

LYTCHETT MINSTER & UPTON TOWN COUNCIL

A **MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** was held on **TUESDAY** the **16 JUNE 2026** in the Council Chamber, 1 Moorland Parade, Moorland Way at 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

- Councillor R Griffin (Chair)
- Councillor S McKell
- Councillor M Pryor
- Councillor F H Drane
- Councillor J R Burns
- Councillor D Wilson
- Councillor C Evans
- Councillor R Wood
- Councillor V Whittingham
- Councillor K Walker

Also in attendance:

- Mrs K Osborne, Town Clerk
- Mrs S Samways, Administration Officer
- Mrs K Babbs
- Mrs A Brenton, Dorset Councillor
- Mr A Starr, Dorset Councillor
- Mr S Robinson, Dorset Councillor

Before business commenced, Cllr Griffin welcomed Mrs Katy Babbs to the meeting in advance of her joining the Town Council as Deputy Town Clerk on 6 July 2026.

70/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There were no members of the public present.

71/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

72/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor D White (non-business)
- Councillor C Squires (non-business)
- Councillor W Pipe (non-business)

73/26 STEM BURSARY PRESENTATION:

The recipients of the first STEM Bursary Awards attended to receive their certificates from Cllr Griffin. Cllr Griffin congratulated the 7 students of Lytchett Minster School on their talent and commitment to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The 6 Year 12 students were awarded a £1000 grant and the Year 13 student received a £2000 grant which can be spent to assist their studies and progression within these STEM subjects. Cllr Griffin explained this unique award displays the Town Council's commitment to the young people of the town, and is thanks to the generous contributions from the Town Council, the Lees and Rockley families and South Lytchett Manor Camping & Caravan site. Funding is confirmed for a further 3 years, and other avenues for future funding beyond that is being explored.

Cllr Griffin also reported more positive news regarding the young people of our town, with the launch of youth services; from September 2026 there will be a Youth Club for two age groups operating at The Grove.

74/26 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 14 APRIL 2026 (AS AMENDED FOLLOWING THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 14 May 2026):

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the AMENDED minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 14 April 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair.

75/26 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2026:

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on the 12 May 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair.

76/26 CLERK'S & OUTSIDE OPERATIONS REPORTS:

CLERK'S REPORT – June 2026

Minute 192/24 Future burial provision at Upton Cemetery: This was discussed at the Amenities Committee meeting on 19 May. The following was agreed:

- Upton Cemetery no longer offers full burials in the north section (the 'New' Cemetery) but will continue to offer interment of ashes.
- Further research to establish the Council's legal obligations regarding the reserved plots in the north area of the cemetery will be carried out. The findings will be brought to the next meeting of the Amenities Committee on 23 June.
- The piece of land in the middle of the old cemetery will be considered for its suitability for burials. If the Council is unable to honour the burials in the reserved plots, the use of this land would need to be seriously considered as an alternative.
- It was reported the recent works by BCP to repair the drainage pipe in the cemetery was completed successfully.

Minute 262/24 Youth Provision: Plans are proceeding in the preparation for the new youth space operating from The Grove from September. The grant application to the Purbeck Local Alliance Group (LAG) to equip The Grove with recreational items (pool table, TV etc) has been successful. The total grant sum awarded is £4,450. Congratulations to the Community Projects and Support Officer who compiled the grant application.

Recreation Ground Lease: See Minute 87/26.

Minute 305/25 Neighbourhood Plan: See Minute 85/26.

Minute 555/25: Deputy Town Clerk Recruitment:
Following the interviews on 14/15 May 2026, the Finance & Administration Committee endorsed the appointment of Katy Babbs to the role. Katy will be commencing employment on 6 July 2026.

