

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

held on

**THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2019, 6.30pm, at OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL**

**WWT PRESENTATION OF NEW ENGAGEMENT HUB PROPOSALS:**

Attended by 14 members of the public.

Alys Laver (AL) presented the design brief for the proposed Engagement Hub at the WWT compound and car park. It will replace the existing portacabins and toilets. The design is a two-storey building to include a dedicated area for volunteers, offices, meeting room(s) and viewing platform. It is a continuation of existing activities and is not intended to increase visitor numbers. The estimated cost is £0.5m; funding through grant applications has not been secured yet. A pre-application planning meeting has been held with SDC. WWT hope to submit a planning application by the end of 2019.

Concerns were raised which included:

- What was the original objective of the scheme compared to what it has become?
- Promises made prior to the site being built have been broken, so there is a trust issue. For example, although a new office building was likely for the future, it would be a low key, single storey building and not a visitor centre.
- Promotion of the scheme; whilst it is acknowledged that WWT are not actively promoting the scheme, various outlets elsewhere are e.g. SDC (tourist information).
- Whilst presented as an 'engagement hub' for all intents and purposes it would appear to be a 'visitor centre'.
- Volume of traffic on the narrow road; residents had never expected the traffic to be so bad; safety of the C182/Biffens Corner junction; condition of the roads are declining; few passing places and some have deep ruts; difficulties for residents in Otterhampton getting out of their driveways; unsafe walking on the road; car emissions. AL suggested the Reserve attracted an average 20-50 vehicles per day, a resident had counted many more than this during some hourly periods whilst walking on the road.
- Disappointment that neither the Environment Agency (EA) or WWT appear to be willing to take any responsibility in trying to find a solution for the traffic/road issues which have occurred as a direct result of WWT Steart Marshes.
- Why does the building have to be so prestigious?

AL responded that the WWT Business Plan promotes the Reserve within Somerset but not outside of it; they cannot over promote the scheme because of a lack of resources; vehicle surveys suggest vehicle numbers have held steady over the last 3 years. In the pre-planning advice, SDC advised AL that planning permission would not be granted unless it was a 2-storey building re flood resilience measures.

WWT is holding a drop-in session at Otterhampton Village Hall on 9.10.19, 2pm-8pm.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:**

T.Gardener declared an interest in agenda item 7b (minute 62/19/2). There were no dispensations applied for. Member's Interests are disclosed at the time of taking Office and updated if and when necessary. This information can be viewed on the SDC website.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

The life belt from the box opposite the Village Hall has come away from its fixings and is on the ground. M.Beckley will speak to someone at the Comwich Boat Club. **Action: M.Beckley**

**PRESENT:**

Julie Evans (Chair), Bob Birkenhead (Vice-Chair), Marie Beckley, Andy Darch, Tina Gardener, Lindsey Parsons, Rachel Perrett, Aly Prowse (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

**56/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Dist Cllr Julie Pay (who had previously submitted a report).

**57/19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5.9.19:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5.9.19 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

**58/19 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. **39/19/00009** – EDF Provision of Shelduck mitigation works including replacement bird hide, new fence, information boards and signage. (GRANTED)
3. **39/19/00011** – Application of lime render (listed building application) Crossway Farm (SUPPORTED)

4. **39/19/00012** – Relocation of existing bird hide, signage and information boards at Steart peninsula (SUPPORTED)
5. **39/19/00013** – Outline (all matters reserved) for a detached two bedroomed dwelling, 21 Riverside (SUPPORTED)

**59/19 FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

1. **Bank Balances** - Current A/C £1831.85; Deposit A/C £20365.22; Reserve A/C £24700.00.
2. **The following payments were AGREED:**
  - a) Mrs A Prowse - £512.06 (September salary including £26.82 misc. office and other costs)
  - b) B.Leathwood (Solopress) - £219.60 (September Otter Tales)
  - c) SDC - £668.93 (Empty 4 dog bins Oct-Mar 2020) Deducted from precept
  - d) Hill House - £20.00 (Use of facilities for Steart Forum on 4.9.19)
  - e) K.Preston - £358.00 (Gardening for Jul-Sep and weekly play area inspections)
  - f) INCOME – £13000.00 (SDC 50% Precept)
3. **Budget Monitoring Statement**  
The budget monitoring statement to 30.9.19 was presented. There were no queries.
4. **Half Yearly Accounts to 30.9.19**  
The half yearly accounts to 30.9.19 were circulated and will be put forward for approval at the next meeting.  
**Action: Clerk**

**60/19 STEART WARD:**

A.Darch advised that the EA will approve the licence to drill a borehole at Steart which is the first phase of the Steart Borehole project.

**61/19 HIGHWAYS:**

1. **Wig-wags on Church Hill**  
It was questioned how effective this system would be, given the suggested location at the bottom of the hill. "Cushions" were suggested as a possible speed reduction measure. Vehicles parking adjacent to the pavement cover the 'Slow' road markings and cause vehicles driving down the hill to overtake and possibly straight into oncoming vehicles travelling from Brookside Rd into Church Hill. We will talk to Highways to ask if a solution could be recommended for Church Hill. We will also ask if there is potential for signage on School Lane to warn of school children. **Action: Clerk**
2. **Children's play area warning signage**  
K.Tyson (Highways) confirmed this will form part of SCC Traffic Management function so will be funded by SCC and ordered in this financial year.
3. **Biffen's Corner**  
Aside from the Vehicle Activation Messaging system that has been promised but may be some time away, L.Hackling (Highways) asked the Clerk to look at the current situation with the vegetation and report back to him. **Action: Clerk.**
4. **Wharf Rd (including the pill)**  
There appears to be problems with subsidence of the road and wall (over the pill) including an increase in the frequency of lorries over 3 tonnes using the road and the trees and vegetation are in need of maintenance. A small sub group (B.Birkenhead, T.Gardener and the Clerk) will look at our obligations, access requirements/permissions within the Deeds and also use of the Haul Rd. **Action: Sub Group**

