

## LYTCHETT MINSTER AND UPTON TOWN COUNCIL

An **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY** meeting was held on **WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL 2026** at **St Dunstan's Church, Poole Road, Upton** and commenced at 6:30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Griffin, Mayor  
Councillor S McKell, Deputy Mayor  
Councillor F Drane

Councillor M Pryor  
Councillor J R Burns  
Councillor D Wilson  
Councillor D White  
Councillor C Squires  
Councillor C Evans  
Councillor R Wood  
Councillor V Whittingham  
Councillor K Walker

**Also in attendance:** Mrs Kate Osborne, Town Clerk  
Mrs Sandra Samways, Admin Officer  
Mr Sebastian Lewis, Community Projects & Support Officer  
Miss Nellie Powell, Mayors Guide  
CEA Martha Cavell  
Approximately 65 members of the public.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor W Pipe

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY TOWN MAYOR, CLLR R GRIFFIN:**

Cllr R Griffin welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**MINUTES:** of the previous Annual Assembly meeting held on 30 April 2025 were received and reviewed, it was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** to accept these minutes.

### **PRESENTATIONS BY CLLR S MCKELL, DEPUTY MAYOR:**

Grant Aid donations were awarded to:

- East Dorset & Purbeck Citizens Advice (Ros Dignan) - £2,500
- STARS (Adam Dennet) - £150
- Lytchett & Upton Beacon Community Association (LUBCA) (Lynn Wright) - £500
- Home Start Wessex (Debbie Phillips-White) - £1,000

## MAYOR'S TOWN COUNCIL PRESENTATION:

Cllr Ray Griffin gave a summary of achievements and work within the town and news of upcoming items, including:

- The appointment of the new Town Clerk, Kate Osborne and Community Project & Support Officer, Sebastian Lewis.
- The Local Plan:  
The Local Plan sets out a long-term strategy to meet local economic, social, and environmental needs in the town.
- The Heritage Trail:  
A series of 17 plaques, marking sites of historical interest around the town – these are listed on the Town Council's website.
- Concern for our environment:  
The Town Council is passionate about protecting our environment and continually strives to improve areas e.g.: re-vamp of the old skatepark area into a pleasant wooded walk way.
- Keeping citizens safe:  
Initiatives such as the SpeedWatch group, who do regular speed checks to ensure restrictions are observed.
- Supporting our youth:  
The Town Council launched a new financial award to support students at Lytchett Minster School studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. Cllr Griffin thanked the sponsors for making this scheme possible.  
A youth space is to be opened in September 2026, in conjunction with the YMCA. This will be for an initial 2 years with the aim to make it permanent.
- Supporting our community:  
The Town Council opens the Help Centre (Mon, Tues & Weds 9:30am to 1:00pm) for any of our residents  
The Town Council Office continues to host East Dorset & Purbeck Citizens Advice Surgeries, and in January 2026 began a weekly 'Access To Wellbeing' drop-in service (Monday 10:00am to 3:00pm)  
Supporting a Dorset Wildlife Trust campaign to 'Save Upton Heath' to protect a large section of Upton Heath from mineral extraction works, by means of a £10,000 grant.
- Neighbourhood Plan:  
The Town Council has committed to producing a Neighbourhood Plan, which gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. The production of this plan, although funded by the Town Council must be led by a Community Steering Group.

- Council Devolution:  
It is likely more services will be devolved from Dorset Council, in addition to those the Town Council has already adopted.
- Picnic In the Park:  
The annual Picnic in the Park at the Recreation Ground is proving to be a popular afternoon out for families, with free entertainment and activities provided. This year's event will be taking place on 27 June.
- Works are scheduled to repair the retaining wall on Moorland Parade, fronting the fish & chip shop – although this is not the responsibility of the Town Council, to maintain the aesthetic and for safety reasons the Town council will fund the repairs.
- The boardwalk at Lytchett Bay View will also be replaced, with permission from Natural England and after the bird breeding season, and funded by the Town Council.

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – HOW TO SHAPE WHERE YOU LIVE, A PRESENTATION FROM DORSET COUNCIL:**

Planning Consultant, Marth Cavell from ECA Planning & Consultation gave an interesting presentation on the value of a Neighbourhood Plan to a community.

### **OPEN FORUM – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ELECTORATE OF THE CIVIL PARISH TO RAISE COMMUNITY MATTERS:**

A panel comprising of the Mayor (Cllr Ray Griffin), Town Clerk (Mrs Kate Osborne), and Planning Consultant, Martha Cavell took questions from the floor:

- 1) Is there any plan to upgrade Upton Junior School – still has mobile classrooms from the 1970's?
  - Cllr White explained the school is led and managed by HAMWIC Trust, and now blended with Upton Infant School (although with separate budgets/funding). The Mayor is very aware of the need for a new school building, however this is the responsibility of the HAMWIC Trust. Despite the buildings and environment, the school is recognised as being very successful.
- 2) What is the cost of implementing the 20mph scheme along Sandy Lane and feeder roads, and who will enforce the restriction?
  - Cllr Griffin responded that Dorset Council fund and implement the scheme. The Town Clerk will contact Dorset Council regarding the costings. SpeedWatch and Dorset Police will enforce.

