

LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Litton Cheney Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 8th July 2025
at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall

Present: Cllr John Firrell (Chair), Cllr Bill Orchard (Vice-Chair), Cllr Andrew King, Cllr Quentin Blacke, Cllr Andrew Price, Cllr Rob Matthews, Ms Debbie Hollings (Clerk) and Ward Cllr Sally Holland.

Apologies for absence: No apologies received.

Declarations of interest: No declarations of interest received or dispensation requests.

Democratic time: No parishioners present.

Approval of Minutes of Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20th May 2025

Cllr King proposed that the minutes were an accurate record. Cllr Price seconded, and all councillors agreed.

Approval of the Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting/Village Assembly held on Tuesday 20th May 2025:

Cllr Blacke proposed that the minutes were an accurate record. Cllr Matthews seconded, and all councillors agreed.

Matters arising since the previous meeting not part of this Agenda:

Cllr Firrell confirmed that the internal audit issue about whether the community hall is a parish council asset has been resolved - it is not at present a Parish Council asset. However, if the Litton and Thorner's Community Hall Trust does not renew its lease after the current one ends, the Parish Council would assume ownership of the hall.

Dorset Council Overview - Ward Councillor for Chesil Bank: Cllr Sally Holland:

Wild camping on Chesil Beach: Cllr Holland reported that a recent multi-agency meeting, including police and local organisations, addressed ongoing issues. As a result, several actions have been implemented. She highlighted possible local use of West Bexington and Abbotsbury. The Ilchester Estate can request a clearway traffic order for Burton Road, enabling police to enforce parking rules. Additionally, Chesil Bank Parish Council is applying for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), expected before summer ends, and more parking signs are being considered.

A major issue with wild camping is the significant waste left behind, including human waste, rotting fish, and broken bottles among the pebbles. The Ilchester Estate manages waste near Abbotsbury. While wild camping itself is legal and cannot be stopped, associated anti-social behaviour, such as leaving waste, is illegal and residents are encouraged to report such incidents accordingly.

Useful links for reporting issues: [Report a crime - Dorset Police](#), [Report fly-tipping - Dorset Council self - Introduction-service portal](#), [Anti-social behaviour - Dorset Council](#)

Household Recycling Centres: Dorset Council has revised its decision on the booking system for Household Recycling Centres (HRCs): They will now focus on four sites: Dorchester, Wimborne, Shaftesbury, and Sherborne. The choice of Shaftesbury and Sherborne is due to high cross-border activity from Somerset, where Dorset taxpayers are covering the disposal of Somerset's waste without receiving any compensation. Bridport also faces some cross-border use from Devon. Useful links:

[New Household Recycling Centre Booking System - Dorset Council](#),
[Dorset Council revises recycling centre plans amid financial pressures - Dorset Council](#)

Clerk/RFO's report:

The Clerk confirmed that the 2024/2025 AGAR had been completed, and Exemption Certificate submitted on time to the External Auditor.

The Parish Council Insurance has also been renewed.

Financial update:

Approval of invoices for payment (as per Appendix a): Proposed and seconded by Cllr Firrell and Cllr Price and unanimously carried.

Approval of Schedule of Regular Payments (as per Appendix a): Proposed and seconded by Cllr Firrell and Cllr Price and unanimously carried.

Recommendations provided to the council by the Internal Auditor's Report:

The combining of the current Asset Register and the Parish Land and Building document into a single Asset Register was proposed by Cllr Firrell and unanimously agreed by all councillors.

The Clerk outlined the current earmarked reserves, totalling £17,750, allocated as follows: £2,000 for LGR/Devolution, £8,000 for Playground Equipment, £4,150 for Village Fabric and maintenance, £2,500 for Equipment (including Defibrillator and IT), and £1,100 for Election Costs. Councillors agreed these

allocations were appropriate and should remain in place rather than being returned to the General Fund. They also decided to review the figures again during the budgeting process in November.

Councillors' Portfolios:

Highways/Transport: Cllr Price:

Cllr Price confirmed that National Highways is committed to a safety review of the A35 this year and, as part of this review, the signage will be looked at with a view to changing it at the top of White Way. Cllr Price understands that the Head of Highways, Jack Wiltshire, has already asked his team to design the signage that will be deployed.

Request for 20-mile-per-hour speed limit: A parishioner has contacted Cllr Firrell asking the council to consider introducing a 20 mph speed limit in the village. Cllr Price reminded the group that the council had previously succeeded in reducing the limit from 60 to 30 mph a few years ago and noted that speeding remains an occasional issue.

Cllr Price noted that the police are unlikely to monitor village traffic, so parishioners interested in addressing speeding would need to volunteer for community speed watch efforts. Cllr Matthews agreed there are speeding problems, particularly on Chalk Pit Lane. Cllr Firrell will continue discussing the speed limit request with the parishioner and invite them to speak at the next parish council meeting in September, if they wish.

Progress report on Cheese Factory landscaping:

Ongoing talks between Ford Farm owners and the Parish Council continue regarding screening of the car park, but current proposed measures are unsatisfactory. The business is working with Dorset Council Planning to find a solution, with further discussions planned involving Planning Enforcement, the Landscape team, and developers. Cllrs Firrell and Price have a continuing dialogue with Ford Farm management which is proving advantageous. Trees have been planted, but they will take about 20 years to effectively screen the lagoon area.

On-going road/drainage issues:

With Cllr Price stepping down, Cllr Rob Matthews will take over the Highways/Transport portfolio. Cllr Price will brief Cllr Matthews on ongoing issues discussed with the Community Highways Officer to ensure continuity and progress.

Playground/ Playing Field/Allotments: Cllr King:

Cllr King has recruited five community members to help clear the gully on 15th July. He also proposed asking Mr Randall to inspect and provide a quote for repairing the allotment site gatepost. Cllr Firrell agreed to request Mr Randall to assess the gatepost.

Cllr King raised a concern from the Village Assembly about visitors having difficulty locating the playing field and asked if new signage was needed. Councillors agreed that adding signage would be costly and complicated, especially on land not owned by the parish council. They also felt it was unnecessary, as residents should already know the location and rental property owners can include this information in welcome packs. Cllr Matthews confirmed the playing field is shown on the village map online. No further action will be taken.

Cllr King reported that the playground gate poses a safety risk due to a narrow gap that could injure a child's fingers, as noted in the annual Play Inspection report. The gate has also become twisted and needs replacing to resolve both the safety and structural issues. Cllr Firrell recommended asking Mr Randall to provide a quote for a replacement gate.

Cllr King asked for suggestions for encouraging greater use of the playing field by villagers. The council considered adding new equipment and proposed consulting the community for suggestions. Cllr King was assigned to gather ideas and present them at a future meeting for further discussion.

Countryside Matters/Footpaths/Rights of Way: Cllr Blacke:

Cllr Blacke advised that all the footpaths on Charity Farm are completely overgrown and practically impenetrable. This issue was reported to Dorset Council months ago. Looking back on the Dorset Council portal for an update on the problem, unfortunately, all the footpaths in Litton Cheney had vanished. Following a complaint to the Webmaster, the paths are now shown on the site, and a new complaint has been logged to address the issue.

Cllr Firrell mentioned that the Ranger was due to come to the village to pressure wash The Rocks path due to it being very slippery. The work has not yet been done. **Afternote** – work carried out – follow-up required.

Village Fabric/ Maintenance/ DAPTC/BLAP/Administration and Probity, Cllr Firrell:

Cllr Firrell updated on a DAPTC initiative aimed at improving collaboration between Dorset Council and town and parish councils. DAPTC may serve as a bridge between parishes and the unitary authority. He shared a draft "Statement of Reasonable Expectations," a mutual pledge to work efficiently together. The

statement is still in draft form. The parish council will receive a survey to complete, either individually or collectively.

Dorset Council are also looking at working with local partnerships. The documentation sent through from DAPTC includes a map of the county which shows how it could be split up into areas. There is also encouragement for parish councils to get together with other parish councils.

