

Draft Minutes of Winterborne St Martin Parish Council

Wednesday 23 July 2025

Magna Community Room

Present: Cllrs Pemberton, Nuttall (Chair), Hutchings, Marsh, Walker, Eversden, Fitzgerald

Apologies: Cllr Newell

Democratic Period:

Nothing raised.

90/2025 Election of Chair: It was proposed by Cllr Hutchings and seconded by Cllr Eversden that Cllr Nuttall is elected as Chair for the remainder of this civic year. All agreed. - Resolved

91/2025 Election of Vice Chair: It was proposed by Cllr Walker and seconded by Cllr Eversden that Cllr Fitzgerald is elected as Vice-Chair for the remainder of this civic year. All agreed. - Resolved

92/2025 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

93/2025 Dorset Cllr report

No update received.

Cllr Pemberton advised he will inform Cllr Tarr of the change of Chair.

Action – Cllr Pemberton

94/2025 Police report

This has been circulated to all Cllrs. It was agreed the clerk should write to PCSO Pilcher highlighting the issues under Winterborne St Martin that refer to Dorchester.

Action - Clerk

95/2025 Minutes of Winterborne St Martin Parish Council AGM on Wednesday 4 June 2025

It was proposed by Cllr Nuttall and seconded by Cllr Walker that these minutes should be accepted as a true record of the meeting. All agreed with one abstention. (Cllr Fitzgerald) - Resolved

96/2025 Minutes of Winterborne St Martin Parish Council May meeting on Wednesday 4 June 2025

It was proposed by Cllr Hutchings and seconded by Cllr Pemberton that these minutes should be accepted as a true record of the meeting. All agreed with one abstention. (Cllr Fitzgerald) - Resolved

97/2025 Action points from last minutes

- a) 77/2025 – Clerk to include item on next agenda to discuss approval of payments - RESOLVED
- b) 77b/2025 – Bankers to approve Insurance payment – RESOLVED

- c) 77b/2025 – Memorial Hall Working Group to explore insurance options – To be discussed under Memorial Hall item.
- d) 77c/2025 – Clerk to submit Exemption to external auditors - RESOLVED
- e) 83/2025 – Clerk to send Cllr Marsh the Grounds Maintenance contract – RESOLVED
- f) 88/2025 – Clerk to invite Wessex Internet to July's meeting – RESOLVED – *Wessex Internet will attend the August meeting.*
- g) 89/2025 – Cllr Nuttall to raise motion for June meeting regarding new bench – Agenda item

98/2025 Finance

- a) Approval of schedule of payments & bank reconciliation – confirm the payment approvals process to ensure it reflects the Standing Orders

The Clerk advised that a monthly schedule of payments and bank reconciliation will be included in future agendas and minutes as currently there is no transparency for the public to identify the councils monthly spend.

Action - Clerk

- b) Review of internal audit report

The internal audit findings were discussed and some of the suggested improvements are to be implemented with clarification on some of the other suggestions needed.

The option of having an interim mid-year audit was discussed and it was proposed by Cllr Nuttall and seconded by Cllr Pemberton that this should be scheduled for November. All agreed. - Resolved

Action – Clerk

- c) Discussion to determine system to be used for accounts – **MOTION:** To upgrade Scribe package to allow for additional users.
Proposed: Cllr Fitzgerald Seconded: Cllr Pemberton

Cllr Pemberton advised the meeting of the benefits the upgrade would bring including the support services. It would also allow to manage to Memorial Hall accounts by having a separate cost code. All agreed with one abstention. (Cllr Hutchings) - Resolved

Action – Cllr Pemberton – following the meeting this has been implemented.

As part of this discussion the Budget Working Group was confirmed as Cllrs Nuttall and Fitzgerald along with the Clerk. Cllr Pemberton agreed to advise but would not be involved in any decisions. All agreed.

- d) Determine the management of receipts/payments related to the Memorial Hall.

This has been resolved by the upgrade of Scribe as per item 98c)

- e) Garage Rental income

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The Clerk advised of the tenants' query about the ivy growing inside the garage. It is understood this was dealt with.

It was agreed the Clerk would respond requesting payment and to ask about the ivy.

Action – Clerk

- f) Purchase of new laptop

This is discussed as part of the Staffing Committee item.

- g) VAT update

The Clerk advised that now Scribe is up to date it will be easier to manage the VAT claim.

Action - Clerk

99/2025 Planning

- a) Planning Consultation

P/HOU/2025/03590 - West End House Road Past Blagdon Hill Martinstown - Proposed Extension and Alterations to West End House

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Pemberton and seconded by Cllr Nuttall that no comment is submitted to Planning. All agreed. - Resolved

- b) Tree works – For Information

P/TRC/2025/03248 – Rylstone, Martinstown - T1 Sycamore - Fell

100/2025 Motion: The Parish Council to sanction the purchase of a bench to replace the existing bench in front of the Church on the Green which commemorates Emily Reeves. Proposed by Cllr Nuttall and seconded by Cllr Pemberton

This motion was withdrawn.

101/2025 Village Green sign renewal – Cllr Pemberton to lead on discussion

A discussion took place regarding the renewal of the sign, and it was agreed to refurbish or replace the sign.

Cllrs Pemberton and Marsh to investigate options and report back.

Action – Cllrs Pemberton & Marsh

102/2025 Beryl Bikes – Cllr Marsh to lead on discussion

Cllr Marsh informed the meeting that having Beryl Bikes in the village would be a positive contribution, being part of the national cycle network and would like this to be explored.

The Clerk agreed to discuss with the Transport Planning team at Dorset Council.

Action - Clerk

103/2025 Highways, Rights of Way and SID

- a) Dorset Council enquiry regarding the SID

The Clerk advised that Dorset Council's Road Safety team has raised concern that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) is not active. It was confirmed that it is active and maintained by a parishioner.

It was agreed the Clerk will confirm continued use with Dorset Council.

Action – Clerk

104/2025 Allotments

A discussion took place regarding the maintenance of the allotments, and it was agreed the allotment holders should maintain their own plots.

Cllr Walker agreed to draft a communication to tenants.

Action – Cllr Walker & Clerk

105/2025 Flood, Stream & Riverbanks

Cllr Marsh advised that two quotes have been received, one is verbal so it was agreed that Cllr Marsh will obtain written quotes and submit motion for next meeting.

Action – Cllr Marsh

106/2025 Washpool

Cllr Eversden advised that a parishioner would carry out the stonework.

107/2025 Grounds

The current contractor has been asked to review the contract and note the maintenance length of grass which should be kept.

108/2025 V & V

Cllr Nuttall agreed to produce the Parish Council page for the next edition.

Action – Cllr Nuttall

109/2025 Village Hall Trustee

Cllr Pemberton updated the council on recent discussions regarding projects associated with the Village Hall. Several planned developments have potential benefits for the local community. One key initiative is the creation of the "Matthews Room" — a multipurpose space intended to be used as a small meeting room, a warm refuge area during emergencies, and a venue for informal community activities, such as small group gatherings.

It was noted that the Village Hall's charter is to provide facilities for the good and benefit of residents, and the trustees are actively working toward that aim.

110/2025 Memorial Hall

The working group have met to discuss matters relating to the Memorial Hall.

- i. Insurance Matters - it was agreed that the Parish Council should be responsible for the insurance to avoid confusion.
- ii. Memorial Hall Account Transfer - Efforts to transfer the Memorial Hall account to the Parish Council have encountered delays. A suggestion was made for the Clerk to formally write to Lloyds, supported by legal documentation, to clarify ownership and control of the account, and prevent unauthorised access to funds. It was agreed unanimously that a letter would be written by the Clerk.

Action - Clerk

- iii. Trustee Involvement and Concerns - Concerns were raised regarding some of the former trustees, about lack of cooperation and clarity around their actions. Discussion acknowledged the difficulty in engaging with individuals no longer actively involved or deemed unable to manage the transition appropriately.
- iv. Title Claim and Future Use The group discussed a previous claim for title to the Memorial Hall, which had been rejected. It was agreed to resubmit a claim once further clarity on the matter was achieved. Regarding future use, leasing the Hall to an external organisation under a long-term agreement was discussed. The lessee would be responsible for all maintenance and utilities, alleviating financial and operational burden on the Parish Council. The idea remains under consideration, and other suggestions are welcomed.

The main concern for progress appears to be the account transfer.

111/2025 DAPTC

Cllr Pemberton confirmed their attendance at quarterly Zoom meetings and stated as there is now a new Chair should he step down. However, Cllr Nuttall requested that Cllr Pemberton remains as the representative, this was agreed.

Cllr Pemberton proceeded to update on the recent meeting which included the following.

- Future of Local Government in Dorset - Dorset Council has been granted powers by central government to enforce changes in lower-tier governance. Two models were outlined:
 - Hub and Spoke Model, whereby smaller parishes may be grouped under larger councils such as Dorchester Town Council, enabling shared governance and service distribution.
 - Financial Restructuring, highlighting Dorset Council's financial limitations and their interest in devolving responsibilities to parish councils that are not subject to central government precept caps.

Concerns were raised about the vulnerability of small parishes, due to their size and limited resources, particularly if planning powers are centralised or removed.

Possible Implications for the Parish, the restructuring could result in the loss of autonomy over local decisions and representation. While there may be access to better resources and infrastructure, there could also be a dilution of local voice and identity.

Cllr Pemberton noted that only one-third of parishes attended the Zoom briefing, suggesting a general lack of awareness or engagement with the forthcoming changes.

- Recommendation for Proactive Communication - discussions with neighbouring parishes including Steepleton and Abbas Parish Councils to understand their interpretations and potentially coordinate responses. The suggestion was supported, with additional proposals to contact Portesham (grouped with Abbotsbury and Langton) and other surrounding parishes such as Bradford Peverell, West Stafford, and Bingham.

It was noted that some grouped parishes may not be receptive due to their established roles in local planning frameworks.

A formal survey is expected to be distributed to councils to gather input on the restructuring process. The council agreed to respond collectively and continue monitoring developments.

112/2025 Staffing Committee

MOTION: Approve the payment of the clerk's standard monthly hours and home working allowance via standing order or direct debit. Any additional hours will be approved at the subsequent meeting with a separate payment. If possible, set up HMRC as a direct debit; if not, pay monthly with one banker setting up and another approving.

Proposed by Cllr Hutchings and seconded by Cllr Walker.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that a Standing Order is set up for the 25 contracted hours per month. The PAYE to HMRC is to be paid via direct debit.

Cllr Hutchings agreed to liaise with Dawson Services regarding the above.

Agreed with one against (Cllr Nuttall) and 2 abstentions (Cllrs Pemberton/Eversden) - Resolved

Action – Cllr Hutchings

The Staffing Committee also confirmed that the Clerk's probation period is now complete.

MOTION: Authorise the clerk to spend up to £600 on a replacement laptop and necessary peripherals (mouse, case, etc.).

Proposed by Cllr Hutchings and seconded by Cllr Marsh.

Following a discussion, the motion was amended by the proposer to "the staffing committee would buy a laptop and peripherals for use by the Clerk up to £600. All agreed - Resolved

Action – Cllr Hutchings

MOTION: List the dates of the next six months of meetings in the bus shelter and, if possible, the village shop. Include a note directing readers to the parish council website or to contact the clerk for an email to view the agenda or minutes.

Proposed by Cllr Hutchings, seconded by Cllr Walker.

If this motion is approved, the standing orders will need to be slightly altered at the August meeting to accommodate this change.

Motion withdrawn.

113/2025 External correspondence received

- a) Martinstown Cricket Club grant application - request for support from Parish Council – Cllr Fitzgerald

It was proposed by Cllr Pemberton and seconded by Cllr Eversden that the Parish Council will provide a letter of support for grant applications for some improvements to the pavilion, which includes the installation of rooftop solar panels and sun tunnels to reduce energy costs and environmental impact. All agreed. - Resolved

Action – Cllr Fitzgerald/Clerk

114/2025 Parish Matters

Concern was expressed regarding the Defibrillator which has been removed due to fault. It is difficult as it isn't managed by the Parish Council. Cllr Nuttall agreed to follow this up with the guardian.

Action – Cllr Nuttall

It was questioned if the new EV charging point is working as there has been vehicles parking in front of it which aren't electric. It was agreed the Clerk will request information from the team at Dorset Council regarding its operational status and request bay markings.

Action – Clerk – following the meeting the Clerk has spoken to Dorset Council who have advised that due to a provider issue the points haven't been switched on yet. There will be no marked bays due to the rough ground but in similar locations across the County, the issue of vehicles parking in front of the chargers has stopped once the points are live.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2105 with notice that the next meeting will be the August meeting to be held on Wednesday 27 August 2025, 7pm at Magna Community Room.