

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

held on

**THURSDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2020, 7.00pm (via ZOOM)**

*(to be approved at the following meeting)*

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and checked that those present were happy that the meeting would be recorded. This was confirmed.

**DECLARATION(S) OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:**

There were no declarations of interest and no dispensations applied for. Member's Interests are disclosed at the time of taking Office. This information can be viewed on the Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) website.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

**Ward Reports**

- Cllr Pay previously submitted a report that had been circulated to councillors. She commented that she preferred attending meetings via Zoom as she felt they were more focused.
- SCC Unitary Council proposal - Cllr Caswell advised us of the District Councils' counter proposal which is that the County is split into East and West areas. There is a Zoom Cluster Meeting on 8.9.20, 6-8pm to discuss the proposals. B.Birkenhead will attend on our behalf.
- The new pilot boat, The Sea Sprite, has arrived and is fully operational.

**WALSINGHAM PLANNING (WP) – POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT BROOKSIDE RD:**

The parish council advises that at this stage, all of the discussions are "without prejudice", no promises or guarantees made by either party. The parish council is reporting what it knows, as it happens in the interest of transparency and for the community to have an awareness at the earliest opportunity. Once the extent of the planning application is known i.e. when it has been submitted to SDC, we can then commence a consultation with the community based on facts.

Following a brief "without prejudice" discussion on Zoom with the Chair and Clerk on 28.8.20, the Director of Walsingham Planning, Mr Ian Jewson, was invited to this meeting to introduce himself and his company which has been appointed by Land Promotion Group to prepare an outline planning application and associated reports for a potential housing development on land behind Brookside Rd up towards the School.

- WP has made an approach to SDC to enquire which policies are relevant to the site.
- Whilst outside the settlement boundary, some housing can be permitted for Tier 3 settlements in proportion to the size of the settlement. From a Developer's perspective, a certain number of houses/housing mix would be required to make a scheme viable. Market housing would need to fund the % of affordable housing required, and additional housing could for example fund additional benefits to the community, such as a community hall or a road to the School.
- A Housing Needs Assessment will be required. We have been pushing SDC to complete a survey which initially (pre Covid-19) had been promised for spring 2020, as for example this will determine the need for 'affordable housing' which could have an impact on the numbers of houses built. We will contact SDC again. **Action: Clerk**
- Mr Jewson was unable to give an idea of how many houses are proposed and what type as he said this is only the start of the process. He did say however, that he is open-minded at how the development might be shaped. He added that he hoped to be able to produce a draft layout in the next month or two to present at a parish council meeting. This would also clarify the area of land it is proposed to build on.

Cllrs Caswell and Pay left the meeting at 7.25pm as did Mr Jewson

**General**

A member of the public had emailed the Clerk with concerns regarding the following items:

- Brownie copse – paths overgrown. The project group will be meeting towards the end of September and will discuss.
- Brambles are very overgrown alongside the play area verge and also the area around the brook between Wharf Rd and Brookside Rd on the brook's bank which was cleared last year. It was AGREED to ask Clean Surroundings to provide a quotation to clear both these areas and then to include them within the Annual Grounds Maintenance Contract so that both areas will be regularly maintained. **Action: Clerk**
- The large willow opposite the post office appears to be very overgrown and at risk of branches breaking, which if they fell into the brook could block the water flow and cause possible flooding. In addition, if the tree were to come down and into Brookside Rd, it could result in very serious consequences. The tree is the responsibility of the houseowner. The parish council did contact the houseowner two years ago to report the concerns and to also advise that the Environment Agency said if it had to attend to the tree in an emergency situation it would charge the houseowner. The Clerk was asked to write to the houseowner again re-stating our concerns. **Action: Clerk**

- It was noted that since EDF staff residing in Comwich had to catch transport to work at park and rides, there have been no incidences of fly-parking. EDF will be asked at the next Transport Forum if these arrangements could continue beyond lockdown. **Action: A.Darch**

**PRESENT (via Zoom):**

Julie Evans (Chair), Bob Birkenhead (Vice-Chair), Marie Beckley, Lindsey Parsons, Aly Prowse (Clerk) 3 members of the public.

**16/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Darch, Tina Gardener and Rachel Perrett,

**17/20 MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 14.7.20:**

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 14.7.20 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

**18/20 BUSINESS CONTINUITY MOTION – MATTERS OF REPORT:**

- Both the Chair and Vice-Chair, J.Evans and B.Birkenhead respectively, agreed to remain in post until the 2021 Annual Meeting.
- Information sheets of decisions made and actions carried out under the Business Continuity Motion had been circulated to councillors and placed on notice boards and the Comwich website for the periods ending 29.3.20, 19.4.20, 3.5.20, 31.5.20, 28.6.20 and 2.8.20.
- A complete list of payments made between 21.3.20 – 31.8.20 was attached to the agenda, although as and when payments occurred, they were included on the corresponding information sheets above.
- A limited agenda parish council meeting was held on 2.7.20 and an extraordinary meeting on 14.7.20 (see minute 17/20 above) via Zoom. Minutes were produced, circulated and published as normal.

**19/20 PLANNING MATTERS:**

- 39/19/00011** – Application of lime render (listed building application) 60 Crossways (AWAITING DECISION)
- 39/19/00014** – Repairs to leaking roof, chimney stacks, damaged roof timbers (Listed Building Consent) 60 Crossways (AWAITING DECISION)
- 39/20/00006** – Certificate of lawfulness re use of residential mobile home, Hill Cottage, Otterhampton. The mobile home has been occupied for over 10 years, is not visible from the road and the parish council had not received any comments from nearby residents. Our response will be NO OBSERVATIONS.
- 39/20/00007** – Reserved matters to erect a dwelling at 21 Riverside, Comwich. It was observed that the 'red line' (size of the plot) had been increased since the approval of the outline planning consent. As a matter of principle, the Clerk had contacted the SDC case officer to ask if this was permitted under a Reserved Matters application and is awaiting a response. Notwithstanding this, councillors OBJECTED to this application because of the change to the red line and the increased size of the dwelling which they now felt constituted over development of the area.
- 39/20/00008** – Not on the agenda as only received on the 3.9.20 is the application for the conversion of a detached garage into additional ancillary accommodation at Greenacres, Bolham. As councillors had not seen the application and the closing date is a few days before the October meeting, we will ask for an extension until 2.10.20. **Action: Clerk**

**20/20 FINANCE:**

- Bank Balances** - Current A/C £1229.43; Deposit A/C £14191.19; Reserve A/C £27911.29.
- The following payments were AGREED:**
  - Mrs A Prowse - £505.46 (August salary including £19.22 misc. office and other costs)

**21/20 STEART WARD:**

- The foreshore fence is now complete. An article will be included in the September Otter Tales explaining why it has been erected. The Clerk advised that Police were called to deal with an incident of non-compliance.
- Work on the borehole is due to start on 21.9.20.

**22/20 VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT – OPPT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Community Consultation. 83 (23%) forms were returned. Of these, those supporting the current refurbishment plans = 31 (37%); those supporting a new village hall should the opportunity present itself = 46 (55%) and there were 6 forms where a preference could not be determined.
- At its meeting held on 24.8.20, OPPT's recommendations to the parish council were:
  - OPPT are not in support of the village hall refurbishment based on the existing proposals.

- b. OPPT recommends a more limited proposal to keep the village hall operating in a safe and economic way pending more information on the proposed development.
- c. OPPT has invited the Trustees to submit a revised bid based on the above recommendations.
3. L.Parsons reported that a meeting had been held to discuss ways of cutting costs. S.Barton has submitted plans to the contractor for a quotation based on priority works to keep the hall open for the next 5 years. The next village hall meeting will be on 8.9.20.
4. The parish council Chair reiterated that if the development doesn't go ahead, further funding may be available from the Hinkley C Community Fund.
5. Parish councillors SUPPORTED the recommendations from OPPT.

**23/20 REVIEW OF ACTION LIST FROM 5.3.20 UNTIL 31.8.20:**

1. It was noted that many items on the list have been deferred or put on hold due to Covid-19. As things start to gradually get back to normal, these items will be pursued in order of priority.
2. It was noted that two letters have been received concerning the parish council's wish to consider options for reduced management along the Wharf Rd, requesting that the area is left 'wild'. It was AGREED to obtain a quotation to trim the area as we normally do each autumn pending further consideration. **Action: Clerk**  
It was also AGREED that 2 or 3 of the large boulders could be removed from the Wharf Rd and placed on the re-seeded grass at the entrance to the track. B.Birkenhead to confirm how many boulders are required and then the Clerk will contact Mr Ingram to ask if he could relocate them. **Action: B.Birkenhead/Clerk**

**24/20 ENHANCEMENTS:**

1. Play Area - The Clerk emailed the SDC Legal department chasing the letter for Wicksteed which was due week commencing 17.8.20. A nine-page draft 'letter of claim' was emailed to the Clerk just prior to this parish council meeting and appears to require a number of actions from us including evidence of various communications. **Action: Clerk**
2. Defibrillators – These have been delivered and will be installed towards the end of September. Training will be given as part of the package (date to be arranged). Checking the defibrillators is not difficult or onerous but some additional volunteers for the rota will be advertised for in September's Otter Tales.

**25/20 MEETING REPORTS:**

- 14.5.20 – Community Forum (Brief resume previously provided by M.Beckley)  
 16.7.20 - Transport Forum (Brief resume previously provided by A.Darch and draft minutes circulated from EDF)  
 31.7.20 – SSG Extraordinary Meeting (Minutes previously circulated)  
 28.8.20 – Walsingham Planning Consultants (brief notes previously circulated)

**26/20 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:**

- 8.9.20 – Parish Cluster (to discuss SCC Unitary Council proposal and the District Councils' East/West proposals)  
 15.9.20 – Village Hall  
 24.9.20 – Community Forum  
 TBA – Parish Shores

**27/20 CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. PCSO Jason Wyatt – Over the last 2 months 2 reported crimes; violence against a person and 2 thefts.
2. SCC - Temporary (5 years) 7.5 tonne weight restriction for the Bolham layby, with effect from 1.9.20.
3. SALC
  - a. Flexibility of Local Authorities and Police Crime Panels – Covid-19 virtual meeting arrangements
  - b. NALC White Paper: Planning for the Future – Consultation. **Action: Clerk**
  - c. NALC Changes to the Current Planning System – Consultation. **Action: Clerk**
4. EDF requested a date to provide an update on Comwich Wharf to councillors. It was AGREED to invite them to the next meeting and if possible, to include Andrew Cockcroft who has taken over from Ross Edwards. **Action: Clerk**

**28/20 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

1. Otterhampton Parish Project Team (OPPT)  
Two new members are required and will be advertised in the September Otter Tales. The constitution states that up to two parish councillors are permitted (two councillors currently serve on the team).
2. Public Rights of Way – B.Birkenhead  
An ongoing issue of a blocked gate at Steart Gate will hopefully be resolved by installing a 'Bristol Gate'.
3. Otter Wheels – currently, only emergency journeys are accommodated.
4. Otter Tales – the September publication will be circulated during the second week in September.
5. School Liaison – hopefully now the children are back to school, a meeting can be arranged.

**29/20 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1 October 2020, 7pm, venue to be confirmed nearer the date.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: