

Stinsford Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors held on Monday 12 May 2025 at 7.00pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College

Present: Mr Michael Clarke (Chair of Parish Council – in the Chair) and four other members of Stinsford Parish Council (Mr George Armstrong, Mrs Sue Escott, Mr Edd Maynard and Mrs Sarah Pattison)

Also in attendance: Ms Kate Mills (Principal of Weymouth and Kingston Maurward College), Mr Mark Burgess (Director of Estates and Major Capital, Weymouth and Kingston Maurward College and local resident), Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk to the Parish Council) and one local resident.

1. Welcome

The Chair of the Parish Council, Mr Clarke, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Kevin Henville and Mr Justin Morris.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chair presented his report for the year 2024/25 (attached as the Appendix to these minutes).

Those present thanked the Chair for his detailed report.

4. Report of the Village Hall Trust

Mr George Armstrong provided the report of the Village Hall Trust. He reminded those present that funds could be used for any communal project to enhance recreational activity within the parish, or to help raise additional funds, having done so in the past for a refurbishment of the play area via grant applications

He explained that the funds were held in M&G Charity Bonds which were currently worth approximately £760. However these were to be wound up as a product and it would be necessary to identify an alternative means of holding these funds.

He reported that the Charity Commission was currently carrying out a programme of removal of small charities. When the Village Hall Trust was considered, it was likely that it would be proposed that this be liquidated and the remaining funds be moved to a dedicated savings account to be held by the Parish Council for use specifically for refurbishment of the Lower Bockhampton play area.

It was **resolved** that:

- (i) the Village Hall Trust continue to exist for the time being pending consideration by the Charity Commission; and

- (ii) Mr George Armstrong, Mrs Julie Morris and the Clerk to the Parish Council, Miss Kirsty Riglar, be appointed as Trustees for the year 2025/26.

7. Public Discussion Period

On behalf of a resident of Higher Bockhampton, Mr Armstrong raised issues relating to the British Eventing event to be held at Kingston Maurward in late June.

• Weymouth and Kingston Maurward College update

Ms Kate Mills, Principal of the College, and Mr Mark Burgess, Director of Estates and Major Capital, provided an update on the development and focus of the merged Weymouth and Kingston Maurward College. They explained that the organisation currently had a stable budget but was under close scrutiny from the Department for Education (DfE) who were concerned about the ongoing viability of using funds received for educational provision for the upkeep of the house and estate. There was therefore a considerable focus on increasing the commercial activities of the organisation in order to protect the house and estate for the future. A plan for the estate and commercial plan needed to be submitted to the DfE by the end of July. In addition to Mr Burgess's appointment, a new Chief Finance Officer had been appointed who had a commercial background.

Those present were also updated on the work underway to strengthen the relationship with the Dorset Studio School and challenge to the DfE about the educational purpose and direction of the facility. It was also reported that the College had recently released some further land to the School for more outdoor space.

Mr Burgess explained that his principal concern was the general standards around the estate and the need to identify action required to both improve and futureproof these. Policies and processes for how the land was used were being developed and infrastructure would also be assessed.

In response to a question about the level of gardening staff, Ms Wills explained that they were currently advertising for a Head Gardener but were looking at the team structure in terms of specialists and generalists. She reiterated that the challenge was to fund this activity and consideration was being given to the possibility of commercialising the gardening or reinvigorating a volunteer programme. She added that there was a need to create the estate as a place and the Harmony Project and King's Fund were being investigated to assist in this. She emphasised that the College remained committed to the estate.

In relation to the land leased from the Ilchester Estate, Ms Wills reported that this was likely to be lost due to the North Dorchester Garden Community development proposals.

In response to a question, Ms Wills confirmed that the house had been valued and consideration given to its sale or lease as part of an options appraisal. However there were issues relating to covenants and the impact upon the structure of the estate. Mr Burgess added that it was the College wanted to ensure that the house's income would enable it to stand on its own merit and not be underpinned by the wider estate.

In relation to the British Eventing event due to take place at Kingston Maurward in June, the members of the Parish Council present outlined the traffic management issues experienced

in 2024 and suggested actions that needed to be taken to avoid these. Mr Burgess acknowledged these and recognised that there was a need for a coherent traffic management plan for the event.

The significant issues experienced around the entrance to the Dorset Studio School at either end of the school day was also raised, together with the spread of parking by staff on the road during the day. Mr Burgess acknowledged this and explained that a piece of work looking at the movement of people and traffic on the site had commenced. This would highlight how this could be better controlled. There was a definite commitment to bring some semblance of order to the current situation.

The issue of the location of the College's tractor training area was also raised. Mr Burgess confirmed that he was aware of this and proposals for improving the current situation for residents were being considered. However this would need to be part of the strategic plan for the estate.

The Chair thanked Ms Mills and Mr Burgess for their update.

The meeting ended at 8:11pm.

Chairman..... **Date**.....

Chairman's Annual Report – May 2025

Our thanks to fellow councillors and particularly our Clerk, Kirsty Riglar, for her considerable support during a period of illness and our wish for her full recovery. A thank-you to our members Sarah Pattinson and Sue Escott both having played a considerable part with consultation documents whether national or county and the creation of a Parish Council Facebook Page. A further person to include in the thank you's is David Taylor, our ward councilor for the Dorset Council who has endeavored to get answers and sometimes, achieved results to so many questions, from officers with the DC.

The announcement of a merger between Kingston Maurward College and Weymouth College was a surprise to the Council as was the manner in which it was carried out. It is pleasing to find the relationship between the new Principal and the Council a good one and the college endeavors to keep us abreast of any changes. I would also like to thank the College for the work completed by its staff on the Lower Bockhampton play area to keep the grass in check and the site accessible, as well as for allowing the Council continued access to the building for its meetings.

Items concluded during the year include the completion of a consultation with residents over the future of the play area in Lower Bockhampton with the removal of the rarely used goal posts, relocation of the swings and the forthcoming creation of wildflower planting. The refurbishment of the parish notice boards is complete, a grit bin has been installed on Cuckoo Lane to assist those living in Higher Bockhampton during the cold spells and a decision not to replace the noticeboard in Frome Whitfield due to continued vandalism. Work to the Stinsford Bridge on the riverwalk has been completed after considerable campaigning by the Parish Council and with the assistance of David Taylor and the Parish website has moved and is now hosted by the gov.uk domain.

One of the major issues under constant review is the North Dorchester Garden Community proposals. The Council had a meeting with the new Liberal Democrat MP, Edward Morello to determine his views on the subject and constantly trying to get a meeting with the Environment Agency regarding potential flooding and water issues, whilst endeavoring to find more about the work of Hyas Associates, with latterly with a Freedom of Information request whilst keeping a close eye on the Local Plan progress.

Road Safety and Traffic Management occur constantly on the Council's Agenda with safety issues, particularly with Cuckoo Lane and A35 closures due to accidents and Slyers Lane plus Hollow Hill. The Parish Council has agreed its priorities for campaigning for improvements working with Councilor Taylor to progress these.

My thanks to all during my year of office as Chair. Michael Clarke.