

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Committee Room of the Village Hall on Monday 6 June 2016

Present: Cllr Ian Simpson (Chairman)
Cllr Tony Bennett
Cllr Andrew Davies
Cllr Tony Farrington
Cllr John Fudge
Cllr John Lister
Cllr Roy Young

In Attendance: Mr Mike Miller (Clerk)
District Councillor Mr Geoff Jung
Mrs Briony Sharp (Footpath Warden)
And 3 members of the public

16/27. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jerry Fry and Sarah Whittingham, and PCSO Sarah Trayhurn

16/28. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interest from Councillors relating to items of business on the agenda.

16/29. Confidential Items of Business

The Council did not wish to consider any business in confidence.

16/30. Minutes

The minutes of the annual meeting held on 9 May 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

16/31. Public Questions and Comments

Questions were asked by members of the public about grass cutting in the cemetery; the frequency and effectiveness of cuts and the clearance of the cut grass; the cutting of the

cemetery beech hedges; and a resident who had purchased plants for the Village Green requested reimbursement for them.

The Chairman agreed to follow up the difficulties with the grass cutting, and the reimbursement would be dealt with by the Clerk.

16/32. Chairman's Business

The Chairman:

- (i) Reported that some residents had cleared up the brook for the Open Gardens event on 5 June 2016; the Council was very grateful for their contribution;
- (ii) Suggested that the list of bank signatories should be reviewed. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Simpson should replace Cllr Lister on the list of authorised signatories;
- (iii) Reported on the meeting of the Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group on 10 May 2016, which he had attended with Cllr Fudge. He reminded the Council that the project was at a very early stage and at present was seeking funding for a number of exploratory studies. A web site was to be set up to inform the public of the project. The Chairman had raised the question of the risk of flooding upstream of Otterton, and the fact that the river was filling up with stones – this would be looked into. The next meeting of the Stakeholder Group would be held on 21 September 2016;
- (iv) Reported that a preliminary request had been made by a company called Shared Access to locate a telecoms mast at Stantyway Recreation Ground. Councillors were agreed that mobile phone reception in the area needed to be improved, and that the income from such a project would be beneficial to the village, but it was expected that there could be opposition, as had been the case in relation to a previous similar request by Orange. It was **AGREED** that a site meeting with Shared Access should be arranged to explore the request in more detail;
- (v) Reported that South West Water had offered a volunteer scheme to help local communities with projects needing significant manpower; we have expressed an interest, but it was known that the number of responses had been very high, some with projects which were already under way, so the likelihood of our being selected was not good.

16/33. Cavanna Homes Advertising Board

It was reported that the board had been removed after Mrs Sharp had contacted the company by telephone. Planning permission would have been required for a board of this sort.

16/34. Play Areas

At the last meeting, the Council had discussed issues arising from children playing ball games on the Village Green, which the Council does not permit. It was felt that one solution would be to improve the football pitch in the Jubilee Playground. This could be done, by turfing or reseeding, if funding was available, in the autumn. Cllr Davies agreed to look into the availability of funding for this.

Differing views were put forward about ball games on the Village Green. Some Councillors repeated concerns about the safety of children playing ball games so close to the road, and there was also the question of liability in the event of an accident. The concerns of a resident who had written to the Clerk were reported to the Council. Other Councillors felt that it would never be possible to stop children playing there. It was suggested that a picket fence would be helpful, and **AGREED** that the existing sign should be replaced with one stating that *organised* ball games were not permitted there.

The Triangle of land by the bridge was felt to be an underused open space. If it could be improved it could be used for ball games, or as a picnic/barbecue area. It was thought that Devon CC was still renting this land for the school, so the Chairman would consult Clinton Devon Estates in the first instance.

16/35. Annual Return and Audit – 2016

The Council considered the Annual Return and Audit for 2016. It was noted that the internal audit had been completed and was satisfactory. The Annual Governance Statement (PC/16/01) and the Accounting Statements (PC/16/02) were considered and **APPROVED** and the Clerk was authorised to proceed with the submission of the return.

16/36. Planning Applications

The Council considered planning application 16/1157/FUL for an extension at 9 Ottery Street. A number of Councillors looked at the site. The Council had no objections to the proposal.

It was noted that there had been a consultation on amended validation requirements for dealing with planning applications; the revised document would be published later in the year.

The Clerk reported that an appeal had been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of East Devon District Council to refuse planning permission for the erection of play equipment at the school. The Council had been given an opportunity to make further comments on the application, but did not wish to do so.

16/37. Local Plan

Cllr Fudge explained the background to the discussion of a new local plan. Considerably more local autonomy was being introduced, arising from the Localism Act of 2011. This had been developed in the National Planning Policy Framework of 2012, which aimed to speed up the planning process and enable more housing to be built. East Devon District Council had prepared its own comprehensive Plan, covering the period 2013 to 2031; Cllr Fudge summarised the headings and sections in that plan. It was noted that the focus for housing development in east Devon was at West End and in the larger towns and villages; there would be less development in the countryside, smaller villages and hamlets. It was reported that most of the other authorities in the area were developing plans. There would be community involvement as the process got under way. Councillors were agreed that having a plan would help the Council and the village to be more in control of its future.

