

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

on

THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2018 HELD AT OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL

PUBLIC SESSION:

2 residents attended to answer any queries if raised in relation to planning application 39/17/00016 (minute 129/17/2)

PRESENT:

Dave Cather (Chairman), Dick Best (Vice-Chairman), Bob Birkenhead, Barry Leathwood, Rachel Perrett, County & Dist Cllr Mike Caswell and Dist Cllr Julie Pay, Aly Prowse (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

125/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from J.Evans (at Transport Forum).

126/17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4.1.18:

The minutes of the meeting held on 4.1.18 were APPROVED and signed by the Chairman.

127/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations applied for.

128/17 WARD REPORTS:

Cllr Caswell

1. Cllr Caswell advised he has submitted our request via the Small Improvement Scheme to widen the layby at Dame Withycombe Villas (2018/19 financial year). The Clerk confirmed Highways own both the layby and verge in front of the cottages.
 2. There is a £13m shortfall in the SCC budget.
 3. SDC's Local Plan is in the final stages of approval with the Planning Inspectorate, which should be finalised at the end of March.
 4. Stockland residents have queried why fencing has appeared at Steart by the common. Cllr Best thought this referred to the fencing across the foreshore which has been erected by Natural England for safety reasons and prevention of wildlife disturbance.
 5. A white van blocking the slip lane at Crossways was brought to his attention. Cllrs are aware of the issue.
- Cllr Pay
1. The SDC budget preparation is in progress and will be put to Full Council at the end of February.

129/17 PLANNING MATTERS:

1. **39/17/00012** – Variations for previous planning consents for 3 dwellings, 9 Church Hill, Combwich. GRANTED.
2. **39/17/00016 (& 39/17/00015 Listed Building consent)** – Single storey link existing dwelling to existing detached garage for additional living accommodation, Justwall Cottage, Crossway Farm. Members SUPPORTED this application.
3. **39/18/00001** – Removal of condition 4 of planning permission 39/14/00010 to reinstate permitted development rights, plot 5, 9 Church Hill. A response of NO OBSERVATIONS will be submitted.

130/17 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

1. **Bank Balances** - Current A/C £1544; Deposit A/C £13092; Reserve A/C £9380.
2. **The following payments were AGREED:**

Mrs A Prowse	£363.82	(January salary including £25.16 miscellaneous costs)
SALC	£217.51	(Annual membership)
SDC	£329.28	(Annual Grounds Maint. Contract to Oct 2017, including clearance of the wildflower area at Crossways)
INCOME	£ 3.90	(Wayleave payment re telephone pole on the Common)

131/17 ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING:

1. **Review of the Action List (for actions not covered by the agenda):**
 - a) **No 2 – Emergency Plan.** The Chairman suggested that instead of the traditional 'Village Walk' in August, we meet to work this, and item b) below. This was AGREED.
 - b) **No 3 – Welcome Packs.** See item a) above.

- c) **No 5 – SDC E-Consultation.** Reference the statement of poor broadband, Cllr Caswell advised that within the next stage of the Connecting Devon and Somerset roll-out, superfast broadband should be installed in all TA5/TA6 areas by the end of 2019.
 - d) **No 8 – Layby and land at Dame Withycombe Hill.** Highways confirmed this is within the Highway curtilage.
 - e) **No 9 – Cannington Playing Fields.** The Clerk showed an illustration of a “family inclusive sports area” Cannington may consider for the playing fields; an example of which can be found at Eastover Park in Bridgwater. West Somerset Council has advised Cannington that they would not be allowed to apply for any other CIM fund until their ring-fenced funds have been used up therefore it is unlikely Cannington will seek contributions from other parishes, but will be happy for other parishes to use the facility if it goes ahead.
 - f) **No 13 – PRoW and Hedge by Riverside Farm.** See minute 132/17.
 - g) **No 15 – Stockland Parish Grouping.** This was explained to Cllr Pay who said she knew nothing about this even though it is within her district.
 - h) **No 16 – Combwich Ponds.** Following the Secretary Of States’ decision that SCC has 6 months to respond to our claim, B.Leathwood suggested we write to SCC acknowledging the intervention and to request a decision as soon as possible. Councillors AGREED to this and Barry volunteered to draft a letter. **Action: B.Leathwood.**
 - i) **No 19 – Tree Maintenance.** The Clerk has requested quotations to carry out necessary tree works as identified in the Tree Maintenance Schedule. J.Doble has agreed to attend the parish council meeting on 1.3.18 to discuss an Open Spaces and Tree Strategy.
 - j) **No 21 – Additional 250 HGV Letter.** Following Mr Flaherty’s (SCC CEO) response, it was AGREED to invite him to the parish to show him around so he can see first-hand, the impact of Hinkley Point C on the parish. **Action: Clerk**
 - k) **No 22 – WWT CIM Application.** WWT has invited the relevant parish councils to a meeting on 13.2.18 to explain its CIM application to fund the new office building. This will be attended by D.Best, B.Leathwood and A.Prowse.
- 2. Play Area – Ground Settlement Issues**
Wicksteed has identified a cost of £2170 to carry out the remedial repairs to the play area, but as a gesture of goodwill, will charge us £1430. We hadn’t been aware that Wicksteed had been to site and it was AGREED to ask for a plan of the repairs to ensure we are happy that all areas are included. **Action: Clerk**
Although it was felt that the original method of the one repair carried out had been effective, D.Best questioned whether we should employ the services of a surveyor to determine the best way to deal with the issue. R.Perrett was concerned how much this might cost when set against the repair cost of £1430 for the whole area if say, it is seemingly as successful as the original repair. The Clerk said Wicksteed advised the system could be permanently eradicated if a surface water drainage system was installed. An ex-Drainage Board employee agreed with this but said the cost would be very high and may compromise the integrity of the flood bank. This therefore might not be approved by either Natural England (SSSI implications) or the Environment Agency. It was AGREED to seek some advice from S.Mason (SDC) on the likely cost to employ a surveyor before proceeding with the repair. **Action: Clerk.**
- 3. Brookside Rd Garages**
Esther Carter (SDC Housing Development Officer) responded to our request for a small community led development of affordable housing. She confirmed there is no immediate consideration to develop this site, but in any event, we would need to follow an 8-staged approach to develop an “affordable housing project plan” starting with a parish wide housing need survey which would cost in the region of £2700. It was AGREED that before we consider going down this route we should have an informal discussion with residents which could be undertaken when we revise the Community Plan.

Cllrs Caswell and Pay left the meeting at 7.55pm

132/17 ENHANCEMENTS:

Vegetation Removal at Brownie Copse (Common Enhancement Scheme):

B. Leathwood, B.Birkenhead and the Clerk met with Iain Porter on 31.1.18. He suggested we decide how far we take the brambles back and which trees to thin out or transplant and get a couple of quotations for the work. He thinks we may be eligible for a grant (a maximum 75% of the total cost) and if we decide to proceed, recommended that we submit a grant application in early summer. A site meeting will be arranged to decide the extent of the work. **Action: B.Birkenhead, B.Leathwood & Clerk.**

133/17 HIGHWAYS:

1. Transport Forum Workshop 1.2.18

A presentation had been put together for the Forum by the Quantock Parishes who are impacted by Hinkley Point C. For us, this included the Combwich junction, SPS buses, the Dame Withycombe Hill layby and Biffen’s Corner. J.Evans will report at the next parish council meeting. It was however, AGREED to

arrange a meeting with the Police, A.Coupe and A.Wagstaff to discuss our proposals for safety improvements in the vicinity of the Combwich junction. **Action: Clerk**

134/17 MEETING REPORTS:

10.1.18 – Village Hall. No-one was able to attend this meeting.

11.1.18 – OPPT

- a) 3 Expression of Interest forms have been submitted; the Village Hall (just declaring an interest at this time); a defibrillator for Steart and a training gig for the Combwich Boat Club. The latter two were approved by OPPT (and previously awarded £150 each as match funding by the parish council) and submitted to the Somerset Community Foundation who will make a decision whether to approve for CIM funding on 12.2.18.
- b) D.Best said few projects were coming forward and suggested we should be more proactive to see how far the projects on the list can be taken.
- c) Community Plan – The Plan needs revamping. OPPT thought it was not the right group to do this and suggested the parish council should appoint a sub-committee. It was therefore suggested we ask for volunteers in the next issue of Otter Tales. **Action: B.Leathwood/Clerk.** D.Cather added that this could be another topic for the meeting in August (see minute 131/17/1a).

135/17 FORTHCOMING MEETING NOTIFICATION:

13.2.18 – WWT CIM Application

15.2.18 – Community Forum

21.2.18 – Steart Forum

21.2.18 – Village Hall. D.Cather will cease attending the meetings due to his new role as Chairman.

B.Leathwood and the Clerk agreed to attend whenever possible.

136/17 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION:

1. General List

- a) Highways – Problems with drains & manhole covers in School Lane were reported to Highways.
- b) Somerset Libraries Consultation 2018 from 29.1.18 for 12 weeks – posters will be placed on notice boards and also in Otter Tales **Action: Clerk/B.Leathwood.**
- c) SALC – Councillor Essentials' Training – 2 events in June.
- d) SDC – Small Grants and Project Grants available.
- e) EDF – Copy of letter to Combwich Boat Club re arrangements for moorings at Watchet.
- f) SDC – Briefing for Sedgemoor members on Sedgemoor 2050 Transport Investment Strategy Study.

2. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Refresher Training

D.Best and the Clerk will attend the CIL training at the SDC Offices on 6.2.18.

137/17 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Hinkley Liaison

The Clerk will send some SSG information to R.Perrett to aid her understanding before attending her first meeting.

2. Steart Ward (D.Best)

D.Best advised the woodland trees have been planted at Backrap and a final order has been placed for larger trees from Chew Valley Trees as per the £931 grant from Magnox.

3. OPRA (B.Leathwood)

There was nothing to report.

4. Village Hall

The next meeting is on 23.2.18.

5. Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT)

See minute 134/17 above.

6. School Liaison (R.Perrett)

- a) It has been confirmed that the School will be incorporated within the Bridgwater Academy.
- b) Parking at the School is a major problem. The Head is looking at options to create more parking spaces.
- c) Dog fouling posters – three will be chosen and then brought to the next parish council meeting to decide the overall winner.
- d) B.Birkenhead went to see the Head as he was concerned about the safety of the children travelling down School Lane on bikes and scooters. The head will write to the parents. Bob was asked by one of the Governors, if the parish council would permit the School to advertise at Crossways. Whilst in total support of the School and wanting it to thrive, it was generally felt that the

infrastructure should be resolved e.g. parking so that it could accommodate more pupils especially from outside the parish.

7. Public Rights of Way (B.Birkenhead)

There was nothing to report.

8. Otter Tales (B.Leathwood)

B.Leathwood, concerned at the lack of control, censorship and delays associated with Hinkley Point B's sponsorship of the magazine, advised members he would not be happy to continue with it as it is. He prepared a draft paper looking at various options and costings to print the newsletter independent of EDF. These included using the internet and a local company. Prices vary depending on colour or black/white and numbers of pages/issues (a range of £1.1k - £3.9k per annum). Other options would include to either lease or purchase a photocopying machine (a range of £1.1k - £4k per annum), although space would be required to accommodate our own machine.

Barry is prepared to carry on in the short term under the existing regime whilst we consider the various options. In parallel, he thought it would be an appropriate time to canvas resident's opinions about the newsletter so he will place an article in the next Otter Tales. He also thinks we should plan for succession and form a small committee; volunteers will also be sought in the next Otter Tales. Further research and a more detailed proposal will be explored to present at the next meeting. **Action: B.Leathwood**

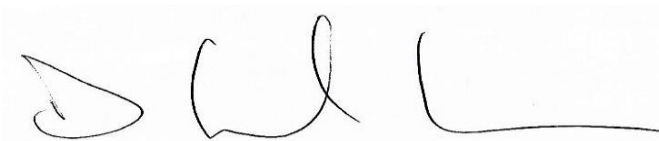
9. Otter Wheels

There was nothing to report.

138/17 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1 March 2018 at 6.30pm (with Sedgemoor Tree Services to discuss the Open Spaces and Tree Survey strategy) followed by the normal meeting at 7.00pm in Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

Signed: 
(Chairman)

Date: 8 March 2018