Parish councils are being asked to report on Dorset Council councillors if they believe they are not performing in their role and interacting with their ward councils. It was stressed the relationship between our ward councillor, Cllr Sally Holland, is excellent.

Telecommunications/IT: Cllr Matthews:

Cllr Matthews confirmed that Openreach had now almost finished in the village, apart from one small section in Chalk Pit Lane that may also extend down to Litton Hill. Openreach are waiting for the overhead permissions from SSE to be put in place. Cllr Matthews will keep monitoring the status. Consider the use of the NALC Template for a new IT Policy. NALC has provided a template for an IT Policy, which Cllr Matthews has reviewed. Cllr Matthews proposed that the new IT Policy be adopted by the parish council. Cllr Price seconded and all councillors agreed. Cllr Matthews noted that the section on councillor usage seems focused on office staff and supplied equipment rather than personal devices. Cllr Matthews emphasized that councillors should use strong passwords for login and email, keep their PCs updated with the latest Apple or Microsoft updates and have anti-virus/anti-malware software installed. Councillors will be expected to comply with these requirements. Cllr Matthews offered to recommend software and assist if needed.

Planning matters:

Planning: Cllr Orchard:

Planning Application P/MPO/2025/03612 1-6 Bridge Place, Litton Cheney, DT2 9GD: Proposed modification of planning obligation (modified by application no. P/MPO/2022/00002) to remove affordable housing restriction and allow for open market occupation of all 6 units, granted planning permission on application WD/D/17/000758.

Cllr Orchard explained that the application proposes to allow the newly built houses to have the affordable housing restriction lifted so that the houses can be sold on the open market. On the Dorset Council Planning Portal the Housing Enabling Team have added an entry which shows that they are concerned about the potential loss of affordable houses on this site.

Cllr Orchard reported that the developer of the site has confirmed to him that he has satisfied the requirements for the marketing of the affordable houses. He has discussed his responsibilities and obligations with Dorset Council. The developer has approached relevant housing associations, and he has taken advice from Dorset Council and has been advised that no organisation there has any funding available to purchase and administer this particular project. He has advertised the properties extensively locally for months in local papers and via social media. The developer also confirmed that the properties have now been advertised nationally.

Agreement was reached by the majority of councillors to support the change, with the caveat that the comment from the council included details of the mixed support and asked for proof that all avenues had been explored by the developer in an attempt that the affordable houses be kept as affordable. Cllr Bill Orchard agreed to draft the response for all councillors to consider and agree. It will then be submitted on the planning portal as showing support for the amendment to the application; however, the response will show that the council are split on their views.

Withdrawal of Neighbourhood Plan Funding:

NALC/DAPTC are asking local councils to object and to make representations calling upon the Government to provide increased, sustained funding to support the development, review and implementation of rural plans. All councillors agreed that Cllr Firrell would respond to the consultation and state that the parish council do not agree with the withdrawal of funding for Neighbourhood Plans.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 7.00pm on Tuesday 9th September 2025.

Before the meeting ended, Cllr Firrell expressed the council's gratitude to Cllr Price, who was stepping down as parish councillor. All Councillors and the Clerk extended their best wishes to Cllr Price and his family for the future.

Meeting close: The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.

Debbie Hollings
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer
Litton Cheney Parish Council

Appendix a
Finance Report 8th July 2025

Parish Funds	Total
Balance brought forward as at 1 April:	£29,931.60
Income to date	£6,177.35
Expenditure to date	£6,240.20
Parish funds as at above date	£29,868.75
Of which the following is held in reserves or CIL:	
Earmarked reserves	£17,750.00
CIL	£6,741.82
Playground (ringfenced)	£100.00
Community Fund (ringfenced)	£423.00
Total reserves/CIL held	£25,014.82
Approved spend since last reported/meeting:	
Dorset Fingerpost Restorers	£378.04
Total	£378.04
Income since last reported/meeting:	None
Interest	£19.12
Total	£19.12
Invoices/Payments for approval at time of publishing agenda:	None
Schedule Payments due (as detailed on Budget and Commitments for the coming year):	
Scheduled: July & August Clerk's wage	£858.48
	£858.48