

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Committee Room of the Village Hall on Monday 6 February 2017

Present: Cllr Ian Simpson (Chairman)
Cllr Tony Bennett
Cllr John Fudge
Cllr John Hiles
Cllr Roy Young

In Attendance: Mr Mike Miller (Clerk)
District Councillor Mr Geoff Jung
and 2 members of the public

17/25. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tony Farrington and County Councillor Mrs Christine Channon.

17/26. Declarations of Interest

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

17/27. Confidential Items of Business

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council **AGREED** to consider the recruitment of a new Clerk in Private Session (Part B). The public (including the press) would be excluded from the meeting for this item.

17/28. Membership of the Council

The Clerk reported that there had been one application to fill the casual vacancy on the Council, from John Hiles. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Hiles spoke briefly about his commitment to the village and the voluntary work that he was already undertaking in the community. The Council then **AGREED** unanimously to co-opt Mr John Hiles to the Council to serve until the 2018 elections.

17/29. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 9 January 2017, were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

17/30. Stantyway Recreation Ground

Arising from M17/15, it was noted that motor vehicles were prohibited from the playing fields.

17/31. Flood Resilience

Arising from M17/20, the Council was pleased to note that a payment of £1,071.21 had been received from the Devon Emergency Flood Resilience Fund to enable the acquisition of a portable sand bag filler, and other tools and equipment which would be helpful in dealing with flooding. Cllr Fudge would organise the purchases. The Council also **AGREED** to buy sand and hold it in a convenient location, though some builders' merchants might be willing to supply some sand free of charge for flood defence.

17/32. Public Questions and Comments

Members of the public raised the following matters:

- (i) The road sweeping in January had worked well, with residents able to move their cars so that the roads could be cleaned thoroughly;
- (ii) Children were playing ball games on the Village Green, but it was hoped that this would be less of an issue when the football pitch in the Jubilee Playground was improved;
- (iii) The Council was asked if there had been any progress with regard to the proposed telecoms mast at Stantyway; nothing had been heard from the companies for several weeks; and
- (iv) Mr Tim Venner, who was a prospective candidate for the County Council, introduced himself to councillors, and spoke briefly of his background in the area.

17/33. Chairman's Business

The Chairman reported on the following:

- (i) Community support for the family affected by the house fire in Fore Street had been quick and effective and the family were reported to be touched by the help that they had received;
- (ii) A customer in the King's Arms had been taken ill, and the defibrillator had been taken out of its housing, but had not been used due to the rapid arrival of paramedics. It would be inspected on 7 February as the green light was not showing. When the defibrillator had been accessed it had become clear that the lack of lighting at the Village Hall steps posed a hazard. It was noted that the Village Hall Committee were dealing with this;
- (iii) The Parish would be hosting the quarterly meeting of Chairmen and Clerks of the councils in the Otter/Exe area on Thursday 9 February; Cllr Fudge would chair the meeting.
- (iv) He hoped to get the new notice board installed at Cross Trees shortly; and
- (v) Some remedial work had been done to the stream and the channels feeding it, but the stonetrap had not been cleared and the grille had not been properly secured.

17/34. Parishes Together Fund – Plant and Animal Signage

The Clerk reported that the application to the Fund had been submitted on 31 January 2017. The application did not include specific quotations for the signs; it was hoped that Cllr Davies would be able to provide these shortly.

17/35. Section 106 Funding for the Jubilee Children’s Playground

No report on this matter was given as Cllr Davies was not present. The Chairman indicated that he would follow this up. In discussion of the most suitable surface for the football pitch, councillors were concerned at the possible safety problems inherent in the rubber matting solution, and **AGREED** that the use of other surfaces should be considered, with turf as the preferred approach.

17/36. Planning Matters

The Council did not have any comments to make on planning application 17/0122/TCA – a proposal to prune a Thuja tree at Barton House in Church Hill.

The Council considered planning application 16/2352/LBC, relating to Willow Cottage at 71 Fore Street. It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Simpson, Young and Bennett would make an inspection visit on Wednesday 8 February 2017 at 5pm to assess the potential visual impact.

The Council did not have any comments to make on planning applications 17/0178/LBC – a proposal to re-cover an outbuilding roof at Pavers Farm, and on 17/0243/TCA – a request to fell and prune trees at 20 Fore Street.

Cllr Bennett reported that he and Cllr Fudge had attended the meeting of the EDDC Development Management Committee on 10 January 2017 at which the Ladram Bay proposal to construct a new service yard and building had been approved. Cllr Bennett had spoken to express the Council’s concerns about the development, particularly in relation to its visual impact. The Council also noted that work had started on the project, though District Councillor Jung stated that the two pre-start conditions had only been complied with on 6 February. It was noted that Cllr Fudge had prepared a sketch map of the external shape of the holiday park, which could be used to monitor further expansion. It would be important for the Neighbourhood Plan to reflect the community’s views on future development of the holiday park.

The Council noted that Mr and Mrs Wells of Box Cottage had started work on a new wall in front of the cottage (Planning approval 14/1454/LBC).

17/37. Football Club

No report was available from the club. The Clerk confirmed that the interim grant of £700, agreed at the last meeting, would not be released until a standing order for the club’s annual contribution was in place and until there was evidence of applications submitted to other potential funders.

17/38. Lower Otter Restoration Project

Cllr Fudge reported on the meeting of the Stakeholder Group held on 1 February 2017. He reminded the Council of the reasons for the project, and then invited councillors to consider the options set out for it, which he had circulated on 3 February 2017. Councillors were agreed that the priorities for the parish were to ensure access to the village and to maintain the road linking South Farm to Budleigh Salterton. It was also felt to be important to find a way of providing a car park for the village (the triangle by the bridge was suggested as a possible location) and to develop cycle paths. It was **AGREED** that councillors should make their views known to Cllr Fudge; he and the Chairman would then submit a Council response by the deadline of 28 February 2017.

17/39. Neighbourhood Plan

The Council received the minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 11 January 2017 (PC/17/03), noting in particular the questionnaire survey, which was under consideration at present. A request had also been made to EDDC for funding.

17/40. Highways and Related Matters

The Council discussed Devon banks, verges and vegetation being allowed to encroach onto roadways, a particular problem in narrow lanes. The Council **AGREED** to ask landowners to address this through a note in the Parish Newsletter. The Village Working Party could be used to tackle this, but there was no easy means of disposal of the soil and vegetation.

Councillors also considered whether a flashing speed limit sign was needed in Fore Street. It was thought that the process of securing such a sign would be complex. It was suggested that a neighbourhood speed watch was needed to obtain evidence of speeding and driver behaviour.

17/41. Audit Arrangements

The Clerk reported that, from 2017 the arrangements for auditing the Council would be changing, and that the external audit process, currently carried out by an accountancy firm, would be stopped. This put greater emphasis on the internal audit process. The Council **AGREED** that a qualified person, who would be independent of the parish and the Council, should be appointed. A proposal would be submitted to the next meeting.

17/42. Reports from Councillors with Specific Responsibilities

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) The Village Green – the Chairman reported that the Green and the kerb alongside it had been damaged on 15 January by contractors (Kier) replacing power poles. The kerb had been repaired quickly, but there had been further damage to the Green, much of it in the area where the crocuses are planted, and to part of a private garden. It was **AGREED** that a compensation claim should be submitted to Western Power, when the work was completed.

- (ii) The War Memorial – nothing to report.
- (iii) Stantyway Recreation Ground – see above (M17/30)
- (iv) The Jubilee Playground – the Clerk reported that the annual safety inspection had been booked for March. Cllrs Bennett and Hiles would undertake a check before the end of February and carry out any necessary maintenance.
- (v) Cemetery – Cllr Bennett had done some work to clear one of the hedges of brambles and other debris.

17/43. Reports on Village Amenities and Bodies

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) Trees – the Chairman reported on a fallen willow south of the village.
- (ii) Footpaths – Cllr Young reported that he had not received a response from Clinton Devon Estates to his message about damage to gates, finger posts and tracks which were thought to have arisen from hedge cutting. There was also another broken fence in Park Lane damaged by a fallen tree, which was a safety matter as there was now a steep unfenced drop to the river. The Chairman would take up these matters with CDE.
- (iii) Contracts and Finance – nothing to report.
- (iv) Ladram Bay – CLLR Bennett reported that the financial contribution towards the cost of maintaining village footpaths (£300) had now been received.
- (v) Football Club – already covered (M17/30 and 17/37)
- (vi) Raleigh Federation – Cllr Hiles reported that a DIY SOS was being held on 19 February and 19 March 2017, whereby parents and others could help with maintenance at the school.
- (vii) Twinning – nothing to report.
- (viii) Village Hall – Cllr Fudge reported on the AGM and OGM, held on 25 January 2017. In 2016 the Hall had installed a new safety curtain, exit doors and security lights. It was intended in 2017 to purchase new trestle tables and a drop down screen, which would be useful if presentations were planned.
- (ix) Community Shop – nothing to report

17/44. Police Report

No police report was available.

17/45. County Council Report

No report was available.

17/46. District Council Report

District Councillor Jung was pleased to note the work being done by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. He encouraged the Council to address issues relating to the North Star site in the Plan. Cllr Jung also asked if the Council could register for the litter-picking weekend from 3-5 March 2017, and give it publicity on notice boards and the Parish News. It was also reported that the proposed boundary changes were to be published this week.

17/47. Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received, as set out on the agenda, and:

- (i) **AGREED** not to make a contribution to the Exmouth & District Ring and Ride service; and
- (ii) **AGREED** that Cllr Hiles should apply to become a Community Road Warden, so that funding could then be sourced from the Highway Community Enhancement Fund to deal with minor road repairs in the parish.

In addition, a number of other items of correspondence had been received since the agenda was circulated:

- (i) An e mail from Rosemary Birch about out of date posters; several such posters had recently been removed;
- (ii) Two e mails from Mike Parkin seeking information under the Freedom of Information Act; the Clerk would respond to them;
- (iii) A letter from Mr Parkin about mud on Behind Hayes; Highways had been notified immediately and the mud had been removed;
- (iv) An e mail from Tim Spurway at EDDC reporting that the Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan had now been published, and the Council was being invited to comment on it. This would be put on the agenda for the next meeting; and
- (v) A message from Clare James, of Clinton Devon Estates, indicating that she would soon be drawing up Heads of Terms to lease the Triangle to the Parish Council; the initial rent would be £50 per year.

17/48. Payments and Receipts for January 2017

The January payments and receipts, most of which had been set out in paper PC/17/04, were noted, as follows:

| Payments | £ |
|---|-----------------|
| <i>South West Water d/d</i> | <i>5.00</i> |
| <i>Archant – press and web advertising for Parish Clerk</i> | <i>522.00</i> |
| <i>SLCC Membership – monthly standing order</i> | <i>8.20</i> |
| <i>Greenbarnes Ltd – Cross Trees Notice Board</i> | <i>919.67</i> |
| <i>1+1 – Ro Smith – web site domain info 2016-17</i> | <i>14.39</i> |
| Total | 1,469.26 |

Receipts

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| <i>Contribution towards Cross Trees Notice Board from Iain Ure</i> | <i>256.00</i> |
| <i>Devon CC Flood Resilience grant</i> | <i>1,071.21</i> |
| Total | 1,327.21 |

17/49. Quarter 3 Income and Expenditure Account

The Council received and noted the Q3 income and expenditure account (PC/17/05 Rev), together with a bank reconciliation (Appendix).

17/50. Date of Next Meeting

The Council **AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on Monday 13 March 2017.

17/51. Business for the March 2017 Meeting Agenda

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

- (i) The Football Club grant application;
- (ii) Section 106 Funding for the Jubilee Children's Playground;
- (iii) The appointment of a new Internal Auditor; and
- (iv) The Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan.

17/52. Recruitment of the New Clerk

The Clerk reported that two applications had been received. The Council **AGREED** that a selection panel, comprising the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr Young should interview the candidates on 13 February 2017 and make the appointment, subject to formal confirmation at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Mike Miller

Clerk to the Parish Council

8 February 2017