

CORSCOMBE, HALSTOCK & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Draft minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025

Meeting to be held at Corscombe Village Hall.

Councillors present: Richard James (RJ), Henry Lovegrove (HL), Nigel Clarke (NC), Roger Hallett (RH), Grant Prior (GP), David Hallett (DH), Deborah Childs (DC), Helen Sherwood (HS) and John White-Hamilton (JWH)

3 members of the public were present.

The meeting started at 7.45pm and was chaired by the chairman Cllr. James.

1. To receive and accept apologies and declarations of Interest

Apologies from Cllr. Fry, Cllr. Arnold and Cllr Caddick

No declarations of interest.

2. To approve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 31st March 2025 (A)

Proposed Cllr. R Hallett, seconded Cllr. D Hallett Approved 9/9

3. To discuss matters arising from the minutes not covered in this Agenda.

None

Public period for comments on issues on the agenda

Reports from Dorset Council Councillor and Police Liaison

Police Liaison – Sessions are going, well note new meeting dates. No main issues although speeding issues have been raised.



Corscombe, Halstock and District Parish Council

Monthly Dorset Police Surgery

Police Surgery Day/Date	Start Time	Location
Tuesday 11 th March 2025	1030	Halstock Village Hall
Thursday 10 th April 2025	1030	Halstock Community Room (behind village shop)
Tuesday 13 th May 2025	1030	Halstock Village Hall
Thursday 12 th June 2025	1030	Halstock Community Room (behind village shop)
Thursday 10 th July 2025	1030	
Thursday 14 th August 2025	1030	
Thursday 11 th September 2025	1030	
Thursday 09 th October 2025	1030	
Thursday 13 th November 2025	1030	
Thursday 11 th December 2025	1030	

- An opportunity to chat with our local PCSO Alex (private space available if needed);
- Enjoy a chat with a tea, coffee or piece of homemade cake.



4. Internal audit update

Agar and Internal report not available for review so will be reviewed and approved at an extraordinary meeting in July.

5. To approve BDO as external auditors.

Proposed Cllr. White-Hamilton, seconded Cllr. Lovegrove Approved 9/9

6. BDO Conflict of Interest statement

None

7. To note the statement of expenditure to date and bank reconciliation (B) and to approve the schedule of payments since the last meeting. (C)

Scheduled payments since 31.3.25 Gross £2145.43, Net £2085.26

Statement of Expenditure - proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, seconded Cllr. R Hallett.

Approved 9/9

Scheduled payments - proposed Cllr. Lovegrove, seconded Cllr. R Hallett.

Approved 9/9

Note – correction to Year end Statement. Corrected version attached.

Action – Clerk to look at the possibility of savings accounts to earn interest on the Parish Councils money

8. To review SCRIBE subscription

Scribe has performed well against the council's current system of Excell spreadsheet and has allowed for more detailed analysis and reporting of financial matters.

The council will move to the use of Scribe for 2025-2026

Approved 9/9

Note Cllr. Sherwood left the meeting.

9. To note/receive a maintenance update for the playground and outdoor gym

Noted

Concern was raised at the last meeting over the agility trail which need a post replaced. On review the Parish council may decide to remove all or part of agility trail. However, at present remedial work has been carried out and it is safe to use. This will be reviewed again at the July Parish Council meeting.

Action: Cllr. R Hallett will speak with Roger Whittingham about the agility trail, and we will wait to see the ROSPA report.

9.1 To note ROSPA playground Maintenance report and remedial work required.

Still awaiting Report.

10. To note key issues raised at the Corscombe and Halstock Parish meetings.

Reports from groups in both Corscombe and Halstock were summarised. The main points coming out of the meetings were

At both the Corscombe and Halstock Parish meetings the issue of communication with residents was raised. How can we better encourage attendance at the Parish meeting and also dissemination of information including of groups and clubs? There was also concern raised over the fact that some groups were finding it hard to attract new members and had subsequently shut. Others were looking for further support and the issue of how to attract younger people into these activities and roles was also raised.

It was acknowledged that while the Chimes, Corscombe Website (Corscombe.org.uk), noticeboards and social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp were being used to disseminate information these did not reach everyone.

At Halstock it was suggested that there should be more use of the Village shop community room with drop-in clinics with Parish Councillors and the Halstock Village Trust.

The Parish Council will create a newsletter to help promote the work of the Parish Council and this could be placed on notice boards, websites and copies in the Village shop.

It was acknowledged that the websites were only as good as the information it received, and groups and clubs were to be encouraged to make more of this facility to promote their activities. In conjunction with the Halstock Village Trust there are plans to rebuild the Halstock village website increasing interaction with residents and in bedding links to other social media sites such as Facebook.

The Parish Council Clerk will look at the Corscombe website this year to try and improve coverage of clubs, groups and events but it was acknowledged that the website was only as good as the information it received, and groups and clubs were to be encouraged to make more of this facility to promote their activities.

It was commented on that there was a lack of information from the Corscombe Village Hall committee. Residents would be encouraged to attend the Village Hall meetings.

11. Highways and Rights of Way updates

11.1 Fingerpost and signs update

Cllr. Clarke has spoken with Mr Whittingham regarding on working on Fingerposts. It was felt the skill sets of both parties would be beneficial. It was agreed that the next four posts to be tackled would be

- By Fox Inn Corscombe
- The Green Halstock
- Halstock Leigh
- By the Cabinet makers Halstock

It was estimated that the cost of repairs would be in the region of £5000 to £6000

It was agreed that a budget up to £3000 would be agreed for repair of the Fingerposts outside the Fox Inn Corscombe and the green in Halstock.

Proposed Cllr. James, Seconded Cllr. Childs. Approved 8/8

A quote from Highways from replacing the damaged sign at the bottom of Adams Green Hill of £631.00.

Proposed Cllr. R Hallett, seconded Cllr. Prior. Approved 8/8

Damage of noticeboard by Fox Inn will be investigated. A decision to approve renovation will be made by or at the July Parish council meeting depending on findings.

Dorset Councillor Kippax arrived.

He presented a summary account breaking down how the Dorset Council Tax rise is justified. Copy sent to Clerk see appendix A. Also to note that Children's services have been rated as outstanding. Dorset Council has made it priority to move towards ending families living in BB accommodation and ensuring there is safe accommodation for homeless people.

12. To consider and note planning applications and decisions.

Noted

Good News concerning planning application regarding the phone box at West Chelborough. Planning have given their response to the removal of the payphone and asked that BT ensure that services are kept and reminded that it is a grade II listed building.

12.1 Enforcement update

There was frustration over Enforcements response to our concerns about the ongoing issue of Magpie auctions at Dodge city.

Action: Dorset Cllr. Kippax will follow up on this issue and notes are general concern over enforcement.

13. To receive and note training update (Verbal) TS

Cllr. Childs has now completed the Carbon Literacy course. Councillors were encouraged to look out for further training opportunities.

14. Correspondence to be discussed and noted. (Verbal) TS

14.1 Wessex Internet update

Christine O'Grady from Wessex Internet spoke briefly about the next stage of rolling out Fast Fibre broadband in Corscombe

Action: Clerk to send contact details for the Corscombe village Fate as they wished to have a stand.

15. Climate and Ecology emergency action to be noted

The Next Big Green Day will be the 27th of September in Beaminster community Hall.

Cllr. Childs has signed up to the Community Waste initiative

16. Update on Sorting of old Parish council paperwork

Many thanks to Freda Hennessy for her help with sorting out the old parish documents. This is still on going with liaison with the Clerk. The findings will be reviewed at the July Parish Council meeting. We have also now received permission to store files at the Corscombe Village Hall and have a dedicated filing cabinet.

17. To consider urgent matters to report from members and items for the next meeting.

A report will be made at the July Parish Council meeting about the options to replace the lost bus service in Corscombe and Halstock.

18. Date of next Parish Council meeting will be the 28th of July 2025 Halstock Village Hall.

Noted

The meeting ended at 9.30pm

Clerk to the Council: Tessa Safadi, Tel: 07595598995

Email: CHparishclerk@gmail.com

Appendix A – Summary of Dorset Council Kippax presentation.

“The inequality in Council tax for Dorset residents is a topic which Councillors and MP’s (of all Political parties) have for many years lobbied on. Dorset residents get a raw deal when it comes to how much funding is provided from Central Government (of all Political parties) with repeated calls for fairer funding as part of wider reform for Local Government funding.

When considering why Dorset Councils tax has had to increase year on year there are two key aspects:

- 1. Under funding of rural areas like Dorset, in favour of urban areas, in particular London**
- 2. Local demographics resulting in increased demand for statutory services**

Under funding

Analysis of the 23/24 budget identified that rural areas receive £111 less per head as part of the settlement analysis, meaning the majority of this shortfall ends up having to come from local tax.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

Since forming in 2019 up to the end of 2023/24 Dorset Council received a cumulative Revenue Support grant of £3.1m. For 2025/26 Dorset received £1.7m of this.

Councils in London received significantly more. e.g. Newham £46.3m Southwark £45.8m, Hackney £44.5m, Tower Hamlets £42.7m, Lambeth £40.5m, Westminster £37.9m and so the list goes on.

Previously the Rural Services Delivery Grant, for which Dorset received £3.2m was meant to reflect the pressures of rural service delivery. For 2025/26 this has been abolished so Dorset receives no direct grant to support with the acute rural pressures.

Demographic

The Council budget for 25/26 is net £417m of which £254m (60%) is spent on the Children’s and Adult & Housing directorates, most of which are spent on meeting statutory need to some of our most vulnerable people and households. A third of the population in Dorset are over the age of 65 compared to an England average of 19%. This level of need coupled with almost no general funding (revenue support grant) puts huge pressure on the Councils budget each year and limits options to meet the legal requirement to set a balanced budget to serve our communities.”

**ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 19th May 2025
Appendix B**

AGENDA ITEM 7

Reconciliation

Bank Statement received 31.3.25 34,307.84

Most recent statement 30.4.25 43,668.04

Balance brought

34,307.84

Expenditure through bank statement

	Payments out	Payments in
1.4.25	18.00	
	600.80	
	500.00	
	15.00	
	0	10,500.00
	6.00	
Total	1139.8	10,500

Balance carried forward

43,668.04

Outstanding expenses not yet showing in bank account - **OUT**

Scribe	18.00
P G Holt	90.00
Deborah Childs Training	66.44
Clerk Salary/expenses	651.19
P G Holt	180.00
Total	1005.63

Outstanding credits not yet showing in bank account - **IN**

Total	

YEAR END STATEMENT FOR CORSCOMBE, HALSTOCK AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL 2024/25

**1. Receipts and Payments Account
2024/25**

	Actual 2023/2024 £	Original Budget 2024/2025	Revised Budget 2024/2025 £	Actual 2024/2025 £
Balance b/fwd	38466	39959	29528	29528
INCOME				
Precept	19000	20000	20000	20000
VAT refunds	470	1731	3299	3299
Grants	1229	1500	950	3009
other	140	50	0	234
Grants and Donations	<u>20839</u>	<u>23281</u>	24249	<u>26542</u>
TOTAL				
EXPENDITURE				
Clerk's Pay /HMRC tax	6510	6693	7500	6885
Office Expenses	423	631	736	841
Insurance	696	730	705	705
Subscriptions	661	693	644	554
Bank charges	0	0	0	71
Audit fees	553	581	469	469
Training/seminars	211	183	500	498
Hire of village halls	118	185	180	150
Grants S137	741	1050	260	260
Asset maintenance	3268	3150	2000	4589
Asset purchase	12994	15000	2000	4053
Non grants s137 (Devolved Services)	231	1575	567	1092
Elections	0	0	0	50
VAT input tax	3299	4187	600	1545
Other	72	76	0	0
Total	<u>29777</u>	<u>34734</u>	16161	<u>21,762</u>
Balance c/fwd	29528	28506	37616	34308
General reserve as turnover % (this should be in the range of 25%-100%)	30	55	81	45

Ear marked reserves @ :				31.3.25
Winter roads	1500	1500	1500	1500
Play equipment replacement	13000	2000	2000	2000
Elections	2500	2500	2500	2500
Devolved services	3500	3500	3500	3500
Halstock Playground reserve			15000	15000
Total	20500	9500	24500	24500

General funds at
31.3.25 9808

2. BANK RECONCILIATION @ 31.3.25

Bank reconciliation 24/25

PER CASH BOOK

b/fwd	29528.00
income	26541.49
expenditure	21761.65
c/fwd	34307.84

	£
Business Instant Access a/c	34307.84

less unpresented cheques -

Date	Payee	£
------	-------	---

Total @ 31st March 2025	34307.84
--------------------------------	-----------------

3. Year End Reserves @ 31.3.25

Winter roads	1500
Play equipment replacement	2000
Elections	2500
Devolved services	3500
Halstock playground reserves	15000
General reserves	9808
Year end reserve TOTAL	34308

4. ASSETS @31.3.25

See Attached

5. BORROWING @31.3.25

There is no outstanding borrowing.

6. Grants @ 31.3.25

The Parish Council made the following payments under S137/S133 LGA 1972:

	£	
Sticklands towards school pool upkeep		260

Total

Signed:

Chairman R
 James

Responsible T
Finance Officer Safadi

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 19th May 2025	AGENDA ITEM 7
Appendix C	

Scheduled payments since 31.3.25

		Gross	Net	Vat	
1.4.25	Scribe	18.00	15.00	3.00	
1.4.25	Salary/expense March	600.80	598.80	2.00	
7.4.25	Halstock Church Organ Donation	500.00	500.00	0	
7.4.25	Halstock Hall Hire	15.00	15.00	0	
30.4.25	Bank fees	6.00	6.00	0	
1.5.25	Scribe	18.00	15.00	3.00	
6.5.25	Playground grass cutting	90.00	75.00	15.00	
6.5.25	Training course	66.44	66.44	0	

6.5.25	Salary Expenses April	651.19	644.02	7.17	
13.5.25	Playground grass cutting	180.00	150.00	30.00	
Totals		2145.43	2085.26	60.17	

Annual Expenditure over £100 (2024-2025)

Net (exclusive of VAT)

1.4.25	Clerks' salary Expenses March 25	598.80
7.4.25	Halstock Church Organ Donation	500.00
6.5.25	Clerks Salary Expenses April 25	644.02
13.5.25	P G Holt Corscombe Playground grass cutting	150.00
TOTAL		1892.82

Signed:

Date

Chairman

Responsible Finance Officer