- 3) The 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Neighbourhood Plan listed French's Farm building as a care home – is this happening?
- The idea of a care home at this location was not supported locally, as being too remote and not within the community. The building is currently being renovated by the Lees Family for personal use.
- 4) Could the public rubbish bin on Poole Road near the Co-Op be replaced with dual recycling & rubbish bin?
- The large recycling skips sited where Aldi is now, were removed due to constant abuse. Dorset Council encourage kerbside recycling. The Clerk will liaise with Dorset Council regarding bin options for the town.  
*Post Meeting Comment: Dorset Council does not provide segregated recycling and general waste bins for on-the-go street litter. While some local authorities use dual-compartment "street recycling" bins, Dorset Council has historically used traditional, un-segregated litter bins on its high streets and public spaces.  
Because public street bins do not separate recycling, all waste placed in them is treated as general rubbish.  
To ensure that your "on-the-go" waste is properly recycled, it is highly recommended to take your recyclables—such as plastic bottles, coffee cups, and cans—home to sort into your kerbside bins or to bring them to one of the council's designated sites*
- 5) The damaged dog waste bin on Briarswood Road was replaced with a rubbish bin in a different position – the resident reports this position is not appropriate.
- All bins are now universal, to accept all refuse including dog waste and dedicated dog waste bins are no longer installed.
  - The bin location is determined by Dorset Council, and may be due to distance from the collection lorry.
  - The Clerk will discuss options for locations with Dorset Council. Also, the bin re-located from the footbridge over the A35 to the garages at Heights Road, near the railway is still causing issues, with regular piles of dog waste bags left at the original site.
- 6) Residents of Roberts Way reported a spate of recent criminal activity in the road, and feel they are linked to other incidents locally. The Police were contacted and Crime Numbers issued but no visit or further action taken. Could the street lights be kept on all night?
- Lytchett Minster & Upton are classed as a Low Crime Area – so Police resources are moved to areas with a higher crime rate.
  - Street lighting being turned off overnight is a national environmental initiative.
  - The Clerk has contacted Dorset Police about this spate of incidents and to request a Police 'Pop-Up' in Upton.

- 7) What evidence is there to support that a care home was not wanted at French's Farm?
- Comments at the Public consultation, plus online comments from residents – the Town Council also agreed it was 'out of the way'.
- 8) Who funds the Neighbourhood Plan?
- The Town Council will engage and fund a Planning Consultant to work alongside the Steering Group.
- 9) How do residents engage in the Neighbourhood Plan?
- Anyone interested in joining the Steering Group please leave your details with the Clerk tonight or in the Office.
- 10) How will the SSSI be affected by change in Government?
- Upton is protected from large scale development by the proximity of Upton heath and Poole Harbour/Lytchett Bay. European legislation currently has a 400m exclusion zone protecting the environment so it is unlikely there will be any changes in the near future – however any future Government may review this.
- 11) There is a lot of talk of spending, how is the Town Council saving money?
- The Council's only source of income is the precept, which is raised annually; there are reserves which are well managed. As a public body there are regulations restricting how the money can be spent and all transactions are subject to both internal and external audit. All Councillors serve on a voluntary basis – there are currently 2 vacancies if anyone would like to apply. Cllr Drane commented that there are things to be done around the town which do not cost money, just the community's time, e.g. litter picking and keeping public areas tidy; the Police advise a tidy town is a safer town.
- 12) Following a van parking on the corner of Poole Road (almost opposite Ropers Lane) last summer – will double yellow lines be installed at this corner?
- The Council were very aware of the chaos caused by this inconsiderate parking, and contacted the vehicle owner, who eventually moved from Poole Road and there have been no further occurrences. Dorset Council Highways visited the site to score for installing parking restrictions, however it did not meet the criteria.
- 13) Residents presented a petition requesting a controlled crossing at Aldi on Blandford Road North, as using the pedestrian refuge on this busy stretch of road is challenging.
- The Council raised this at the planning stage and acknowledge this poses a danger to pedestrians. This will be included for discussion at the next quarterly meeting of the Town Council and Dorset Council Highways team.

14) Residents of Beacon Park Road and St David's Road reported issues with Aldi customers parking on these roads and obstructing driveways?

- It is confusing why people choose not to use the large Aldi car park provided? This will be included for discussion at the next quarterly meeting of the Town Council and Dorset Council Highways team.

#### **VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS PRESENTATIONS BY CLLR M PRYOR:**

Volunteer of the Year 2026 recipients received a trophy and certificate to keep, and a donation made to the Charity of their choice:

Under 18	Nellie Powell Chosen Charity: Dorset Blind Association
Over 18	Debbie Head Chosen Charity: 1 <sup>ST</sup> Lytchett Minster Scout Group
Over 18	Maureen Bradshaw Chosen Charity: Wild Bird Rescue
Organisation	Lytchett Minster & Upton Beacon Community Association (LUBCA) Chosen Charity: LUBCA

**There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.00 pm**