

HINTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held at Hinton St Mary Village Hall
on Tuesday February 17th 2026
at 7pm

Present:-

Chairman Celia Wright (CW)

Councillors Ben Cooper (BC) Robbie Bartlett (RB), Mark Steggles (MS)
Jo Curtis (JC)

Clerk Vivian Hitchmough

The Manager of Hinton St Mary Farms , Fred Sorby in attendance.

2026.47 Apologies:- County Councillor Carole Jones

2026.48 The Chairman introduced Fred Sorby, the new Manager of Hinton St Mary Farms to the meeting. Mr Sorby has been in post since February 2025 and has recently moved to the village. He is looking to provide a balance between the farm, the estate and village life. He will endeavour to attend Parish Council meetings in the future.

2026.49 Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday November 11th 2025 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

2026.50 Declarations of interest:- none

2026.51 Matters Arising

Issues relating to heavy traffic using Veals Lane was discussed . Veals Lane is under three metres wide in places and the heavy traffic and tractors have accelerated road deterioration and caused considerable damage to the verges. To this end the Parish Council has asked Dorset Council to repair the road and work is scheduled to take place from 20th to 23rd March 2026. The Chairman reiterated her concern for residents on foot and in their cars using Veals Lane with the amount of heavy HGVs and tractors using the road as it was very likely that an accident may occur.

The upgrading of the farm track behind Bartlett Contractors to provide access to Stearts Yard and Home Farm from the B3092 application (Ref: P/FUL/2021/02948) was granted on 19.01.2022.

The Chairman and Councillors all agreed the need to support the farming community and pointed out that the proposed farm track in the field below Veals Lane would reduce the amount of traffic through the conservation village and prevent further damage.

Mr Sorby assured the Council the farm track has been upgraded and will eventually be tarmacked and used entirely by the HGVs and tractors.

The Chairman will write to Eric Parker, cc Fred Sorby, to pass on the concerns of residents and the Parish Council.

2026.52 Updates from Officers.

Planning:-

**P/TRC/2026/00536 Enzo Grange.
Tree Work granted.**

The Chairman was concerned an extension in Wood Lane had been refused and will contact the resident to add the Parish Council's support to the application.

Roads, drains and potholes.

RB reported that he had left messages to speak with Amanda on several issues and was waiting to hear from her.

He spoke with Mr Sorby regarding ditches and gullies needed in various areas and Mr Sorby will speak with the Estate in this regard and work with them and RB to resolve the problems.

RB said reporting any pot holes to Dorset Council will raise a priority which will be addressed by the Council with a job number. Any resident can do this online . <http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement>.

Village Garden

JC reported that the hedges need a chain saw cut back and Mr Sorby said he will add it to his list.

The Chairman noted that there were overhanging shrubs and hedges in the village causing problems to residents and cars passing and would ask people to cut back where possible.

Speed Indicator Device

MS reported the weather has been an issue regarding moving the S.I.D as there is a six week schedule, but he will move it on Saturday in order to comply. BC offered to help with the move.

Defibrillator

CW confirmed all was checked and in order and will train BC to check the equipment.

Telephone Box

Well stocked with books and pamphlets.

2026.53

Finance

The Chairman was delighted to announce that at last the signatory changes to the bank account at Lloyds have been approved after many hours of patient telephone calls etc. The plan to have online banking will be a consideration in the future.

Cheques were signed for DAPTC, Clerks salary and PC insurance. The Council agreed a 5% rise to the Clerk's remuneration from April 2026/27

2026.54 County Councillor Carole Jones report (in her absence)

There is a consultation taking place to reduce the speed to 30mph on the A357 at Bagber.

The new 48 housing development opposite Rolls Mill will break ground on 5th March.

Dorset Council's net budget went through at 482.6 million. The government has decreed that Dorset Council will have an uplift of spend of 215.9 million, but 24.1 million of this comes from increasing the Council Tax.

The challenges of running one of the most rural areas in the country with the oldest percentage of people living in it is not understood by the Government. In Dorset, 93% of our income comes from council tax, last year it was 83% - compare this to Derby where 24% comes from council tax and Hounslow with just 29%. As ever, our main spend is children's services and adult social care.

An extra 5.2 million is being made available to tackle flood impact.

In two years of the Lib Dem administration they have failed to make any savings at all.

Dorset Council is looking to improve the way it works with Town and Parish Councils. They will be offered new and further responsibilities, although it is unlikely there will be any funding put forward.

Cllr Jones is looking into the access road to Nicholson's Cottages as it is in a very poor state. MS said he was concerned about the access road danger caused by the bus stop sign and the possible increase in bus services would increase the danger to pedestrians and vehicles.

2026.55 Any other business

The Chairman attended the Gillingham and Shaftesbury transport forum and reported that there is a plan to connect buses to various routes which will enable residents to take advantage of new bus service connections in the future.

2026.56 Date of next meeting

Tuesday May 12th 2026 at 7pm.

This will be the Annual Meeting of the Council followed by the Council Meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm