

**OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

held on

**THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2019, 7.00pm, at OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

No items were raised in the public session.

**PRESENT:**

Julie Evans (Chair), Bob Birkenhead (Vice-Chair), Marie Beckley, Andy Darch, Tina Gardener, Lindsey Parsons, Rachel Perrett, Aly Prowse (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

**42/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

There were no apologies for absence.

**43/19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4.7.19:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4.7.19 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

**44/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations applied for other than those declared to SDC as part of Member's Interests disclosed at the time of taking Office. This information can be viewed on the SDC website.

**45/19 PLANNING MATTERS:**

1. **39/18/00010** – Erection of 3 dwellings (plots 1,2 and 3) garages and formation of access, land at 9 Church Hill. Environment and Archaeological Reports are outstanding (AWAITING DECISION).
2. **13/19/00017** – Discharge of req. C14 surface and foul water at Combwich Wharf (GRANTED).
3. **13/19/00023** – Temporary laydown area for abnormal indivisible loads, including construction of hardstanding, fencing, gates, lighting, CCTV cameras, welfare facilities, landscaping and earthworks in relation to Combwich Wharf (GRANTED).
4. **39/19/00010** – 1 x Turkey Oak T6 and 1 x Oak T5 Crown, reduce by up to 3m height and spread, Hill House Christian Centre (GRANTED).
5. **39/19/00009** – EDF Provision of Shelduck mitigation works including replacement bird hide, new fence, information boards and signage. Following amendments to the proposal including the removal of the new hide and boardwalk at Steart Gate to be replaced with two small information boards, confirmation of the warden's role, together with the support of Steart residents, the application was SUPPORTED.
6. **SCC 3627 2019** – Magnox Ltd – To allow importation of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) from Sizewell, Oldbury and Dungeness sites to Hinkley A (T.Gardner advised this application was REFUSED by SCC).
7. **SCC 3628 2019** – Magnox Ltd – To allow importation of size reduced ILW skips from Sizewell, Oldbury and Dungeness sites to the on-site waste encapsulation plant at Hinkley A (REFUSED).

**46/19 FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

1. **Bank Balances** - Current A/C £1997.51; Deposit A/C £12347.32; Reserve A/C £21716.43.
2. **The following payments were AGREED:**
  - a) Mrs A Prowse - £512.89 (July salary including £26.65 misc. office and other costs)
  - b) Mrs A Prowse - £504.24 (August salary including £18.00 misc. office and other costs)
  - c) SDC - £576.00 (Ground's maintenance contract Apr – June)
  - d) B.Leathwood (Solopress) - £219.60 (July Otter Tales)
  - e) Jual - £413.64 (Polo shirts for the choir – Hinkley C Community grant funded)
  - f) PKF Littlejohn - £240.00 (External Annual Audit)
3. **Annual External Audit**

The annual accounts to 31.3.19 were approved by PKF Littlejohn with no issues reported. A Notice of Conclusion of the Audit must be displayed on the notice boards and website before 30.9.19. **Action: Clerk**
4. **Bank Mandate**

The new bank mandate has been signed. The authorised cheque signatories are M.Beckley, B.Birkenhead, A.Darch, T.Gardner and R.Perrett.

**47/19 STEART WARD:**

A.Darch briefly advised of the recent spate of vandalism in and around the Tower Hide; proposed new cattle grids at the entrance of Steart and Stolford commons subject to planning permission and bridle path approval

(which may be some years away); WWT has received visitor/vehicle numbers from the traffic survey undertaken during the Easter period. A report will be produced which will be sent to us.

**48/19 MEMBER'S CODE OF CONDUCT:**

NALC issued a new model Code of Conduct. The Clerk converted our existing document dated 2012 into the new 2018 model. There are no changes to the content. Councillors APPROVED the new model. Copies in the A5 format will be given to councillors. **Action: Clerk**

**49/19 ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING:**

**1. Review of the Action List (for actions not covered by the agenda):**

**No 2** – Housing Needs Survey – The Clerk chased SDC as letters should have been sent to residents during July. **Awaiting response.**

**No 3** – SCC Small Improvement Scheme. No project ideas were suggested.

**No 4** – Good Councillor Guide downloaded for councillors. **Action complete.**

**No 6** - Wall subsidence in Ship Lane – The Clerk has written a letter to the houseowner. It is understood that a structural survey of the wall is required. **Action Complete.**

**No 7 & 15** – Chase Highways for the outstanding works within the parish. Ward Cllr M.Caswell has emailed K.Tyson to request a progress update. No response so we will chase again. **Action: Clerk**

**No 10** – Play area swing basket chains – this will be monitored for further wear and replaced as necessary.

**No 11** – Combwich Ponds Appeal – *nb post meeting - B.Leathwood was advised on 5.9.19 that the review is almost complete. Mr Groves who is dealing with the Appeal is likely to be conducting telephone interviews with interested parties in October. There has been no contact with the Combwich Angling Association.*

**2. Village Walk Actions 5.8.19**

a. Bus shelter – Agenda item for next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

b. Crossways – Question number -of Anchor Inn A boards with the landlord. **Action: J.Evans**

c. Weeds in village – The Clerk contacted SDC to ask if weed spraying is planned. **Awaiting response.**

d. Vegetation growth on banks of the brook along Brookside Rd - R.Perrett and the Clerk met with the EA to clarify the responsibilities for vegetation removal along the watercourses in the village. Clearly, little or no maintenance has been done recently. Mr Reeves took photographs of the problem areas and advised he will check if the EA intend to cut the banks before the winter. He said riparian owners are normally responsible for the banks on the boundaries of their property. We asked if the EA would write to the landowners to advise them of this and he said no, but he did send a link to the Government Website that we could use to publicise this fact in Otter Tales. **Action: Clerk.** Most of the verges in the village belong to Highways e.g. opposite the Post Office, in which case it would seem reasonable that Highways should remove the vegetation. We will confirm this with SDC. **Action: Clerk.** Mr Reeves will check that the EA will be cutting the flood bank on the common. It is his understanding that the banks must be kept cut to allow investigation for weaknesses. The wall from Brookside Rd to the Wharf Rd edging the pill is Highways. We will make Highways aware of its worsening condition. **Action: Clerk**

e. Unofficial car park opposite the Village Hall – the suggestion to tarmac and line the area to formalise parking bays will be considered after the Hall refurbishment has been carried out.

f. Trees near the Common – These are included within the tree maintenance schedule. Some works may be required to take the height and weight from some of them. Agenda item for next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

g. Area of land beyond the Brownie Copse – Clean Surrounds has been asked to provide a quote to treat the brambles and then a price for regular cutting within the existing ground's maintenance contract. **Awaiting quotation**

h. Uneven road surface near Mill House on Church Hill – this has been reported to Highways.

**3. OPRA Replacement Pavilion**

T.Gardener reported that the cost for a container including delivery is £3k. The cost for cladding will be additional. A location is still to be decided.

**4. Replacement Combwich Defibrillator**

T.Gardener advised the details for leasing a defibrillator from The Ambulance Service (as a fully supported package). The cost is £1800 (or £2800 for two). This would be payable every 4 years in advance (i.e a cost of £450 or £700 per annum). The cost includes all maintenance, replacement defibrillator pads and batteries. We would request initial funding from the Hinkley C Community Fund, thereafter, it would need to be funded from the precept. Subject to finding a second location, it was AGREED we should purchase two defibrillators. The Anchor Inn was suggested as a second location. An approach will be made to the landlord. **Action: J.Evans**

## 50/19 **ENHANCEMENTS:**

### 1. **Play Area ground settlement and safety surfacing issues**

There are two issues; ground settlement and the carbon blacking from the surface. Both have long term implications.

Ground settlement - we need to decide whether to fill the dips as they occur in the hope that we eventually fix all the holes that are going to appear or whether to have a ground survey to determine if this action will work and/or what other options are available to us. The Clerk advised we had previously communicated with, and sent photographs to, a Ground Engineering Specialist. He advised that a survey would be prohibitively expensive and thought that filling the holes with gravel and resurfacing would probably be the best option.

Carbon blacking – Wicksteed said this problem is caused by ‘fair wear and tear’ and suggested the solution is to respray, thus resealing the surfacing. This would be provided at a discounted rate. Our issue with this is whether 3 years constitutes fair wear and tear, what guarantees are there that the treatment will last, and if indeed, the surfacing is fit for purpose.

We also discussed legal action but decided we need to be sure of our position first. The Chair had drafted a letter to send to Wicksteed but it was AGREED that as a first step, we should request a site meeting with Wicksteed to try and determine what has gone wrong and what they are prepared to do about it. **Action: Clerk.**

T.Gardener has a contact in The Playing Fields Association, so will try and seek some advice. **Action: T.Gardener.** It might be pertinent for us to join the Association. For future consideration.

### 2. **Willow and bramble clearance by the brook**

Three tenders were received. The cheapest was from Sedgemoor Trees at £800 plus VAT. It was AGREED to place the contract with Sedgemoor Trees. **Action: Clerk.**

### 3. **Willow tree(s) on the Wharf Rd**

A resident made us aware of a potentially dangerous willow tree(s) on the Wharf Rd. It was AGREED to seek a quotation for the three trees that are next to each other, in priority order of risk. **Action: Clerk**

### 4. **Suggestions for flags**

R.Perrett advised that it is United Nations Day on 24.10.19. Some of the one-off day flags cost under £5. If the cost for the UN flag is not expensive, councillors AGREED we should purchase one and fly on the appropriate day. **Action: Clerk**

## 51/19 **MEETING REPORTS:**

The Chair said she would like brief written reports of meetings to be submitted prior to the parish council meeting to enable them to be read so that questions can be thought of in advance. It might also make the meetings shorter.

### 10.7.19 **Village Hall**

L.Parsons gave a summary of the main points of the meeting:

- The documentation for the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) proposal has been received. The public consultation is in the Village Hall on 14.9.19. It is important that residents support this proposal or else the Hall may close.
- 2 tenders for the refurbishment have been received so far and are more expensive than envisaged. The plans will be on display at the consultation event.

### 17.7.19 **Tree Strategy Group**

J.Evans previously circulated notes of the meeting. The proposals will be an agenda item for the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

### 29.7.19 **Being a Successful Chair**

J.Evans and B.Birkenhead found this course interesting, but possibly overlong.

### 18 .7.19 (and 30.7.19) **Planning Training**

This was very useful. The presentation slides are with the Clerk if anyone wishes to have them.

### 1.8.19 **Transport Forum**

A.Darch previously circulated notes of the meeting. Briefly, these mentioned that the Hinkley C jetty should be operational by the end of September; breaches of recent transport deliveries to Hinkley C (2 occasions); HPC is encouraging cyclists to use the cycle path and Biffens Corner junction including the traffic warning system (VAS). Once we have the vehicle monitoring survey numbers from WWT, we can perhaps use these to further our case.

### 8.8.19 **Hinkley C Site Visit**

Councillors enjoyed the visit. The construction has moved on considerably since the previous visit in 2017.

### 15.8.19 **Community Forum**

The meeting was deferred until October.

- 52/19 FORTHCOMING MEETING NOTIFICATION:**  
18.8.19 - Code of Conduct training (to be confirmed)  
8.10.19 – SDC Joint Parish Cluster meeting.

**53/19 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION:**

**1. General List**

- a) SCC – Notification of forthcoming maintenance work on the C182, planned to commence in October.
- b) Somerset Road Safety – asking if we would be interested in receiving a presentation (Route 60+) aimed at older drivers. We believe there would be sufficient interest in the parish but to enable us to advertise in the next Otter Tales, we will request dates in late November/beginning of December.

**Action: Clerk.**

- c) Citizens Advice Sedgemoor – Thanking the parish council for its donation of £200.
- d) EDF – Notification of Abnormal Indivisible load (AILs) training during September on the C182 which may result in delays to road users.
- e) EDF – Notification of dredging works during September at Combwich Wharf.

**2. SALC – GDPR documents. Actions for Councillors**

General advice including a recommendation for councillors to create a unique email address for sole use (i.e. to exclude access by a partner/spouse); do not retain any documentation that could identify a person (e.g. names, address, email) and to be careful when forwarding emails.

**3. Request to install a clothing bank in the parish**

As we already have a clothing bank up by the school, we will decline the invitation. **Action: Clerk.** However not many councillors were aware of this facility in the parish so we questioned whether other residents might not be aware also. R.Perrett will discuss this with the Head at their next meeting, and ask whether the clothing bank should receive some publicity say, though Otter Tales. It is thought that the School benefits from the revenue generated.

**4. End of Grant report for Dame Withycombe Hill layby widening**

All grant funding applications require a post completion report, usually within a year. The report needs to detail the outcomes against the measures identified to determine the success or otherwise of the project. The report is to be sent to the Somerset Community Foundation, by 30.9.19. **Action: Clerk**

**54/19 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

**1. Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT)**

Nothing to report. Meetings are convened mainly to receive and consider grant funding applications.

**2. Public Rights of Way (PROW) (B.Birkenhead)**

No volunteers came forward following the article on 'Adopt a footpath' in Otter Tales.

**3. Otter Wheels**

Additional drivers are still required as this scheme grows in popularity.

**4. Otter Tales**

The next Otter Tales deadline is 4.9.19.

**5. School Liaison**

The next meeting is on 27.9.19

**55/19 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 3 October, **6.30pm** (to accommodate a presentation on WWT's new building proposals at Steart Marshes) in Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm.

Signed: J.Evans (Chair)

Date: 3 October 2019