

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

on

THURSDAY 4 JANUARY 2018 HELD AT OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL

PUBLIC SESSION:

1. There was a problem with the drainage (sewerage and foul drains) at Brookside Rd on Christmas Day. This was solved by a resident who had been unsure which authority to contact. We will make enquiries and report back to the resident. **Action: Clerk.**
2. Hinkley C – P.Gripton re-iterated the issue of the additional 250 HGVs, adding he thought the whole approval process was appalling. The Parish Council has also made strong representation of its dissatisfaction to The Chief Executives of both SCC and SDC, the relevant cabinet Members and Ian-Liddell-Grainer MP.

PRESENT:

John Berry (Chairman), Bob Birkenhead, Dave Cather, Julie Evans, Barry Leathwood, Rachel Perrett, County & Dist Cllr Mike Caswell and Dist Cllr Julie Pay, Aly Prowse (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

108/17 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

1. Following his imminent move to Cyprus John Berry stepped down as Chairman to ensure a smooth handover. B.Leathwood expressed our thanks to John through difficult times and for his sterling efforts and contribution during his tenure. John said he has enjoyed working with everyone and is grateful for the support he has received. He will remain a councillor until the March meeting.
2. John called for Chairman nominations. B.Leathwood nominated D.Cather. This was seconded by R.Perrett. There were no other nominations and D.Cather was unanimously ELECTED.

109/17 ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE (CHAIRMAN):

D.Cather signed the formal Acceptance of Office form and then took the Chair.

110/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from D.Best.

111/17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7.12.17:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7.12.17 were APPROVED and signed by the Chairman.

112/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations applied for.

113/17 WARD REPORTS:

1. Cllr Pay had nothing to report
2. Cllr Caswell advised that he had received our request to potentially help with a Small Improvement Scheme to widen the layby at Dame Withycombe Villas, although it was noted the scheme had closed for 2017. We need to confirm who owns the layby. The Clerk believes it is Highways, but will check. **Action: Clerk.**
Cllrs Caswell and Pay left the meeting at 7.20pm

114/17 PLANNING MATTERS:

1. **39/17/00012** – Variations for previous planning consents for 3 dwellings, 9 Church Hill, Combwich. AWAITING DECISION.
2. **39/17/00014** – Erect detached garage/garden store and demolish existing garage, Greenacre. GRANTED.

115/17 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

1. **Bank Balances** - Current A/C £1231; Deposit A/C £15091; Reserve A/C £9379.
2. **The following payments were AGREED:**

Mrs A Prowse	£368.34	(December salary including £39.68 miscellaneous costs)
Mrs A Prowse	£179.51	(Dell Computer repair – Hard Drive replacement)
D.Best	£228.00	(Defibrillator Battery Replacement)
SDC	£167.23	(Empty Litter Bins at Play Area Apr-Sep 2017)
K.Preston	£289.00	(Gardening £189 & weekly Play Area Insp. Oct-Dec £100)
3. **Approve 2018/19 Precept**
 - a. D.Cather suggested the Clerk's workload has increased substantially and felt that the 6 hours per week currently paid was insufficient. This was echoed by councillors. It was unanimously **AGREED** to raise the Clerk's hours to 8 per week as proposed by B.Leathwood and seconded by J.Berry. This would increase her salary by circa £1300 per annum.

- b. In view of a) above, plus the ground settlement issues at the Play Area, urgent tree maintenance works and match funding opportunities for Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) projects, councillors unanimously AGREED to scenario 4 (demonstrating the impact of various £k rises) as proposed by J.Evans and seconded by B.Leathwood. This will increase the Precept from £20000 to £23000 which will result in the average cost of the parish council element of the Council Tax for an average Band D taxpayer from £64.58 to £74.20 (a rise of £9.62) per property per annum. Our expenditure this financial year (i.e to 31.3.18) will total approximately £23000, some of which are one-off costs. **Action: Clerk**
- 4. Budget Monitoring Statement to 31.12.17**
There were no questions or queries regarding the quarterly budget monitoring statement.

116/17 ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING:

- 1. Review of the Action List (for actions not covered by the agenda):**
 - a) **No 5 – On line Planning Documentation.** We are still awaiting a response from SDC.
 - b) **No 7 – Add R.Perrett to Bank Mandate.** This will be actioned in February/March as J.Berry will be removed as a signatory at the same time. **Action: Clerk**
 - c) **No 9 – Cannington Playing Fields –** A meeting will not be held before February. J.Evans and B.Birkenhead will visit the playing fields to consider potential use of the facilities. **Action Ongoing.**
 - d) **No 11 – NHS Health Checks.** These will take place on 1st and 2nd March in the Village Hall.
 - e) **No 13 – PRoW and Hedge by Riverside Farm.** Quotations will be sought to remove the vegetation and cut the hedge by the brownie copse. In parallel, D.Best suggested we could talk to the Quantock GQLDF CIM fund to see if we may be eligible for a grant. **Action: Clerk.**
 - f) **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.**
 - g) **No 20 – Ship Lane Nameplate.** SDC has placed an order for the replacement nameplate.
- 2. Play Area – Ground Settlement Issues**
A response is still awaited from Wicksteed. This will be hastened again. **Action: Clerk.** It was however reported that the play area continues to be used despite the occasional amount of surface water.
- 3. Stockland Parish request to discuss potential grouping**
This was debated at some length. It was agreed that there would be a certain logic in ‘Grouping’ with Stockland Parish, although there would not actually be a lot in it for Otterhampton parish. Councillors would not permit our parish to finance the costs that such a grouping would incur and although this would not preclude such a venture, the Clerk would not be able to do any additional hours to accommodate the extra workload, so extra resources would need to be employed. It was AGREED that before any useful discussions could proceed, Stockland Parish would need to assess the annual number of hours it believes would be required for a clerk and treasurer to represent the needs of Stockland Parish and in turn, how this would impact on an average Band D taxpayer in Stockland through the Precept. Evidence would need to be provided that residents would be prepared to raise the finance through the Precept. A suitable response will be given to Mr Sivyer. **Action: Clerk**
- 4. Brookside Rd Garages**
SDC advised there are no immediate plans and timescales for the site to be developed, D. Best recently suggested that the site could be demolished to accommodate car parking. J.Evans then suggested we could instigate a community initiative for a small affordable housing development. It was AGREED that we would make representation to SDC with this suggestion. **Action: Clerk**

117/17 ENHANCEMENTS:

- 1. Grounds Maintenance Contract Year 2 Option**
Based on the service received in year 1 from Clean Surrounds, together with the comparisons of prices from the other tenderers it was unanimously AGREED to offer the Year 2 Option of the contract to Clean Surrounds. **Action: Clerk**
- 2. Tree Survey**
It was AGREED to ask for prices to carry out the following recommendations:
 - a) “Extreme” action to the willow tree on Wharf Rd.
 - b) Recommended works within 6 months for a tree at Crossways and another near the brook (Wharf Rd).
 It was also AGREED to invite Jim Doble (Sedgemoor Tree Services) to the March meeting to discuss ideas with us for the Green Spaces and Tree Strategy mentioned in his report. **Action: Clerk**

118/17 HINKLEY C:

- 1. SPS /Hinkley C buses - Combwich Bus Stop**
 - a) Notes of the meeting with Andy Wagstaff on 11.12.17 were previously circulated.

- b) The Clerk received a complaint that although the situation had improved, it had recently deteriorated, with a lot of mini buses now using the Stop. D.Cather said a new timetable has been issued showing a reduction from 37 to 7 buses picking up at the bus stop, with 3 picking up at the layby on the opposite side of the road; all drop-offs should be at the nearside lay-by on the C182 and minibuses had been used recently in place of the larger buses which should help the situation. This is a difficult balance for the parish council because we could in theory, refuse to let Hinkley use the Stop but crossing the increasingly busy C182 to use the lay-by opposite is dangerous. Removing the bollards would increase the safety risk, be difficult to negotiate access from or to Brookside Rd, various agencies would need to address the services/manhole cover and it would only add to the verge damage and mud at this busy junction.
- 2. Additional 250 HGV's Decision**
- a) Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 18.12.17 were previously circulated.
- b) We are awaiting responses from SCC, SDC and Ian Liddell-Grainger in relation to our complaint regarding the decision to permit an additional 250 HGVs per day on the C182. It was AGREED to send a copy of the letter to the Bridgwater Mercury. **Action: Clerk**
- c) An hour-long workshop has been set aside at the next Transport Forum (1.2.18) to discuss the Quantock Cluster group's issues regarding Hinkley C. The Clerk is co-ordinating the responses from the other parishes. Members AGREED to J.Evans' suggestion of a PowerPoint presentation to present our issues, which include a possible 40mph speed limit prior to the Combwich junction (to a point beyond Biffen's Corner); a footpath from Dame Withycombe cottages to the junction; a bus shelter (largely for Hinkley C passengers); a pedestrian crossing at the junction, which would also serve as a crossing to the bus shelter and cyclists whose journey extends beyond Combwich and improvements at Biffen's Corner. A meeting will be arranged to coordinate the presentation. **Action: All**
- 3. Additional £4m mitigation fund re 118/17/2**
Following the presentation at the Transport Forum, it is hoped we could put together a case to fund our safety suggestions/improvements from the additional £4m mitigation fund.

119/17 HIGHWAYS

- 1. Brookside Rd Parking.**
Consultation with residents is ongoing and will be complete by the end of January, approximately half have been seen, and so far, there is no indication of support for double yellow lines. Once the consultation is complete we will check with Highways whether a road narrowing option (physical barrier) is a possibility to help reduce the speeds of vehicles entering the village. There has been a slight improvement with the parking, possibly because of the conversion of another front garden to provide parking spaces. The fly-parking appears to be under control, although we need to maintain pressure on EDF to ensure it doesn't revert to unacceptable levels.
- 4. Dame Withycombe Hill Lay-by**
Largely covered under minute 118/17/2c. A further accident occurred here on 2.12.17 (the 6th to be reported on the C182 in the vicinity of the Combwich junction this year) which was reported to the various authorities.
- 5. Bolham Lay-by**
Remedial works to repair the lay-by will start mid-January.
- 6. Biffen's Corner**
Safety improvements will form part of our presentation to the Transport Forum (minute 118/17/2c)..

120/17 MEETING REPORTS:

- 13.12.17 – B.Leathwood attended the meeting which mainly covered the Village Hall refurbishment and putting together a CIM application. Barry has a concern that there may be a conflict between the potential facilities at a refurbished Village Hall, with say potential community facilities that may be proposed within an application from the Church. If such an application is subsequently submitted by the Church, OPPT should recommend the two organisations get together to ensure their projects complement each other rather than compete/conflict.

121/17 FORTHCOMING MEETING NOTIFICATION:

- 10.1.18 – Village Hall
11.1.18 – OPPT
1.2.18 – Transport Forum

122/17 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION:

- 1. CIM Expression of Interest (EOI) Applications**
OPPT has received 2 EOI applications. Each one has applied for match funding from the Parish Council

- a) Defibrillator for Steart (D.Best) at a cost of £1644 (£274 VAT recoverable) seeking 10% match funding. It was unanimously AGREED to fund £150 as proposed by J.Evans and seconded by R.Perrett.
 - b) Rowing Gig (T.Reason, Combwich Boat Club) at a cost of £14290 (VAT non-recoverable) seeking a non-specified amount. It was AGREED to fund £150 as proposed by R.Perrett and seconded by B.Birkenhead. *Note: D.Cather registered a member's Interest for this item.*
 - c) OPPT has a meeting on 11.1.18 to consider whether the applications will be submitted to the Somerset Community Foundation and to also review and update the Community Plan.
- 2. WWT Seeking Parish Council Support for its CIM application**
 WWT has submitted an application to fund an office building with a visitor orientation hub for maps and leaflets and a dedicated area for volunteer rest breaks (not a visitor centre). N.Wigley has asked if the parish council could write a letter of support. Quite a lengthy debate ensued as whilst the parish council would like to be able to support the application, members felt it did not meet the CIM criteria i.e mitigation against the impact of Hinkley C, particularly for the local community who already have ready access and unlikely to require the services of a visitor orientation hub. Whilst the project should not attract additional visitors, it could conflict with our continuing fight for safety improvements at Biffen's Corner re the additional traffic Steart Marshes generates. B.Leathwood said it is important both OPPT and the parish council retain its credibility regarding CIM applications. Members would like to see a copy of the EOI. J.Evans suggested that if the CIM application could encompass safety improvements at Biffen's Corner, then perhaps a case could be argued for Community Impact Mitigation. We will talk to WWT. **Action: Clerk**
- 3. General List (Received/Sent)**
- a) Mendip Community Transport – Thanking us for the £100 donation.
 - b) Hill House – Thanking us for the £20 donation in lieu of using its facilities for the last Steart Forum.
 - c) 2 expressions of interest for forthcoming councillor vacancy.

123/17 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:

- 1. Hinkley Liaison**
 There was nothing to report. However, with J.Berry's imminent departure a new SSG representative will be required. R.Perrett tentatively AGREED to be the new representative and will attend a meeting to see how she gets on. The SSG secretary will be advised. **Action: Clerk**
- 2. Steart Ward (D.Best)**
 There was nothing to report.
- 3. OPRA (B.Leathwood)**
 There was nothing to report.
- 4. Village Hall**
 The next meeting is on 10.1.18.
- 5. Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT)**
 See minute 122/17/1.
- 6. School Liaison (R.Perrett)**
 Following the Christmas and New Year break, there was nothing to report.
- 7. Public Rights of Way (B.Birkenhead)**
 B.Birkenhead is encouraged with the progress of the defects he has reported; the gates at Hill House have been repaired and the path at Dame Withycombe Hill to the sewerage pumphouse has been repaired. Bob was asked if he could lead a walk for Members across the PRow. This will be arranged in the Spring.
- 8. Otter Tales (B.Leathwood)**
 Members would like the full transcript of the HGV letter to be included in Otter Tales. B.Leathwood explained the past difficulties of including items implied as criticism of EDF and the agreement with the Communication Team to give advance notification so that EDF has the 'right of reply'. Members AGREED that the letter should be included and it was agreed that Barry would forward it to EDF prior to submitting the newsletter for printing to give the opportunity for comment.
- 9. Otter Wheels**
 B.Leathwood advised the scheme is gradually growing both in terms of drivers and journeys undertaken.

124/17 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1 February 2018 at 7.00pm in Otterhampton Village Hall.
 The meeting ended at 9.40 pm.

Signed:   
 (Chairman) Date: 1 February 2018