

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held on

THURSDAY 1 JULY 2021, 7.00pm at Otterhampton Primary School

DECLARATION(S) OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:

There were no declarations of interest or 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:

- Welcome Packs – these will be delivered to the 4 families who have recently moved into the village. **Action Clerk**

Ward Councillor Reports

Cllr Pay previously submitted her report and had nothing to add.

Cllr Caswell also previously submitted his report and added the following:

- The old Bridgwater hospital is up for auction
- Somerset County Council has reverted to full public meetings
- Boundary Changes are proposed to enable voting constituencies to become more equal
- Infrastructure at Dunball roundabout may receive Town Plan funding shortly
- The Bridgwater Barrier is currently with the Secretary of State for approval. A decision is imminent. If approved, construction will commence next year.

PRESENT:

Bob Birkenhead (Acting-Chairman), Marie Beckley, Andy Darch, Tina Gardener, Lindsey Parsons, Rachel Perrett, Aly Prowse (Clerk), Ward Cllrs Mike Caswell and Julie Pay, 2 members of the public.

87/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Julie Evans who is not permitted to attend for health reasons *nb Julie did observe the meeting via social media but as per Government regulation (confirmed by Justin Robinson the SALC Director) she cannot be recorded as present; she should not participate in the meeting and cannot vote.*

88/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 1.6.21:

The minutes of the meeting on Zoom held on 1.6.21 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

89/21 PLANNING MATTERS:

1. **39/20/00012** – Roof and change of use from silage clamp to silage clamp and livestock building. Lower Hill Farm, Otterhampton. AWAITING DECISION.
2. **39/21/00002** – Conversion of existing storage barn to living accommodation at Fender House, 6 Brookside Rd. AWAITING DECISION.
3. **39/21/00003** – Application for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (as for 39/21/00002 above). AWAITING DECISION.
4. **39/21/00004** – Installation of disabled access ramp at Otterhampton Village Hall. Amended application. PERMISSION GRANTED.
5. **39/21/00006** – Single storey extension to side (East) elevation, 4 Fender Orchard. SUPPORTED.

90/21 FINANCE:

1. **Bank Balances** - Current A/C £2420.79; Deposit A/C £19044.02; Reserve A/C £68975.31.
The Reserves A/C is high because of the grant award received to resurface the play area, the verge marker posts and wall refurbishment.
2. **The following payments were AGREED:**
 - a) Mrs A Prowse - £574.38 (June salary £528.53, plus misc. exp. £31.46 & £14.39 Zoom subscription)
 - b) Mrs A Prowse - £80.00 (S171 license £50 and gift for internal auditor £30)
 - c) Mrs A Prowse - £34.02 (£20.40 timber to repair bench by the pill & £13.62 parts to service lawn mower)

91/21 STEAR T WARD:

A Darch previously circulated his report, the main items included: -.

The next Steart Forum will be held on 13.7.21 via Zoom. Isobel Pring (SCC PRoW) will confirm the location of the two-minute litter pick board on the peninsula and whether there is something more suitable she could provide to those groups who already litter pick.

92/21 ENHANCEMENTS:

1. Re-surface the play area
A date for the work to commence is still awaited. **Action: Clerk**
2. Verge marker posts and refurbishment of the wall by the play area
The planned date of 5.7.21 is confirmed and will take approximately 1 week to complete.
3. Village sign
B Birkenhead advised that Andy Turnball (Community Engagement, EDF) will refurbish the sign. The faded red paint (depicting the buoy) will be re-painted and he will order the wooden posts to fix the sign to at a cost of £94. T Gardener said the fixings had not been agreed. After some debate the suggested wooden posts were AGREED as a reasonably priced option which may need only serve as an interim solution depending on residents' feedback. The Clerk thinks we have existing permission (now a S171 license) from Highways for the sign, but she will check. **Action: Clerk.** B Birkenhead asked whether Steart might like a sign. **Action: A Darch**
As per M Beckley's suggestion this area will be included within the August village walk with regard to possible landscaping or adding planters.
4. Repair of the Combwich buoy
B Birkenhead in conjunction with A Turnball (Community Engagement from EDF) is arranging to get the buoy repaired. He will dig out some earth around the buoy and fill with gravel to create some drainage to try and protect the base of the buoy.
5. Wharf Rd speed and weight limit sign
The new sign has been ordered at a cost of £170 plus VAT. We will ask if EDF will pay for it, if not the parish council will. **Action: Clerk**

93/21 REVIEW OF ACTION LIST:

1. General
 - a. No 1 - Housing need assessment, priority action following Brookside Rd planning application. This has been chased by D Harvey (cc'd to his colleague) on 24.6.21. Follow up after a few weeks. **Action: Clerk.** It was noted that some large trenches were dug recently in the Brookside Rd field which is assumed to be archeologically related. R Perrett asked if SDC has reached its housing quota for the Local Plan to 2032; housing requirements are termed as a 'minimum housing requirement' so the Plan figures are only for indicative purposes.
 - b. No 3 – Gritting salt. T Gardner will use some of the stock in the OPRA barn for Fiddington.
 - c. No 4 – Broken kerb stones by bus shelter – chase action from Highways. **Action: B Birkenhead**
 - d. No 9 – Wharf Rd Landscaping. 'Wild gardening' and 'bee conservation' were suggested, but traffic would be a potential problem so it may not be safe. Consultation with the community will be required. This area will be considered during the August village walk. It could be a project for the additional EDF community support. **Action: All**
 - e. No 10 – Highway's survey of Church Hill, Ship Lane and School Lane. As far as the Clerk is aware this is still planned for the summer and we will be notified when it will take place.
Concern was again raised on behalf of the Dame Withycombe Hill residents and in particular the family with three young children. We will check whether they have hi-vis jackets to wear when crossing the road. K Tyson (Highways) will be asked again if there are any safety options available because of our ongoing concern. **Action: Clerk**
 - f. No 11 – Dog gloves ceasing – notices have been placed on the dog dispensers and in Otter Tales. It is estimated the stock will last until the end of July 2021.
 - g. No 13 – Biffen's Corner vegetation removal. The grass and vegetation have been cut back - it is thought by a local farmer - which has improved the visibility. A long-term permanent solution is still the desired outcome. This will remain on the action list.
 - h. No 14 – Communication mediums. It was AGREED to ask the All Things Combwich Facebook Group if the parish council could set up a direct link, so that pertinent and timely information could be posted (the comments option will be turned off) on the basis that it has 600+ registered users in addition to the Combwich website which attracts an average 20-60 users per day. **Action: Clerk**
 - i. No 16 – Combwich Ponds. B Leathwood has been advised that the report should be finished at the end of July

Ward Cllrs J Pay & M Caswell left the meeting at 7.45pm

94/21 CHANGES TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

A decision is expected towards the end of July 2021.

95/21 MEETING REPORTS:

8.6.21 – Village Hall.

Apart from some ‘snagging’ which need to be done plus the installation of the disabled ramp, the refurbishment is almost complete. The Trustees are awaiting the final bill; extra funding may be required to cover work done on the front windows. The village hall has its own website. Meetings will switch to Wednesdays in the future.

16.6.21 – School Liaison

R Perrett previously circulated her report. Briefly, the Head continues to encourage parents/carers to park away from the school to walk to it and the issue of children swimming in the pill was addressed. It was noted that children are of secondary school age, but she is willing to engage with the RNLI if needed. The next meeting will be in September. Rachel will ask the Head if the mobile library still calls at the school as previously, the numbers of school users helped to justify the retention of the mobile library in the village.

25.6.21– SSG

The meeting was attended by B Birkenhead. Draft minutes will follow shortly.

96/21 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

3.7.21 – Otterhampton Wilder Community (second family taster event)

13.7.21 – Steart Forum

14.7.21 – Village Hall

22.7.21 – Transport Forum

5.8.21 – Annual parish council village walk, 6pm, meeting at the bus shelter

97/21 CORRESPONDENCE:

- The 2023 Boundary Review – initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries.
- Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme – Letters will be sent from the Environment Agency to all landowners within a 50m radius of the boundary advising of the ecological surveys
- Somerset Wildlife Trust – the project is looking for new partners to enable the scheme to continue beyond January 2022. It will be seeking funding and has asked parish councils or community groups to submit expressions of interest. The email was submitted on 1.7.21 and will be circulated to councillors for consideration. **Action: Clerk**
- Swimming in the pill – a few residents have contacted the parish council regarding safety concerns for children swimming in the pill. The Clerk has erected signs in the vicinity of the pill and contacted EDF and the Harbour Master. Children have also been spoken to by numerous people. The issue will be included within our Otter Tales report highlighting the dangers. **Action: Clerk**
- Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations – the programme for the Jubilee (June 2022) will be circulated to local groups within the community should they wish to organise an event(s). **Action: Clerk**

98/21 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) – B Birkenhead

Nothing to report

2. Otter Tales

The deadline for articles is 1 July.

A lengthy debate ensued regarding the Equality article. Whilst the authors included two councillors (in personal capacities) plus one member of the public, the article mentioned the parish council twice. The majority of councillors present requested mention of the parish council be excluded from the article. This will be considered by the authors.

3. OPRA – T Gardener

- The new mower has been received (and tested satisfactorily!)
- A meeting was held a week ago to develop its programme. This will include a cream tea event at Dowells Farm, Steart on 15.8.21 and commencement of its walks. It is OPRA’s 21st anniversary this year.

99/21 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETINGS:

The annual village walk will be on 5 August 2021, 6.00pm, meeting at the bus shelter. Thereafter, the next meeting will be on Thursday 2 September 2021, 7pm, at the Village Hall. EDF is due to give an update on Combwich Wharf.

The meeting finished at 9.15pm

Signed: Original signed by J.Evans

(Chair)

Date: 2 September 2021