Crime levels in the town:

A useful meeting took place with David Sidwick (Dorset Police and Crime

Commissioner) and officers from the Purbeck Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) on 3 June. The following was discussed:

- Roberts Way non-dwelling burglaries. No lines of enquiries. Difficult to prosecute as no forensics. The NPT had organised a meeting with the residents to provide advice (target hardening) and support.
- NPT will look to increase their presence in the town and include the town as part of Operation Relentless (evidence based mapping of patrol routes).
- Pop-up police contact points at the Town Council office to be trialled over the next 3 months. NB: The first pop-up took place on 4 June. It was only attended by one member of the public. More publicity will be released to promote the next event.
- Thefts from shops. Very much down to the individual shops to report to the police. The NPT will speak to local shops.

The Clerk reported receiving more updates from the Police on activity locally.

Proposed closure of Hamworthy Fire Station:

Update from Cllr Squires – see 'Items of Report'.

OUTSIDE OPERATIONS MANAGERS REPORT - June 2026:

The detailed report was noted by members; the Outside Operations Team were congratulated on their continuing excellent job maintaining the appearance of the town.

77/26 CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

78/26 TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND TO RESOLVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

To receive Committee minutes and to resolve recommendations:

Amenities Committee (Extraordinary) 14 April 2026

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Amenities Committee (Extraordinary) meeting held on the 14 April 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair of Committee. There were no recommendations.

Amenities Committee 19 May 2026

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on the 14 April 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair of Committee. There were no recommendations.

Finance and Administration Committee (Extraordinary) 26 May 2026

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Finance and Administration (Extraordinary) Committee meeting held on the 26 May 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair of Committee. There were no recommendations.

Environment and Planning Committee 26 May 2026

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Environment and Planning Committee meeting held on the 26 May 2026 be accepted and signed by the Chair of Committee. There were no recommendations.

79/26 TO CONSIDER AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026:

The Council's Internal Auditor, Parish and Town Auditing Services, visited the office on 13 May 2025 to carry out the year end internal audit. In accordance with the Council's adopted Financial Regulations and the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioners' Guide, the Council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records. The internal Auditor is required to complete the internal audit report of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the external auditor. The audit concluded that the Town Council reporting is compliant, and made some recommendations, including minuting the account balances monthly.

The Clerk was congratulated on an excellent job completing the internal audit process.

80/26 TO RECEIVE THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2025/2026:

The unaudited financial statements for 2025/2026 were received by members, and signed by the Chair and Town Clerk as the Responsible Finance Officer.

81/26 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026:

After consideration it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31 March 2026, and then signed by the Chair and Town Clerk as the Responsible Finance Officer.

82/26 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026:

Members received the Accounting Statement year ending 31 March 2026 which had been signed by the Responsible Finance Office (RFO).

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to approve the Accounting Statement for the year ending 31 March 2026 and it was signed by the Chair.

83/26 TO CONFIRM AND NOTE THE DATES FOR THE NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF THE UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN:

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the dates for the exercise of public rights be from 18 June to 29 July 2026. Notices will be placed on the website and noticeboards.

84/26 TO DECLARE ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST WITH THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR, BDO LLP:

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that there is no conflict of interest with BDO LLP and the Mayor and RFO signed the declaration to confirm this.

85/26 TO RECEIVE A REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN INCLUDING PROPOSALS AND FEES FROM PLANNING CONSULTANTS:

Following consideration of a feasibility report at a Council meeting in January 2026, Council agreed to move forward with a Neighbourhood Plan and to instruct a consultant to support and guide the process. Members were presented with and considered proposals and fees from planning consultants have put forward proposals (report ref: MATCJUN26Doc7).

The role of officers would be to clerk the Steering Group meetings and carry out and monitor actions from these meetings, liaise with the consultant, circulate information and papers between meetings, compile PR, surveys and public consultation events.

The reports recommended that the selected consultant commences in September following the commencement of the consultation of the draft Dorset Local Plan document.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** (with 2 abstentions) to accept the proposal from ECA Architecture & Planning.

