

**OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
held on  
**THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025 at 7.00pm at OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:**

Lindsey Parsons (Chair), Gina Mear (Clerk), Tina Gardener, Connie Sanders, Steve Parker, Mike Haycraft, Dave Dodge (late arrival), Cllr Mike Caswell and six members of the public.

**036/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Carol Bradbury and Cllr Brian Bolt.

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

Cllrs Connie Sanders and Steve Parker declared an interest in item 044/25.

**PUBLIC SESSION (INCLUDING SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

**1. Somerset Council members report**

- Cllr Caswell reported that he is pleased to see movement from Somerset Council regarding the flooding on Brookside Road. Council Tax will increase by 7.5% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

**2. Public**

- There was an attempted break-in on School Lane. It was a white van but no registration number was noted.
- G Perrett asked if the parish council need to do something to mark the closing of the shop/Jane and Peter's retirement. Coffee morning have made a collection and a signed card.
- It was asked if traffic calming measures could be installed between the former shop and Nursery Close. Clerk to contact Gary Warren at Highways for advice.
- Abandoned boats in the pill. It was suggested that a working party could be organised to dismantle the abandoned boats and put in a skip. Permission will need to be sought from EDF. It was mentioned that the working party should be led by the boat club for their expertise in this area. Signs should be attached to the boats stating if no ownership they will be dismantled.

**037/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13.02.25**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 13.02.25 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

**038/25 PLANNING MATTERS:**

None

**039/25 FINANCE:**

**1. Bank Reconciliation and Budget Statement for February 2025**

The budget statement and bank reconciliation for February 2025 was circulated prior to the meeting and was agreed. The balance at the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 was £54,925.07 including reserves of £21,376.01.

**2. The following payments were AGREED:**

- a) G Mear - £622.27 (Clerk salary – February 2025)
- b) Nest - £43.56 (Pension contribution)
- c) P Sanders - £8.41 (Fuel for Pump)
- d) T Gardener - £163.79 (Hose for Pump)
- e) D Dodge - £125.50 (Rowan Tree)
- f) B Birkenhead - £44.79 (Buoy Maintenance)
- g) M Narraway - £120.00 (Village Gardener)
- h) Otterhampton Village Hall - £16.00 (Hall Hire – Community Shop)

**3. Income Received:**

- a) National Grid - £34.16 (Wayleave)

**4. Review Reserves**

It was agreed to add the following amounts to reserves:

Common Track - £5,000

Defibrillator - £3,000.

Funds for the community shop steering group will be added to the reserves.

Councillors unanimously agreed to pay for the skip hire to dispose of the abandoned boats.

#### **040/25 HINKLEY POINT C**

- a. Large buses are turning into the Crossways area and damaging the kerb stones. Other than the school and college buses, only HPC minibuses should be turning around in this area. The damage has been reported on Fix My Street. Perhaps HPC money could be used to widen the entrance if getting Highways to do it will be an issue.

#### **041/25 HIGHWAYS**

- a. Parking opposite the Anchor. It has been reported that there are still vehicles parking on the road opposite the Anchor car park.
- b. 20mph speed limit. Clerk to contact G Warren at Highways for advice about implementing a 20mph limit for Combwich.
- c. Cllr Bolt advised by email that he is still pursuing a pedestrian crossing/road markings and for the sign to be fixed outside of Combwich that has been knocked.
- d. There will be road closures on the C182 for surface dressing (From 14/06/25).
- e. Highways are only doing essential works due to budget restrictions.

#### **042/25 WHARF ROAD**

- a. A Rowan tree has been planted at the far end of Wharf Road before the entrance to the labs.
- b. Clerk to ask M Ingram to remove the foliage that was removed and left.

#### **043/25 ENHANCEMENTS**

- a. Village Gardener – It was suggested that no further work is done to the trees on the bank opposite the former shop to keep it stable.
- b. Use of pesticides – No update.
- c. Community Payback – L Parsons to obtain a price for purchasing Hammerite paint for painting the railings on the harbour wall.
- d. Brownie Copse
  - A disease-resistant Dutch Elm will be planted in the area to the right of the copse. The cost is a total of £305. All councillors agreed to the purchase.
  - Brownie Bench – there is no further update on where the bench will be sited. A composite bench would cost approx. £700.
  - Bramble Clearance – The brambles have been cleared by M Ingram.
  - It was suggested that if the brownie copse has a designated status then we may be able to obtain a grant.
  - The land to the left of the copse has been looked after by the residents of the neighbouring house. It was suggested that in the future we could look at planting trees in this area and adding a bench.
- e. Trees
  - The Tree Steering Group needs to be included as a future agenda item.
  - Four to five trees will be planted in the grounds of Steart Church. D Dodge to research some suitable species. All councillors agreed to a budget of £500.

#### **044/25 SALC – COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAMME**

S Parker has completed a draft of the application form which needs to be submitted by 24<sup>th</sup> March. Costings to be added. It is hoped that after receiving the grant from SALC then a grant from the Parish Council the following year that the project will become sustainable.

