

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Committee Room of the Village Hall on Monday 13 March 2017

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

In Attendance: Mr Mike Miller (Clerk)
County Councillor Mrs Christine Channon
District Councillor Mr Geoff Jung
Mrs Francesca Mills (Clerk designate)
and 5 members of the public

17/53. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Whittingham and PCSO Chantalle Major.

17/54. Declarations of Interest

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

17/55. Confidential Items of Business

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council **AGREED** to consider the appointment of a new Clerk (M17/78) in Private Session (Part B). The public (including the press) would be excluded from the meeting for this item.

17/56. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 6 February 2017, were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

17/57. Lower Otter Stakeholder Group

Arising from M17/38, it was noted that Cllr Fudge had responded to the Lower Otter Stakeholder Group on 27 February 2017, indicating that while the Parish Council did not in principle object to the proposed scheme, it wished to ensure that access to South Farm should have top priority; that the river footpath between the coast and Otterton should be preserved and enhanced; that the flooding of the road out of the village needed to be addressed; that car parking would be even more important if the numbers of visitors and tourists increased; and that the work should not increase the risk of the flooding of homes in Otterton.

17/58. County Council Report

County Councillor Channon reported that repairing the potholes in Church Hill was now in the programme of work for 2017; this was welcomed by the Council. It was also noted that the school had been subject to an unannounced OFSTED inspection. Cllr Channon felt that the process had been thorough and fair and was cautiously optimistic about the outcome, based on informal feedback at the conclusion of the inspection.

17/59. District Council Report

District Councillor Jung spoke in detail about the draft recommendations from the Boundary Commission on the electoral review of East Devon. He was opposed to the proposed new 3 member ward – Budleigh and Raleigh – which he felt had been created primarily because of equalising numbers, without sufficient attention being paid to other factors such as shared interests. He felt in particular that it would be preferable for rural parishes to be linked to other rural parishes rather than to towns. The Council noted Cllr Jung's comments.

County Councillor Channon left the meeting at this point.

17/60. Public Questions and Comments

Members of the public raised the following matters:

- (i) A group of residents raised concerns about a tenant of EDDC housing in Maunders Place, who had recently been released from prison. It was reported that he was on the sex offender's register, and there was particular concern as the property was close to the school. The residents were also dissatisfied with the way their correspondence and complaints had been dealt with by EDDC. The Council **AGREED** to write to EDDC to express its concerns about the issues raised;
- (ii) The value of the Triangle (which it had been planned to use as a picnic or recreation area) to the Council was questioned;
- (iii) A number of concerns were raised about the condition of the grass in the cemetery and the Children's Playground; the Chairman indicated that he would make sure that the grass was cut as soon as possible;
- (iv) The phasing of the street lights had been affected by a power cut; this had been reported; and
- (v) Parking in Fore Street, particularly by camper vans, remained a problem; it had not been resolved by the use of cones.

17/61. Chairman's Business

The Chairman reported on the following:

- (i) He indicated that he would be standing down as Chairman in May due to pressure of work but would remain on the Council;
- (ii) The stonetrap had now been cleared; and
- (iii) The Green would be used on Saturday 25 March 2017 by parents for a 'Mad Hatters' fundraising event.

17/62. Appointment of Internal Auditor

Following the discussion at the last meeting (M17/41), the Council considered a proposal to appoint Mr David Hinchliffe as Internal Auditor (PC/17/05). It was noted that Mr Hinchliffe was well-qualified and very experienced. He would charge a fee of £150 per year. The Council **AGREED** to make the appointment.

17/63. Section 106 Funding for the Jubilee Children's Playground

The Chairman reported that he had used Facebook to consult parents and children about their preferred new play equipment; the consensus had been in favour of a zip wire and a basket swing. Cllr Simpson would seek quotations for these items.

The Council again considered how best to improve the condition of the football pitch in the Children's Playground, following the concerns about the safety and suitability of a rubber matting solution. It was thought that better maintenance, and more frequent mowing, together with an annual reseeding of worn areas would be a more cost effective solution, enabling the S106 funds to be used for outdoor sports equipment. It was **AGREED** that levelling and raking the pitch should be a priority for the Volunteer working party. The Chairman would investigate the feasibility of obtaining outdoor exercise equipment.

