

Present: Cllr Richard Footitt (Chair), Cllr Tom Scott-Malden, Cllr Martyn Gillingham, Cllr Sue Coutanche

In Attendance: Mark Payne (Clerk), Cllr Craig Monks, and five members of the public

Item No		Action
2025/015	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from Cllr Robin Ketteridge. These were accepted.	
2025/016	Notification of items not on the agenda None	
2025/017	Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 07.01.25 These were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Cllr MG, seconded by Cllr SC	

<p>2025/01 8</p>	<p>Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>a) <i>Progress on maintaining grass verges</i> Terence has agreed to maintain verges at Manor Close, including the hedges. He has also planted daffodils and crocuses. Cllr SC asked if council should be warned about the flowers to ensure they don't cut them down. Cllr RF / MP to action. Mike Buchan had offered to maintain Pipplepen Lane – RF needed to confirm this with him. Cllr RF still looking for someone to paint the white posts at either end of the village and keep the hedges around them trimmed.</p> <p>b) <i>First Aid Course</i> After initial interest from 22 people, in the end 10 attended. As agreed at the outset, SPPC will cover the full cost. It was suggested communication issues may have partly caused the lack of numbers. This would be reviewed for any future courses. Cllr RF raised the issue of a register of those who had completed the course, in case of a medical issue in the village. Participants would need to agree.</p> <p>c) <i>Letter to Highways</i> This had been completed via Cllr Monks.</p> <p>d) <i>Wessex Internet (WI)</i> Forthcoming road closures in Pipplepen Lane on 10th March and in Church Hill on the 12th May. WI have confirmed that access will be maintained for residents. Cllr SC stated there was at least one resident who would require daily access for medical reasons. Cllr MG felt that the Parish Council should have been consulted about the route of cabling through the village and should have a map showing cable routes. Landowners had been approached, and the proposed route included the footpath through the churchyard but the PCC was not yet aware of this. WI have been invited to the Village Meeting on 29th April so it is an opportunity for clarification on these matters together with any other questions from residents.</p> <p>e) <i>EV Charging Point</i> The Village Hall Committee are broadly in favour of installing an EV charging point in Village Hall car park. However, insurers have raised concerns about the location of the chargers – suggesting they were a fire risk next to the building. They have also queried whether they would be illuminated and the car park properly marked out. DC have subsequently confirmed that they have no plan to illuminate or mark out the spaces. A new location away from the building is being investigated.</p> <p>f) <i>Village meeting</i> To be held on 29th April 2025. The Village Hall Committee will run a bar and snacks will be available. Cllr MG hopes that as well as WI there will be a presentation about Digital Voice from BT, either in person or via video link. Cllr MG confirmed that Digital Voice did not require the fibre optic cable that WI are about to install. Currently it was unclear whether BT would be interested in installing fibre to the village if Wessex Internet have already done this.</p>	<p>RF/M P</p> <p>RF</p>
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	<p>g) Appraisal of Payroll officerA date has been set for end of March.</p> <p>h) 5G coverageCllr RK has been pursuing this with the aim of installing an additional 5G mast in the village. It was commented that a resident had been approached about installation on their land.</p>	
2025/019	<p>Appointment of Wardens Cllr RF explained that Andy Sydell had agreed to take on the role of Tree Warden. Proposed by Cllr MG, seconded by Cllr TSM and was agreed. Louise Sydell had offered to be Junior River Warden. Cllr SC felt Deputy River Warden was a more appropriate title. Proposed by Cllr MG, seconded by Cllr TSM and was agreed.</p>	
2025/020	<p>Millennium Green Cllr MG explained that solicitors for Natural England and the Charity Commission had misunderstood what needed to happen, believing that SPPC wanted to take over the ownership of the Millennium Green. Cllr MG has pointed out that SPPC want to become the sole trustee, rather than taking over ownership. The solicitors are now acting on the corrected information.</p> <p>Cllr MG has received a quote for grass cutting, and was obtaining another quote. The MG working group, when formed, will need to determine the cost and the frequency of grass cutting.</p>	MG
2025/021	<p>Planning</p> <p>a) P/FUL/2024/06664 Shepherd huts at Picket Lane Nursery Decision awaited.</p> <p>b) WD/ENF/20/00041 Parrett Hotel Enforcement notice Cllr RF confirmed that following an inspection the Enforcement Notice had been lifted. The property is now a 9-bedroom hotel plus living quarters registered as one property.</p> <p>c) P/NOTP/2025/00915 Telephone Box BT has applied to have this removed despite another part of BT reinstating the line to the box. Cllr RF will draft the response from SPPC objecting to the removal.</p>	RF

2025/02
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Reports

a) Dorset Councillor – Craig Monks

1. Dorset Council debated and voted through the budget at its meeting in February. Residents will be aware of the proposed introduction of 24-hour parking charges. After voting for the proposal the council has now announced that this scheme will be postponed for review. Significant budget pressures – 5% council tax rise. Cllr RF noted that the SPPC precept had remained the same – so a 0% increase.

2. For some time, Cllr Monks has been working on improving rural connectivity of our Ward including public transport. Following further funding from Central Government for rural buses he was very pleased to share that pending a final funding decision the Saturday CR6 service to Bridport is to be introduced. As part of his pitch the CB3 bus through South Perrott would have a timetable to fit in with the CR6 and even introduce further services to other villages. Cllr SC commented it would be helpful if any new timetable could reduce the long waiting time at Bridport as she was aware this was a problem for some residents.

