter editor for inclusion in a future edition.

## **12 Planning Applications**

To receive and consider all planning, licensing matters and consultations. N.B. Any application received after the agenda publication date may still be considered during the meeting. For an up to date list of applications please check Dorset Council's website

It was noted that there were no planning applications that required comment on this occasion.

## **13 Finance**

13.1 To consider and approve the budget for financial year 2026/27

It was reported that the Council had met in October 2025 to review the draft budget for financial year 2026/27 which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

13.2 To determine and approve the Parish Council precept for financial year 2026/27

Members considered the proposed precept increase by £500 per annum, which equated to a 4.5 % uplift. It had been discussed that the level be set at £15,000 for 2026/27, which was 29p per annum for a Band D property.

It was proposed Cllr Andrew Buckingham, seconded by Cllr Jo Chilcott and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Council approves the budget for 2026/27 as set out in the briefing paper, and that the precept of £15,000 for the financial year 2026/27 be agreed.

13.3 To consider the quotation received for the internal audit for financial year 2026/27

It was proposed by Cllr Kim House, seconded by Cllr Andrew Buckingham and **RESOLVED**

**UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the quotation for audit services from Barker-Fox Associates at a cost of £145.00 be approved.

13.4 Community Benefit Fund

Members noted that the Community Benefit Fund should be accounted for separately from the Council's precept funds. It was further noted that confirmation of grants awarded should clearly state the intended purpose of the expenditure.

It was **AGREED:-** To defer further consideration of this matter to the next Council meeting.

13.5 NS&I "ringfenced" account for longer term payments

Cllr Andrew Buckingham had circulated a breakdown prior to the meeting. The Clerk would need to obtain access to the account to report to a future meeting.

13.6 Insurance

It was **AGREED:-** To defer further consideration of this matter to the next Council meeting.

13.7 Bank Balances and Payments

It was noted the bank balances and payments would be presented to the next meeting. The Clerk would report on any payments since July. These had primarily been for grounds maintenance.

It was reported that the Council's email provider had confirmed that no action was required in respect of the domain name and that an invoice would be supplied in due course.

It was suggested that training in the use of the defibrillator and the financial support for the ongoing maintenance of the defibrillator be discussed at the next meeting.

**14 Date of next Parish Council meeting:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026

