

DRAFT

WHITSBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 14TH APRIL 2025 IN WHITSBURY VILLAGE HALL

1. Attendance Register, Apologies and Declarations of Interest.

Present: Cllr G Thompson (Chair), Cllr H Sutton, Cllr G Dominey, Cllr S Husher

Apologies: District Cllr J Richards

Absent: Cllr C Harper

In Attendance: 9 Members of the Public, Mr E Hale (Clerk), Mrs M Hildreth (Future Clerk)

No Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Minutes of Meetings held on 6th January 2025

The Council resolves that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 6th January 2025, having been circulated to members, be signed as a correct record.

3. Items raised by Members of the Public

- One member of the public reported that the trees next to the public footpath near the water works are in need of care. It is their opinion that at least one tree seems near to falling and could harm people and property. They also reported that rain cascades down the foot path and pools at the bottom. They would like to see a solution to this problem if possible.
- Another member of the public was concerned about a proposed CALA Homes site in Fordingbridge Parish next to Whitsbury Parish. They felt Whitsbury Road would not be able to handle the amount of proposed traffic for such a site.

4. Report by District Cllr Richards

Cllr Richards was unable to attend the meeting but sent a report. She wanted it known that the number 49 bus, which comes through Whitsbury on a Tuesday, is due to be discontinued at the end of August. It will no longer be subsidized by New Forest District Council for the sum of £2500. Fordingbridge Town Council is having a meeting to discuss saving this bus route and Cllr Richards will attend. She will report back on what happens in the meeting. Cllr S Husher was also interested in attending if possible. The Council agreed to research further to see if there is anything they can do to save the bus route. Possibly by working with other towns and villages on the route.

5. Financial Reports and Payments

Clerk E Hale reported that the Council accounts finished the financial end of year on March 31st with a balance of £14,159.21. This is an increase of £456.08 on the year before. The following payments were approved by all councillors: £152.07 to Zurich insurance for renewal on June 1, 2025. £65.77 to Cllr S Husher for the printing of the village newsletter. £5.75 in Bank Charges for use of the accounts.

6. Planning Applications

There has been no decision from the planning officer regarding Planning Application 24/10939.

There was no objection to tree works CONS/25/0120 or CONS/25/0130

Cllr Thompson went to the public consultation session for the 95 homes proposed by CALA Homes that are just outside of Whitsbury Parish in Fordingbridge Parish. Planning permission has not yet been applied for, but it is anticipated that it will be soon. Whitsbury residents have expressed concern

regarding the amount of traffic and construction traffic that could happen on Whitsbury Road in the direction of Fordingbridge. The Council have decided to keep an eye on the situation and may decide in future to write to Fordingbridge Council with their concerns or respond to the planning application with their concerns when comments become open to the public.

7. Lengthsman

The Lengthsman is due on 6 June. The Clerk and Chairman will speak on what tasks should be assigned.

8. Jim Dyer Legacy

An update is awaited from Cllr Harper regarding the church footpath.

9. Whitsbury Village Plan

Cllr Husher reported he is waiting for survey results concerning a noticeboard for the north end of the village before making a proposal.

10. Village Emergency Plan

Mr Cobb-Smith reported he had attended a Local Resilience Forum at Lyndhurst. He and four other residents will be working together to create the Emergency Plan. They will need to identify Risks and Response, equipment and materials as well as identify those who are vulnerable within the community. To consider a generator that can be used at an Emergency Hub. Possibly at the Hall. A grant for a generator can be applied for through SSE. Mr Cobb-Smith will brief the Council on his findings at the next meeting.

11. Speed Reduction

Cllr Dominey reported the application for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy had been successful and £2900 had been approved for road markings and signs. The next step is to contact Hampshire Highways to have plans approved. This part of the process might take some time and could take until 2026 to implement. Cllr Dominey to check how the monies will be given and if they will remain earmarked if the Hampshire Highways process takes a while.

12. Thank you to Edward Hale for 10 years of service as Clerk. Chairman Thompson thanked Edward Hale for his hard work over the last 10 years and presented him with a leaving gift. He was given a loud round of applause by all in attendance.

19. Closed Session

Chairman Thompson proposed to move to the closed session at this point. The Council agreed. Before starting Chairman Thompson asked members of the public to leave the room but informed them that they could come back in after the session if they wished to hear the rest of the agenda items. Melissa Hildreth left the room to allow the Council to come to their decision.

Councillors all agreed to hire Melissa Hildreth as the new Clerk under the conditions stated in the contract circulated to them before the meeting. The contract was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

13. Discuss and Agree Purchase of a Laptop and Wireless Mouse for the Clerk

The Council all agree to set a limit of £550 for the purchase of a laptop as well as £15 for a mouse. The Council also agreed to spend on a subscription for Microsoft 365 for Business starting at £9.60 excluding VAT. It was also agreed that a security program should be purchased. Clerk to investigate costs and bring to next meeting.

14. Discuss Options for Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Two working groups to be formed. Cllr Thompson and Cllr Dominey to work together on the Standing Orders. Cllr Thompson and Cllr Husher to work together on the Financial Regulations.

15. Discuss and Decide the Contract for Internal Audit

The Council all agree to spend £125 to contract to with Do the Numbers. Chairman Thompson the sign the contract and clerk to inform the company.

16. Read and Approve the Accounting Statements for 2024/25 Tax Year

Section 2 of the AGAR was presented to the Council with £14,159 in cash held on 31 March and with asset values of £6040. Section 2 was signed by Clerk E Hale and Chairman G Thompson.

17. Discuss Registering with the ICO for Data Protection as Required Under the Data Protection Regulation 2018

All the Council agree to the payment of £52 for registration. Clerk to register the Council. Also, new emails to be made for all Councillors through the Whitsbury Parish webpage.

18. Any Other Business

Clerk to look up the cost to join HALC and present at next meeting.

Thank you to Cllr Husher and Elaine for the newsletter.

A Cherry tree has been cut down on the verge. Discuss a garden or plaque for the site next time.

To discuss next steps for the placement of a handrail for the footpath to the church. Who would be available to help?

20. Date of Next Meeting

7pm on Monday 9th June. Other meetings arranged for 28th July, and 10th November.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Posted: 30th April 2025

Melissa Hildreth Clerk - Whitsbury Parish Council

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