

Statement on behalf of Cranborne & Edmondsham Parish Council concerning Cranborne Village Hall

At the Parish Council meeting on 16th July 2024, the Parish Council took the decision to commence the process of negotiating a termination of its lease of Cranborne Village Hall with the land owner, Cranborne Estates.

This decision was taken after a lengthy process, and was made for several reasons including:

- The Parish Council believes that it would be better for a new management of the Village Hall to have full control over its affairs and decisions without reference to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council first became involved with the village hall because the council was a legal body with the power to enter into leases/contracts and own buildings. The Village Hall committee was not a legal body and therefore could not do so. In 2012 a new style of organisation was introduced which meant that village hall committees could enter into legal agreements and own buildings if they applied to be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This gives village hall committees the power to act and make their own decisions.

- Cranborne Estates has indicated to the Parish Council that its preference is for the Village Hall to remain open as an amenity for the village, provided that it can be operated in an orderly manner and kept in good repair by a properly constituted management body.

The Parish Council believes that the best way for this to be achieved is for such a management body to take a lease directly from the landlord, and that there is no benefit to the Parish Council or the tax payers of Cranborne and – in particular, Edmondsham - for the Parish Council to be involved in the running of the Village Hall

- Under the terms of the current lease and constitution, the building can only be used as a village hall for the residents of Cranborne. This restricts the purposes for which it can be used and its financial viability. Although in the past the Village Hall has not always been run in accordance with these terms, the Parish Council is now aware of these restrictions and believes that it is not in the best interests of the Village Hall – or a new management of it – to continue to be restricted by these terms.

The Parish Council would welcome and looks forward to supporting a new management organization for the Village Hall.