#### **045/25 FLOODING**

- a) Homes in Sedgemoor Garage – No reply yet from Homes in Somerset regarding reimbursement of items removed from the garage. Clerk to chase and keep Cllr Caswell informed.
- b) Culvert Management – R Dunn of Somerset Council sent an update by email: The foul sewage from the Dame Withycombe Villas (DWV) is collected into a pump station to the east of no. 1 DWV and pumped along the front of the Crossways Farm area to a gravity foul sewer chamber outside 49 Brookside Road. Regarding the surface water drainage pipe work along the front of Justwall Cottage / Crossway Farm / Doevecote / Stable Barn, this is what he believes is a carrier

of surface water and its start location is not known. There is no marked ordinary watercourse feeding it. From the historic mapping, the OS 1888 map shows 2x ponds abutting the road in the grounds of Crossway Farm & Stable Barn. And what looks like an open ditch in the field to the east of Dovecote entrance. Further to the west of Justwall Cottage, there is nothing that can be seen that would feed it, apart from any unmarked field ditches. It is suspected that at some time an open ditch may have been culverted or a culvert was built to aid managing surface water. Looking at more recent times, this surface water pipe outlet has changed and it is thought that the highway road gullies drain into it also. Thus, he believes that the surface water culvert would be the responsibility of either the riparian owners or Somerset Highways being the body responsible for the highway. Regarding the CCTV & jetting works on the downstream culvert at no55 Brookside Road they have been successful in finding the two MH chambers and the outlet pipe. The CCTV works are planned for next week and the plan & need to 1<sup>st</sup> priority the culverts at No55 & No54, since they are the outlet drainage system. 2<sup>nd</sup> priority is to check the drainage pipe work from the field abutting no54, since it ponds here. The 3<sup>rd</sup>, being to CCTV (CCTV only, no jetting) the section along Justwall Cottage / Crossway farm / Dovecote / Stable Barn, if there is time left on the purchase order. It all depends upon how long the 1<sup>st</sup> priority takes, and we may run out of time / resources. As mentioned before there is a slim chance that some extra CCTV works to camera this section could be added in but there are no guarantees. NB the CCTV works being undertaken are using permissive powers and in no way gives / denotes any ownership in the culvert drainage system. Clerk to send R Dunn's email to all who attended the flooding meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

- c) Location of new pump – As agreed at the flooding meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February, the affected residents are aware of where the new pumps are stored.

#### **046/25 OTTER TALES – ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT EDITION**

- Parking opposite the Anchor
- Planting of the Rowan tree on Wharf Road
- Planting of trees at Steart church
- Dog Fouling
- Brookside Road flooding update
- Attempted break-in
- Annual Parish Meeting.

#### **047/25 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – SET A DATE**

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May at 7.00pm in the village hall. Clerk to send out invitations.

#### **048/25 MEETING REPORTS**

- a. Local Plan Workshop – Somerset Council is working on a local plan which will take 3 – 4 years but will be a plan for the next 20 years. The local plan for Sedgemoor runs out in 2032.
- b. LCN Highways Working Group – no-one was available to attend.
- c. SSG – R Perrett attended and advised there was nothing of interest to the parish to note. Fuel will be emptied from the reactor at HPB by next year.

#### **049/25 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

- a. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (B Birkenhead) - Normal inspections are continuing. The gate at the bottom of the field by the Brookside Road garages needs to be replaced. It has been reported to Somerset Council.
- b. OPRA (T Gardener) – Events to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary include a silent disco for the children of the parish, Easter egg hunt, Easter quiz and a vintage tea on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.
- c. Steart Ward (D Dodge) – A sluice gate is leaking and letting in salt water which will cause damage to the environment. The Environment Agency is due to repair the gate and look at changing one of the culverts.
- d. Social Media (D Dodge) – Dog fouling campaign is going well and has received a positive response.
- e. Parish logo – ideas have been given to the designer who will send through some images for the PC to consider.
- f. Otterhampton Village Hall – L Parsons attended and reported that plans to celebrate VE day were mainly discussed.

- g. LCN – Connecting Devon & Somerset will not be rolled out in this area as it is not cost effective. There was a discussion about rural transport with the option to apply for a grant to get a community bus service which maybe a Slinky on a demand-basis.
- h. Transport Forum – D Dodge attended. A new acoustic fish deterrent is being looked at, one that is proven to work. There are currently 12,637 workers at HPC, with 15,000 being the maximum. The police unit is working to catch and educate anti-social drivers. Only 14% of the 706 high tides can be used to bring in AILs.

**050/25 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:**

- a. OVH – 15.04.25
- b. Parish Summit – 15.03.25

**051/25 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

- a) Abandoned boats in the pill – an email was received from the harbour master, Jessica Tyson, who advised that they are aware of all the boats. She stated that although all the boats are apparently abandoned, there is a level of due diligence for them or any other party such as EDF to locate the owner and request action before any action can be taken by the Harbour Authority or others. And as ever is the case, removal of abandoned boats comes with a cost particularly when it is glass reinforced plastic (GRP) boats. The one on the saltings is on EDF land. They are aware of it and have been looking to get the owner to remove it. We understand that it belonged to a gentleman that died and his estate have not communicated their intentions on this matter. Regarding the submerged vessel on the moorings in the Pill, they are and have been monitoring the situation for some time. The HA has been in touch with the parties concerned and understand that there will be another attempt to get the vessel refloated/removed in the coming days.

**052/25 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025, 7.00pm at Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting finished at 9.22pm

Signed:

(Chair)

Date 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025