

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 21st January 2026

West Parley Community Hub, 275 Christchurch Road

Present: Councillors: John Barber; Mark Barber; Andy Batley; Alan Logan; Rachel McDonald;
Barbara Manuel; Andrew Parry

In Attendance: 6 members of the public

Cllr Parry agreed to take notes of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr(s): David Spencer

The Proper Officer, Mrs Linda Leeding, was not in attendance.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary

The Chairman asked Councillors if there was any declaration of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interest and informed all Councillors present that should a matter of declarable Interest arise during the meeting they should make the Chairman aware. No declarations were made at this point.

3. CONFIRM & SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 17th DECEMBER 2025

Circulated prior, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record & signed by the Chairman (11666-11668).

4. Consideration to exclude the Press and Public in accordance with Section 1, subsection (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960. (item 5)

None Present.

5. CONFIRM & SIGN THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 17th DECEMBER 2025

Circulated prior, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record & signed by the Chairman (11669).

6. CONFIRM & SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON 7th JANUARY 2026

Circulated prior, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record & signed by the Chairman (11670).

7. REPRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

With 6 Members of the Public present regarding the same matter, at the Chairman's discretion P/FUL/2025/07132 Stourvale Barns, Church Lane, West Parley planning application was taken before item 3 on agenda.

Cllr Manual (Lead Member for Planning) suggested the existing structure should really be classified as a "Greenhouse" rather than a "Barn". It was also stated that the site sits in greenbelt and therefore development here would be contrary to policy. In explanation Cllr Manual felt the proposal was out of character and over-development of site, also expressed concern of lack of formal parking and no garage. A member of the public said that the planning notice was not displayed prominently. Expressed concern that Church Lane as a formal ancient road leading to All Saints Church, is being damaged by development and stated her belief that the water table has been affected by other development in former greenbelt land and firmly believed that granting this application would only make matters worse. Another member of the public again stated they

felt the planning notice was “hidden” and had conflicting dates, that the proposed building was too close to neighbouring boundaries, describe it as “huge” and further objection to application on grounds of Greenbelt. A member of the public expressed concern for wildlife in the area, that application is larger footprint than he had ever been led to believe. Design not in keeping with the area and should remain greenbelt.

Cllr M Barber noted that Building regs had yet to comment.

Cllr Manuel confirmed that this site is outside of 400m Heathland mitigation zone.

19.38hrs all 6 members of the public left the meeting.

8. DORSET COUNCILLOR REPORT

Circulated prior to the meeting, members accepted the report and raised not further questions.

9. CLERK REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The report was circulated prior and members focused concerns on the internet connection issues at the Community Hub, which need rectification as a priority. BT account package to be urgently reviewed and establish if it is no longer competitive in comparison to other utility providers.

Cllr McDonald left the meeting at 19.35 to print papers and returned at 19.38

The Clerk requested a Councillor to attend a meeting with Dorset Council Election Team, considering use of the Community Hub as a possible Polling Station venue. Cllr Manuel agreed to represent Elected Members of the Parish Council at the meeting.

Correspondence:

- a) A letter had been received from the Parley Pre-School trustees, which will be addressed under agenda item 19a.
- b) It has been reported that the Defibrillator, had been removed from its container recently and although it was returned, thought to be unused, it will nevertheless require further examination as the battery indicator is showing half charged.
- c) Cllr Vacancy: As a result of the recent Planning Committee being inquorate, Cllr Parry reminded councillors that with a number of vacancies for a long period still to be filled on the Parish Council, the possibility of whether a Section 91 notice being served was likely to be raised. Such a notice would result in the appointment of councillors from the Principal Authority, if Council continues to be at risk of not being quorate.

10. ACTIVITY PLAN

The document was circulated prior and Councillors noted the content.

11. WEST PARLEY MEMORIAL HALL

Councillors welcomed news that work to repair the roof is progressing, once completed this should prevent further water ingress and generally help in making the premises more secure.

12. AGREE APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

Resolved: to retain the existing Auditor for the next financial year.

13. WEBSITE PROVISION

Resolved: *Deferred until next meeting.*

14. REVIEW FUTURE STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Resolved : review after budget has been agreed and utilisation requirements of the Community Hub, which are still bedding down, to be more fully understood.

15. FINANCE REPORTS

The Payment Schedule; bank reconciliation and 3rd quarter updated were circulated prior to the meeting.

- a) Monthly Payment Schedule **Deferred**

b) Monthly Bank Reconciliation **Resolved:** agreed & signed by Cllr B Manuel

c) Financial Update : 3rd Quarter

Council discussed an important matter regarding a donation received from Parley Pre-School in October 2025 being contrary to specialist advice received in June 2025. This has implications on Council's ability to reclaim all the VAT for the project. Further advice is being sought from the specialist of the correct action to take or suggested alternative resolutions. Council was made aware of the legal advice from Parley Pre-School that would enable return of the donation.

The VAT submission for July to December 2025 has been submitted within HMRC deadline.

Resolved: that formalisation of a lease to the Parley Pre-School is agreed by 31st March 2026 along with the £15k donation returned to the pre-school.

d) Reserves : Policy & Report

Resolved: that money held in reserves CCLA to be drawn down to cover expenditure in Quarter 4. All agreed.

Action: the Clerk to be asked for updated cash flow forecast for Quarter 4 and draw down funds required.

20:27 Meeting Adjourned, 20:33 Reconvened

16. AGREE BUDGET 2026/7

Cllr M Barber Lead discussion on reviewing expenditure. It was acknowledged that the completion of the Community Hub Refurbishment had been successful but in doing so, had significantly drained the Council's reserves. It was also recognised by councillors that there is the potential for unquantifiable risks, for example should there be a need for a tree works, as had been experienced in the previous year, but without knowing if and when, then it would be difficult to precisely judge its impact on budget. Councillors recognise that the Parish Council continues to run a lean budget, but in doing so acknowledged that financial pressure can quickly spiral.

Resolved: In agreeing the budget, it was felt that unspent funds or not directed to a specific project, should be allocated to the reserves for possible in year adjustments, to meet any emerging need.

17. AGREE PRECEPT REQUEST TO DORSET COUNCIL

Resolved: . Cllrs agreed by majority vote on a 9.99% precept increase to £104,794.01 for the 2026/2027 financial year. (6 in favour; 1 against).

18. Consideration to exclude the Press and Public in accordance with Section 1, subsection (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960. (item 19a)

Resolved: Agreed.

Cllr McDonald declared a pecuniary interest for item 19a and left the room at 21.00; returning at 21.09hrs.

Council resolved to suspend Standing Order 3x (meetings to be 2 hours) at 21:00hrs.

19. LAND & PROPERTY

a) Update on Parley Pre-School Lease

b) Update on VAT Advice

c) Update on the Entry System

d) Update on the Snagging List

All matters under Item 19, were conducted in confidential session and minutes taken.

20. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P/FUL/2025/07132

Stourvale Barns, Church Lane

Proposal: Demolition of existing Use Class B8 Storage unit and the erection of a four-bedroom dwellinghouse, and change of use from agricultural to residential land with associated landscaping and works

Resolved: Objection

P/HOU/2025/07055

23 Heathlands Avenue

Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory. Erect single storey rear extension and freestanding pergola

Resolved: No Objection

P/FUL/2026/00135

392 Christchurch Road

Proposal: Retain existing overflow car park

Resolved: No objection. On proviso that it is linked to business's primary activities as a garden centre nursery.

21. PLANNING APPLICATIONS (information only)

P/CLP/2026/00076

54 St Catherines Church Lane

Proposal: Loft conversion including two side gables

P/CLP/2025/07636

3 Meadow Close

Proposal: Loft conversion

P/NMA/2025/07508

Land East of New Road

Proposal: Non-material amendment to approved P/A P/RES/2022/08041 (Reserved Matters submission comprising layout, scale, appearance and landscaping pursuant to condition 1 of outline permission ref. 3/17/3609/OUT for Phase 2 comprising 148 dwellings (Use Class C3) with public open space and landscaping. Vehicular access off Christchurch Road and Church Lane as approved in the outline planning permission) the amendments are limited to the external elevations of individual plots along the eastern side and church lane, excluding any dwelling directly facing Phase 1. The amendments include the following:

- Use of earthy, deeper tones in the brickwork
- Replacement of render panels with stacked brick panels
- Incorporation of traditional pitched porches and bays in place of contemporary glass.
- Raising of window cills

22. TREE APPLICATIONS

P/TRT/2026/00015

20 Gallows Drive

Proposal: T1 Oak: - Prune lower (SE) canopy growing towards 20 Gallows Drive only by approximately 2m. - Prune to achieve a 6m clearance from ground level all around tree. Only secondary and tertiary branches shall be pruned leaving wounds no larger than 8cm.

Cllr Manuel stated a non-pecuniary interest and withdrew from discussion. No Objection form other Cllrs.

Meeting started: 7.03pm

Meeting closed: 9.25pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18th February 2026

Full Council

venue: West Parley Community Hub

Wednesday 4th February 2026

Planning Committee

venue: West Parley Community Hub