

Manston and Hammoon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on Monday 24th November 2025 at 6:30 pm in Child Okeford Village Hall

Present: Councillors -

J. Hussey (Chair), P. Easter (PE), A Frampton (AF), D. Honeybun (DH), A. Yarwood (AY), M Harris, (MH), M Woods (MW)

In attendance:

Cllr Jane Somper, Dorset Council, David Green (Parish Clerk) & two members of the public

Chair's Welcome

Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

25.39 Public Discussion Period (30 mins)

The issue of the Hammoon Gates operation was discussed.

Cllr Woods summarised the situation. After 7 months and several prompts Dorset Council's legal department had finally responded to the request for clarification of the insurance position concerning the operation of the gates by local volunteers.

Dorset Council have now advised that they take full responsibility for the operation of the gates and that this cannot be delegated, as it has been, to the team of local volunteers for the last 4 years. Dorset Council have advised that the risks associated with volunteers within the highways is something that cannot be 'satisfactorily mitigated', given that legally a road closure can only be ordered by the Police or the Highways Authority.

Dorset Council have suggested that the Parish Council contacts their Highways department should the gates need to be closed, and a team will be sent to deal with the closure – and any subsequent re-opening of the road - and that this will take up to 2 hours on any occasion.

Cllr Woods noted that Dorset Council had actually done nothing to provide a working solution to the issue, and to stand down voluntary action actually increases the dangers. It was agreed that the Parish Council was justified in asking the question because the insurance position of volunteers had not been confirmed since the gates were introduced in 2021, there being no Memorandum of Understanding drafted to properly delegate functions.

It was noted that the dangers of the situation were now fully exposed for all to see. It was agreed that a written response to Dorset Council would be submitted, and this would highlight the risks that now exist from delayed closure/opening and will point out the likely additional costs that would now arise. The question of how flooding incidents due to excess rainwater run off would trigger a closure would also be raised.

Cllr Somper confirmed that she had spoken to Dorset Council Legal department concerning the issue; they had confirmed that the lack of any Memorandum of Understanding was an oversight. Cllr Yarwood noted

Chairman:

Date:

that it was the Environment Agency who had contacted her to advise of flood warnings on past occasions. The issue of improved flood warning signage was raised, and will be mentioned to Dorset Council.

25.40 To receive and accept apologies for absence

None.

25.41 Declarations of pecuniary and other interests in relation to the agenda

None were declared.

25.42. To agree the minutes of previous meeting on 18th August 2025 are a true and accurate record

These were unanimously **AGREED**.

25.43 Issues arising from the last meeting/Chair & Clerks report

Hammoon Noticeboard

The Chair thanked Mike & Sue Harris and the Hammoon PCC for their agreement to use the Church noticeboard for PC information.

Manston Village Hall

It was noted that Manston Village Hall remains officially out of use for the foreseeable future. There have been legal developments though, there has been a proposal to remove the problem trees without acceptance of any liability. It is noted that two of the Trustees have recently resigned.

The Council agreed to thank Anne Mills, Trustee and support her efforts in pursuing the proposed way forward and noted that the surveyors report did not show that the structural issues were insurmountable. There is no public funding available for a new Hall to be built and every effort should be made to preserve the existing building.

Mower Lane bridle way

Following contact by Cllr Frampton, it was noted that the bridleway had been greatly improved by a landowner, and it was also noted that some new signage had been put in place. Dorset Rangers had confirmed that they are not responsible for this bridleway.

25.44 To receive report from Dorset Council

Cllr Somper provided several updates:

Planning – Dorset no longer has a 5-year housing land supply therefore it will be ‘open season’ for any applications submitted between now and the finalisation of Dorset’s new Local Plan which will be published next autumn.

Dinah's Hollow – will be closed for up to one year from January. This is unlikely to impact on Manston & Hammoon Parishes but will impact greatly on the use of the A350.

Devolution – North Dorset parishes have challenged Dorset Councils proposed transfer of services to towns & parishes which have uncapped precepts. There has been no consultation regarding this process. It is likely that the introduction of 'Area Boards' will create yet another layer of bureaucracy.

The Clerk noted that the DAPTC's recent 'Fresh Start' event focused on the subject of transferring services and encouraged the raising of precepts to fund any transferred services.

25.45 To receive a finance report and to agree action in response to proposals and payment approvals:

- i) Retrospective payments approved:

Date	Supplier	Description	Amount
26/08/2025	Child Okeford Village Hall	Hall Hire	£ 46.00
28/08/2025	David Green	August 2025 pay & arrears	£ 180.87
31/08/2025	Unity Bank	Service fee	£ 6.00
02/09/2025	Alfie Burt	mowing	£ 130.00
29/09/2025	David Green	September 2025 pay	£ 161.73
30/09/2025	Unity Bank	Service fee	£ 6.00
01/10/2025	Alfie Burt	mowing	£ 130.00
13/10/2025	HMRC	Q2 PAYE 2025/2026	£ 117.40
28/10/2025	David Green	October 2025 pay	£ 161.73
31/10/2025	Unity Bank	Service fee	£ 6.00
03/11/2025	Alfie Burt	mowing	£ 130.00

25.46 Budget and Precept for 2026/2027

The Clerk proposed setting a precept of **£7,600** for 2026/2027, the purpose being to maintain current costs and build up something of a reserve. The impact of this on Council Tax band D will be modest – increasing from £ 66.14 to £ 67.44. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

25.47 Hammoon telephone box museum project progress

Cllr Yarwood confirmed that Dorset Council had declined to provide a grant for the project but there is community support for the museum idea. The Clerk suggested that costings be brought to the next PC meeting and the Council would discuss whether part funding from reserves would be possible.

25.48 Report on any highway issues in both villages (to include traffic and speeding)

The question of a 20-mph speed limit in Manston was raised. It was noted that these were now widely used elsewhere in Dorset and this should be reconsidered. Cllr Somper said that she would support an application. The process for self-funded Traffic Regulation Order will be clarified with the Road Safety Team. It was noted that Okeford Fitzpaine makes use of 'Village Gates' and planters to persuade drivers to reduce speed.

25.49 To comment on any planning applications

There were no new local applications to review. It was noted the efforts by a landowner to tidy up the farm in Hammoon should be acknowledged.

25.50 Confidential Matters (public and press to leave the meeting)

No items to discuss.

25.51. Items for the next meeting

- Flood gates operation update
- Village Hall update

25.52. Date of next meeting(s)

Monday, 23rd February 2026 at 6.30pm

There being no further business to be transacted the meeting closed at 19:55 hours.

DRAFT