**62/19 ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING:**

1. **Review of the Action List (for actions not covered by the agenda):**
  - No 1** – Bus shelter light – work to commence 7.10.19.
  - No 2** – Housing Needs Survey – This has now been deferred until 2020 as per SDC on 21.9.19.
  - No 3** – Display the Notice of conclusion of 2018/19 Audit. **Action: Complete**
  - No 4** – End of grant report for Dame Withycombe layby widening scheme. **Action: Complete**
  - No 12** – (Item 6) Request a quote from SDC Clean Surrounds to clear the area of brambles by the Brownie copse and thereafter to include in the annual grounds' maintenance contract. A quote was received for £432 with future mowing absorbed into the annual contract at no additional cost. The quotation was APPROVED. **Action: Clerk**
  - No 12** – (Item 7) Weed spraying in village. SDC said this was planned for September/October.
  - No 15** – Purchase United Nation's Day (24.10.19) flag. **Action: Complete**
2. **OPRA Replacement Pavilion**  
T.Gardener has sought pre-planning advice. She and B.Leathwood have had discussions with a landowner regarding locating the pavilion on his land. It has been agreed in principle. OPRA is considering 2 pavilions (1 x 20' and 1 x 10'); the second one to house the mower. This action continues.

**3. Replacement Combwich Defibrillator**

M.Beckley offered to talk to the landlord of the Anchor Inn to see if he would be willing to locate a defibrillator on the outside of the public house. **Action: M.Beckley**

**4. Somerset Road Safety Presentation (Route 60+)**

We were advised 20+ people are required to qualify for a presentation because of the number of other Agencies that are involved. A notice will be placed in the Post Office, Notice Boards and the November Otter Tales to gauge interest in the parish. Stockland Bristol will also be invited to share in the presentation. **Action: Clerk**

**63/19 ENHANCEMENTS:**

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

We are still awaiting a response to our letter dated 24.9.19. There may be an opportunity for some legal advice through SALC. **Action: Clerk**

**2. Willow and bramble clearance by the brook and Wharf Rd trees**

The trees around the brook have been cut down and removed. There are still some brambles that need to be removed from the edge of the brook. The area looks very untidy. Check with contractor when the work will be complete, when the single tree T20 on the Wharf Rd will be removed and to seek advice when T18 and T19 need to be removed. A member of the public expressed concern about bats roosting in the trees. The tree surgeon will be made aware of this. **Action: Clerk.**

It was AGREED to obtain a quotation to erect a post and (3) rail fence to match existing fence along the now open side of the brook. **Action: Clerk.**

**3. Trees outside of the Village Hall and 41 Riverside**

These trees are included within the Tree Maintenance Schedule and again, we should seek advice when and what action needs to be taken on them. **Action: Clerk**

**4. Bus shelter**

Members said they liked the stone building and would prefer to see it 'pointed and refurbished' rather than replaced at this stage. A quotation will be sought. **Action: Clerk**

**5. Tree Strategy Group Proposals**

It was AGREED that for now, the priority will be for the maintenance and removal of those trees in need of action. Once this work has been done and paid for, we will review the proposals and decide which element(s) we wish to progress and in what time frame. This item to be retained on the action list.

**6. Suggestions for flags**

The United Nations Day Flag will be flown a couple of days either side of 24.10.19. This will be followed by the 'Help the Heroes Flag' for Remembrance Day. No flag will then be flown until the 'Merry Christmas' flag for a couple of weeks and then not again until the spring, as the flags deteriorate in the bad weather.

**64/19 MEETING REPORTS:**

**10.9.19 Village Hall**

L.Parsons advised that the plans for the Hall refurbishment (after they have been finalised) will be on display at a future Village Market. 3 tenders have been received at a greater cost than was envisaged.

**18.9.19 Code of Conduct Training**

Most councillors and the Clerk attended the training which was very useful. Copies of the presentation slides will be circulated. The existing Member's Interests forms will be checked to ensure everything is up to date. **Action: Clerk and Councillors**

**65/19 FORTHCOMING MEETING NOTIFICATION:**

8.10.19 – Village Hall

8.10.19 – SDC Joint Parish Cluster meeting.

25.10.19 – SSG

26.10.19 – SALC AGM

21.11.19 – Transport Forum

29.11.19 - School

**66/19 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION:**

**1. General List**

- a) Nicole Wigley (Choir) asked if the parish council would be willing to hold its December parish council meeting in the Harbour View Bar so that the choir can practise on the stage for its Christmas programme. This was AGREED subject to checking that the bar is available. **Action: Clerk**
- b) SDC – Advising that the sack of daffodil bulbs will be available for collection week commencing 14.10.19. **Action: Clerk**

- c) SCC Bridges Team – Following our letter advising that the Bolham Old Bridge had been damaged again and asking if a weight/width limit could be imposed, we were advised that this would not be possible. The bridge has been assessed as being capable of carrying 40t and as the width of the carriageway over the structure is in the order of 3.3m, a width restriction would not be relevant.

**67/19 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

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

The next panel date is 30.10.19 (papers by 14.10.19). The following one will then be held in February on a date to be agreed.

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

Nothing to report.

**3. Otter Wheels**

Additional drivers are still required.

**4. Otter Tales**

The next Otter Tales deadline is 10.11.19

**5. School Liaison**

The Head is keen to host a “one off” coffee morning at the School on a Friday morning and will arrange with H.Jowett.

**68/19 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 7 November 2019, 7.00pm, in Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm.

Signed: Original signed by J.Evans

(Chair)

Date: 7 November 2019