

OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held on

THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER 2023, 7.00pm at OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT:

Lindsey Parsons (Chair), Gina Mear (Clerk), Mike Haycraft, Connie Sanders (Vice Chair), Tina Gardener, Dave Dodge, Carol Bradbury, Cllr Mike Caswell, Cllr Brian Bolt and two members of public.

185/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

No apologies were received.

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 Somerset Council website.

PUBLIC SESSION (INCLUDING WARD COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

1. Ward Councillors Reports

- Cllr Bolt spoke about flooding and highways and that work is being done to sort these issues. Cllrs Bolt and Caswell are pushing for existing issues to be resolved.
- Cllr Caswell advised that drains have not been cleared properly resulting in flooding issues. Airband (Connecting Devon & Somerset) is delivering superfast broadband in this area in 2024. It is advisable to register an interest with Airband and look out for a leaflet dropping through doors. There are vouchers towards the cost on the Connecting Devon & Somerset website;
www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk
Magnox has changed its name to Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS). There will be a consultation about A and B Stations at Hinkley Point.

2. General

- Highways left behind a sign holder on the grass verge opposite the shop when they resurfaced the pavements in Estuary Park. Clerk to ask for it to be removed.

186/23 PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCIES/CO-OPTION

There have been no applications for the remaining vacancy. It was agreed to re-advertise in the new year. Clerk to email the application form to all councillors.

187/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 09.11.23

The minutes of the meeting held on 09.11.23 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

188/23 MATTERS ARISING – UPDATES FROM THE CLERK

- a. **Combwich Post Box** – The clerk has contacted Royal Mail but has not yet received a response.
- b. **Bus Shelter Noise Box** – Information about this was circulated to all councillors but it wasn't known if the unit requires mains electricity or is powered by a battery. Clerk to look into this further.
- c. **Stuart Defibrillator** – This is still work in progress as we currently waiting for the electrician.
- d. **Church Hill Development** – Despite writing a letter to the developer there has been no response.
- e. **Play Area Damage** – M Ingram can fix the hedgehog rocker, Clerk to order the parts.

189/23 PLANNING MATTERS:

- a. None.

190/23 FINANCE:

1. **Budget Statement for November.** All agreed the budget.
2. **Six Monthly Accounts.** These were circulated to all councillors.
3. **The following payments were AGREED:**
 - a) G Mear - £861.90 (Clerk Salary, Pension & Expenses)

- b) H Brooks - £160.00 (Removal of Cherry Tree)
- c) B Leathwood - £244.77 (Otter Tales Printing)
- d) M Ingram - £172.50 (Various Work)
- e) Somerset Council - £836.16 (Dog Bins – Oct-Mar 24)
- f) G Mear - £48.00 (Expenses – Sand Bags & Garage Keys)
- g) H Brooks - £85.00 (Removal of 2nd Cherry Tree)

4. **Income Received.** None.

5. **Precept Meeting – Set a date** – Thursday 4th January, 7pm in the Meeting Room at the Village Hall.

191/23 COMBWITH POST OFFICE & STORE

The questionnaire is almost finished and will be looked at following this meeting. It will be distributed with the next Otter Tales in January.

192/23 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There have been no reported incidents apart from HPC fly parking.

193/23 STEAR T WARD

D Dodge circulated a report prior to the meeting.

194/23 HIGHWAYS (CLLR B BOLT)

Cllr Bolt advised that work is being done on the A39 regarding flooding. Kier has been awarded £225 million for highways work; this will be honoured. Clerk to chase up reported potholes on Church Hill.

195/23 FLOODING – BROOKSIDE ROAD

More flooding occurred on 4th December and was reported to be the worst flooding ever seen in the Brookside Road area. Following Somerset County's request, the flooding was reported by the clerk. The Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is responsible for the culvert to the middle of the road. Cllr Caswell will follow up on the blocked culverts at the entrance to Brookside Road. Clean Surroundings in Colley Lane have sand bags and you can help yourself.

196/23 WHARF ROAD

D Mosedale has offered to clear Wharf Road. Clerk to check what his intentions are.

197/23 SOMERSET COUNCIL – DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES

A Highways Steward is being appointed by Somerset Council at a cost of £50,000 p.a. This cost can be shared between parishes within the LCN. It was unclear if they would be a point of contact or would be fixing issues reported to them.

M Caswell and B Bolt left at 8.00pm

198/23 ENHANCEMENTS:

1. Brownie Copse – There is still brash that needs to be cleared.

199/23 ACTION LIST

1. Emergency Plan – It has been completed, T Gardener to send to clerk for circulation to all.

200/23 MEETING REPORTS:

1. **15.11.23 – Village Hall (L Parsons)** – The meeting was not quorate so the only items discussed were the water leak in the bowls room/skittle alley, the ramp will be repointed and new batteries have been put in the door switch.
2. **16.11.23 – Transport Forum** – A Darch is happy to attend these meetings on behalf of the parish council but was not able to attend this one. R Perrett reported that a lot was discussed about the wharf though there isn't much happening in January and February. Equipment and other items from HPC site will go out on the barge when it brings items in. An additional lay down area is not needed. There will be an update on the cycle path at the next meeting.
3. **22.11.23 – LCN** – As discussed in point 197/23. Devolution of services was discussed.

201/23 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

1. **Public Rights of Way (B Birkenhead)** An email update was circulated.
2. **OPRA (T Gardener)** The Christmas dinner was very successful with 55 people attending. The Christmas tree lights switch on was well supported despite the wet weather.

202/23 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

1. 10.01.24 – Village Hall
2. 18.01.24 – Community Forum

203/23 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION

- a. **HPC Community Bus** – An email was received advising of a reduced service over the Christmas period.
- b. **Police Funding Survey** – An email was received asking for the public's opinion on increasing the policing part of the council tax by at least £10 per year for a Band D property. Email to be sent to B Leathwood for circulation.
- c. **National Grid** – M Haycraft reported that National Grid asked for permission to remove some trees near cables at the bottom of Ship Lane. All agreed the work can be done.
- d. **Somerset Rivers Authority Draft Strategy & Flood Action Plan** – This was circulated to all.

204/23 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11th January 2024, 7.00pm at Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting finished at 8.27pm

Signed:

(Chair)

Date 11 JANUARY 2024