16/38. Parishes Together Fund

Cllr Davies presented a proposal for signage relating to plants and animals on footpaths, which he felt would be of great value and which could be suitable for funding under the Parishes Together Fund. Councillors were very supportive of the proposal and **AGREED** that the parishes of Colaton Raleigh and East Budleigh be invited to join with an application. Cllr Davies was asked to try to secure statements of support from relevant local bodies and schools. The Chairman could source some oak slabs on which the signs could be placed. Although the deadline for the current round of applications was 24 June, the Clerk was asked to consult EDDC to find out if a late application would be considered.

The Council had previously agreed (M16/12) that an application should be made to the Fund for a new Notice Board, but it was thought that this would not meet the Fund criteria and in any case had far less support than this proposal.

16/39. Reports from Councillors with Specific Responsibilities

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) The Village Green – it was noted that the chestnut tree had been lopped. One of the seats needed attention; the Chairman would deal with this.
- (ii) The War Memorial – nothing to report.
- (iii) Stantway Recreation Ground – the grass has been cut and Cllr Davies has removed the old mower. A fallen branch from a cherry tree needs to be removed; the Chairman will deal with this.
- (iv) The Jubilee Playground – Cllr Davies has replaced the seats on the bench. It was noted that the grass is in need of cutting again.
- (v) Cemetery – nothing to report.

16/40. Reports on Village Amenities and Bodies

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) Trees – already covered earlier in the meeting.
- (ii) Footpaths – Cllr Young brought up the issue of the dog bins. Now that dog waste could be put in general bins, the dog bins did not need emptying as often as previously, and he wondered if their location was optimal. It was thought that the bin on the Village Green would be better close to the bridge, where there was a real need for it; EDDC would be asked to move it. It was also reported that there was some duplication of strimming close to the bridge.
- (iii) Contracts and Finance – nothing to report.
- (iv) Ladram Bay – the Chairman would request a financial contribution towards the cost of maintaining village footpaths this month.
- (v) Football Club – Cllr Farrington reported that a defibrillator sign had been put up at the Club House.
- (vi) Raleigh Federation – nothing to report.

- (vii) Twinning – Cllr Bennett would be visiting Vieux later in June, representing the village and would be making a speech at a ceremony during the visit.
- (viii) Village Hall – Cllr Fudge reported that, at the meeting on 11 May 2016, it had been agreed to undertake two major projects in the coming year – the rendering of the exterior of the building and the fitting of double safety doors.
- (ix) Community Shop – the AGM was to be held on 29 June 2016.

16/41. Police Report

In the absence of PCSO Sarah Trayhurn, the Clerk reported that there had been one reported crime between 1 May and 4 June 2016 – an incident of criminal damage at Ladram Bay.

16/42. County Council Report

There was no report available to the meeting.

16/43. District Council Report

Cllr Jung raised a number of matters:

- (i) He had been alerted to car parking problems at the top (eastern) end of Fore Street. The Council discussed this, but was not able to see a resolution to the problems.
- (ii) He encouraged the Council to be robust in putting forward its concerns and views on the Lower Otter Restoration Project.
- (iii) It was noted that grants to farmers for growing maize for electricity production were to be withdrawn; this was welcomed by the Council.
- (iv) He informed the Council of discussions between Devon and Somerset County Councils about the possibility of greater cooperation. The initiative hinged on the prospective development of Hinckley Point, which in turn was related to the EU Referendum.
- (v) The requirement for all developers to make provision for social housing had been overturned by the courts; in future this would only apply to projects of 5 or more houses.
- (vi) He urged caution with regard to adders, particularly on Woodbury Common and the coastal path.

16/44. Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received, as set out on the agenda and on paper PC/16/03. The Council **AGREED** to the request from Carla Whitaker of CDE to put directional signs in the village for the Farmland Bioblitz event on 24 – 25 June 2016, provided they were taken down at the end of the weekend. The consultation on markets and street trading was not felt to be relevant to Otterton.

16/45. May Payments and Receipts

The May payments and receipts were noted, as follows:

Payments	£
<i>South West Water d/d</i>	<i>5.00</i>

AON (UK) Insurance renewal 330.36

Receipts

Palmer's Funeral Service – Lilian Reynolds interment 100.00

Matthew Brocklehurst – exclusive rights to plot 132 500.00

16/46. Date of Next Meeting

The Council **AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on Monday 4 July 2016.

16/47. Business for the July Meeting Agenda

It was **AGREED** that the following items of business should be on the next agenda:

- (i) The application to the Parishes Together Fund for plant and animal signage; and
- (ii) The Shared Access proposal for the telecoms mast

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Mike Miller

Clerk to the Parish Council

8 June 2016.