After discussion, it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** (with 2 abstentions) to apply to Dorset Council to designate the Parish boundary as the Neighbourhood Area, and for ENPLAN Committee to oversee the process of establishing a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and its Terms of Reference.

Members were asked to consider any residents that may be candidates for the Steering Group; additionally ideas from the 2008 Town Plan and the French's Farm document should be considered. Cllr Griffin agreed to check the Town Plan recommendations that were implemented eg: Keep Upton Tidy/Carnival/Beacon Project etc.

86/26 TO RECEIVE A RECOMMENDATION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH A NEW TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE INCLUDING QUOTATIONS FROM WEBSITE PROVIDERS:

Members considered a report (report reference MATCJUN26Doc8) presenting proposals to create a new Town Council website. The aim was to create website which was more accessible and easier to navigate for users. This would also ensure the Council was legally compliant with the WCAG 2.2 AA (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) accessibility standard, enforced under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018

Cllr Burns emphasised the importance of establishing the purpose of our Town Council website, and its aims and objectives – highlighting the need for a Communication Strategy, which the Community Projects and Support Officer is currently working on.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** (with 1 abstention) to appoint provider Aubergine as its new website provider and to create a new Town Council website

The Clerk would investigate whether Aubergine provide an associated Conferencing Tool app.

87/26 TO RECEIVE QUOTATIONS TO CARRY OUT A VALUATION OF THE RECREATION GROUND AND SELECT A MRICS REGISTERED VALUER:

Council resolved (March 2026) to move forward with an independent valuation of the recreation ground as part of future negotiations with the landlord, Turbary Trust, to purchase the land. Members were advised that three independent valuers (MRICS Registered Valuers) were invited to provide quotations to produce a red book valuation report. Red book valuations must be conducted by a certified and qualified surveyor who has been awarded the title RICS Registered Valuer by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). A red book report has been requested to demonstrate the Council's due diligence to support any future purchase of the asset and Public Works Loan application.

The three quotations submitted were as follows (as detailed in report reference MATCJUN26Doc9:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. District Valuer Services (HMRC) | £2,250 +VAT |
| 2. Symonds & Sampson (Somerset) | £2,345 +VAT |
| 3. Wessex Surveyors | unable to act - outside their remit |

After discussion it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the District Valuer Services (HMRC) quotation. (This was approved in principle subject to the Turbary Trust instructing a valuer.) This will be funded from budget 103 (Administration) 4252 (Other Professional Fees).

88/26 TO RECEIVE PROPOSALS TO REPLACE THE EXISTING OFFICE PRINTER THROUGH A LEASING AGREEMENT:

The office printer was purchased in November 2017 for £1500. It is showing signs of poor quality printing and has become operationally slow. The Council has a contract with Konica Minolta to supply the machine with cartridges and to service it. The Council had been advised that it was no longer economically viable to continue servicing it, mainly due to limited parts availability. Additionally, older machines can become less reliable and may produce lower quality prints.

Three companies have been invited to put forward quotations for a lease arrangement:

1. Konica Minolta (Uses Government Framework Pricing)
Per year: £1231 - 5 year contract: £6,157
2. Zerographic
Per year: £1948 - 5 year contract: £9,740
3. RICOH (Uses Government Framework Pricing)
Per year: £1114 - 5 year contract: £5,582

The budget agreed for printing costs for 26/27 is £1,250 under budget Administration (103), Photocopier Rental (4205).

After discussion, it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously to replacing the office printer via a 5 year lease agreement, and that the decision to appoint a supplier be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor.

89/26 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS (INCLUDING MAYORAL/LUBCA/UPTON IN BLOOM/UPTON TOGETHER)/DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS.

Upton Together – Cllr McKell

Upton Together continue to have a steady flow of requests for prescriptions, and a food parcel request. The schools now get supplied by Waste Not Want Not.

Speedwatch – Cllr Evans

Another successful SpeedWatch was held recently. Cllr Evans has provided Dorset Police with a list of session for the next 6 months.

Upton in Bloom – Cllr Griffin

A reminder of the 2026 Horticultural Show will be held on 15 August.
The recent plant sale raised £500.

Dorset Councillors Report – a discussion regarding the Central Government Community Conversation initiative.

Cllr Griffin complimented Dorset Cllr Robinson on his progress on Adult Social Services.

90/26 TO RECEIVE THE LATEST FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the financial summary of accounts for April and May 2026 be approved.

91/26 TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT FOR JUNE 2026 UP TO DAY OF MEETING, AND A FULL MAY 2026 PAYMENT LIST:

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the accounts for payment as presented be approved.

92/26 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR ALL COUNCIL ACCOUNTS UP TO 31 MAY 2026:

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** unanimously, that the bank reconciliations for all Council accounts up to 31 May 2026 as presented be approved;

Unity Bank	£253,483.23
CCLA	£363,969.47
Unity Fixed 2 Year	£100,000
Petty Cash	£144.44

The Balance Sheet was received and noted.

93/26 ITEMS OF REPORT (INCLUDING PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES) AND MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:

1) Proposed closure of Hamworthy Fire Station update:

In his absence, Cllr Griffin presented an update from Cllr Charlie Squires dated 11 June 2026 relating to the proposed closure of Hamworthy Fire Station. This was attached to the Clerk's Report and in summary confirmed that the Chief Fire Officer had announced that, that subject to confirmation that Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) can increase their precept above the threshold next year, he will remove 6 out of the 8 fire stations from his recommendation for closure. Whilst this doesn't rectify the unfair funding formula imposed on Dorset and some may regard this as a step in the positive direction for the wider DWFRS in terms of

retaining staffing numbers and equipment more so than the current proposals, it does not include Hamworthy within the 6 to be saved. Instead, Hamworthy is proposed to merge with Poole Fire Station. Cllr Squires highlighted that this does not alleviate concerns locally over the geography, infrastructure, traffic congestion etc. all being constraints to response times and, under the new proposals, residents will be paying extra tax for less of a service.

Members noted the update and reaffirmed the Town Council's opposition to the closure of Hamworthy Fire Station.

- 2) Cllr Griffin mooted the idea of the Town Council setting up a Hardship Fund, and asked Members to consider this. The Clerk advised the Grant Aid scheme could be reviewed.
- 3) At the Annual Assembly, residents presented a petition for a pedestrian crossing at Aldi on Blandford Road North. In accordance with procedure, this has been forwarded to Dorset Council's Petitions Team. Dorset Council have confirmed receipt to both LMUTC and the Ward Councillors, who are all supportive of this.
- 4) Cllr Wilson reported on a recent meeting held at the site of the approved pedestrian crossing on Dorchester Road at Lytchett Minster School exit. Once this has been installed consideration re: applying for the approach to be reduced to 20mph speed limit.
- 5) Cllr Griffin advised of the Dorset Police Neighbourhood Policing Team holding a pop-up event in Upton.
- 6) Cllr Griffin updated members that Dorset Council are consider proposals to introduce a regulated e-scooter scheme which would include Upton (similar to Beryl Bike Scheme). Cllr Starr advised users require a full driving licence to hire, and the e-scooters have registration ID.
- 7) Cllr Griffin updated that mental health support will be provided in Upton schools.
- 8) Lytchett Minster School are holding their first Summer Fayre – to raise funds for the school – on Saturday 11 July. Everyone welcome, and volunteers were asked for the Town Council stand (which will be the same format as the Picnic in the Park stand).
- 9) A reminder to all of the Picnic in the Park, Saturday 27 June from 1:00pm.

94/26 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING AND CLOSE OF MEETING:

The next meeting of the Town Council will be Tuesday 14 July 2026 at 6:30pm.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:30pm.

Chair.....

Date.....