3. One element of DC's budget is the idea of working with Town and Parish councils which might be able to take on services. Perhaps SPPC might want to explore this further given the opportunity to receive financial support? This might include support for verge maintenance.

4. Mosterton PC have met with engineers regarding the upgrade of the mobile signal for the area. He wondered if SPPC had also been contacted. On the subject of improving broadband services work is taking place in SPPC area. He has raised concerns with officers and have had it confirmed that access will be available to residents within road closures.

5. Following concerns raised by SPPC, Cllr Monks has raised concerns regarding the damaged railings by the river in the centre of the village. Officers were very prompt in replying so he is hopeful that

Nothing to report. Cllr SC reported that Alex had confirmed that the damaged car parked in Picket lane was legal and was probably awaiting collection/tow away.

c) River Warden – Martyn Gillingham

The start of the New Year has seen a further two major storms to hit the UK and Ireland.

Storm Eowyn on Friday 24th January, and Storm Herminia on Sunday 26th January, caused widespread flooding with rainfall totals of 30 – 40mm across Wessex and some intense downpours. A wind speed of 83mph was recorded at Berry Head in Devon.

Apart from the usual A356 road flooding in the dip on the way to Crewkerne, no other flooding problems were experienced in the village. Ironically, we are unable to sign up with the Environment Agency for Flood Warnings, as they don't consider this stretch of the River Parrett as liable to flood!

I have rodded the drain at the bottom of Church Hill, to remove the soil blockage that was preventing surface water run-off into the river. I have also cleared the gutter leading to the waterfall drain outside the Village Hall, which was blocked by debris arising from the recent hedge trimming.

We have posted on the Parish Council website (www.southperrottparishcouncil.org) a copy of the Flood Recovery Guide, as requested by the Environment Agency.

d) Footpaths Officer – Sue Coutanche

The Leggs sandstone tracks are being regularly used, in all weather and at all times of the day, by walkers from both South Perrott and Mosterton. This is not surprising as the official footpaths are often waterlogged and in places ankle deep in mud. The Leggs have erected gates to prevent their use by motor vehicles. Steven informed me recently that he has ordered a gate for pedestrian access to the track that starts opposite the Engineer's Road in Picket Lane.

Bailey's Lane Bridleway through the river and also the steps leading down from the permissive path are very overgrown. This is due to lack of use as this route is rarely used now to access the Millennium Green.

I'm pleased to report that Lecher Lane is currently almost mud free! This is thanks to the Buglers, the tenant farmers, who have purchased a bucket and brush (not suitable for the kitchen floor!), which fits onto a tractor to brush and scoop mud off of the road and into the bucket. This equipment is being kept permanently at Hill Farm in Lecher Lane.

	<p>In late January Dorset Council were busy in South Perrott clearing ditches and grips, which together with Martyn Gillingham's diligence in unblocking the drains and gullies, has prevented any significant flooding in the village, despite the recent severe storms.</p> <p>e) Environment – Plastic Free Community – Yvonne Sullivan Yvonne reported on the progress in making South Perrott a plastic free community. Information about the initiative can be found on the Surfers Against Sewage website.</p> <p>A steering group has been set up including Cllr RK (as the SPPC representative) which met on 16th February. The meeting agreed some first steps to raise awareness across the village at village events such as the Jumble Sale and annual Village meeting. They also agreed to organise a village litter pick. Cllr TSM asked if information could be provided for the SPPC website, Cllr SC suggested information could go in the Pump and Pound when appropriate.</p>	
2025/02 3	<p>Finance</p> <p>Cllr TSM reported current balance of £7938.99 .</p> <p>Expenditure since last meeting was £390 on First Aid Course, £108 on Christmas Tree and £500 donation to Church for grass cutting. Total expenditure was £1642.18 (including salaries and HMRC payment).</p> <p>£527.32 has been received from the Neighbour Car Scheme which used to operate in the village. It is proposed to ringfence this for a potential future car scheme. Proposed by Cllr TSM, seconded by Cllr MG. Agreed. The future ability to provide lifts to doctor appointments etc. would depend on finding one or two drivers.</p> <p>Website and email costs are currently being paid by Jonathan Baker. It is proposed to reimburse him £249.78 for this. Proposed by Cllr MG, seconded by Cllr SC. Agreed. The renewal will need to be paid in September for the year beginning Jan 2026. Cllr RF / MP will research costs with other providers for comparison, before the SPPC meeting in September.</p>	RF/M P
2025/02 4	<p>A356 repairs and traffic measures Covered under item 2025/022 a) 5</p>	

<p>2025/02 5</p>	<p>Matters of report and items for the next meeting Cllr RF reported back from a meeting with Nick Ireland – many issues were covered, including re-organisation at County Hall, funding raised from increasing car parking charges, the increasing cost of social care (by 2030, 35% of Dorset’s residents will be retired) and government targets for new housing.</p> <p>Planters for the entrance to School Hill are about to be ordered. SPPC are looking for volunteers to maintain them. It was suggested that Cllr RK might contact Vicky Read.</p> <p>The village Welcome Pack is almost ready. Cllr RF suggested that this should be funded by SPPC. Proposed by Cllr MG and seconded by Cllr SC. Agreed.</p> <p>Cllr RF reminded councillors to complete the online Register of Business Interests.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>2025/02 6</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting Tuesday May 2nd 2025 AGM followed by normal SPPC meeting.</p>	

Meeting closed at 20:41

Signed Date