17/64. Planning Matters

The Council noted that, following the site visit by Councillors Simpson, Young and Bennett, there were no objections to planning application 16/2352/LBC, relating to Willow Cottage at 71 Fore Street.

The Council also noted that, following a site visit, the Council had no comments to make on planning application 17/0178/LBC – a proposal to re-roof an outbuilding roof at Pavers Farm.

The Council considered planning application 17/0458/TCA, a proposal to trim birch trees at 44 Fore Street; there were no objections to the proposal.

The Council considered planning applications 17/0455/TCA and 17/0306/TCA, proposals to fell two trees and trim two others at 3 Watering Court; there were no objections to these proposals.

In discussion Councillors asked the Clerk to contact EDDC to check the planning status of building works at Three Corners and a property in Orchard Drive.

17/65. Football Club

It was noted that the Club had notified the Clerk that a quarterly standing order had been set up to cover the Club's contribution to the cost of maintaining Stantyway. Cllr Farrington reported that the Club was in the process of applying for grants. The Council confirmed that the grant of £700 would not be paid until grant applications had been submitted.

17/66. Greater Exeter Strategic Plan

The Council noted that EDDC was running a consultation on the Plan, which was principally concerned with housing and business development. Councillors were invited to consider the plan (www.gesp.org.uk) and make any comments at the next meeting.

17/67. Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan

The Council noted the consultation on the Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan, and was content to confirm the comments made at the November meeting on pre-submission draft of the Plan.

17/68. Neighbourhood Plan

The Council received a brief report from the Chair of the Steering Group (PC/17/07), and noted that the Group's main work at present was the finalising of the consultation strategy and the preparation of questionnaires. The grant from EDDC of £2k had been received.

17/69. Annual Parish Assembly – 10 April 2017

The Council considered the arrangements for the 2017 Annual Parish Assembly, to be held on 10 April 2017. It was **AGREED** that provision should be made for a short presentation/discussion about the Neighbourhood Plan, and that representatives from Ladram Bay Holiday Park should be invited to make a presentation on their plans for the future development of the park.

17/70. Electoral Review of East Devon: Draft Recommendations

The Council noted that the Boundary Commission had now published its draft recommendations for East Devon. A new 3 member ward – Budleigh and Raleigh – was proposed, which would include Budleigh Salterton, East Budleigh and Bicton, Colaton Raleigh and Otterton; this was much the same suggestion that the Council had previously supported. The concerns mentioned by District Councillor Jung (M17/59) were noted, but the Council continued to feel that there were many positive features of these new arrangements, though some uncertainties as to how the 3 member element would work in practice.

17/71. Reports from Councillors with Specific Responsibilities

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) The Village Green – It was noted that children playing ball games on the Green was still a concern to a number of residents, though the crocuses appeared to have survived both the ball games and the damage by contractors working for Western Power. It

was **AGREED** that a compensation claim should be submitted to Western Power, now that the work by Kier was completed.

- (ii) The War Memorial – nothing to report, other than a short correspondence with the War Memorial Trust.
- (iii) Stantway Recreation Ground – Councillors remained worried about the damage being caused by car parking, though no further action was felt necessary at present. It was noted that there had been some vandalism and forced entry to the club house. The bench next to the playing field had not been bolted down, though Cllr Davies had undertaken to do this some time ago.
- (iv) The Jubilee Playground – the Council was reminded that the annual safety inspection had been booked for March. Cllr Bennett had carried out some maintenance work. It was **AGREED** that a more frequent and thorough maintenance/inspection procedure was needed, with a log to keep a formal record of inspections.
- (v) Cemetery – it was noted that the main concern was the state of the grass which needed cutting as soon as possible. Councillors discussed the issue of grave settlement, which made the cutting more difficult; the Clerk would investigate what could be done about this. The new 3 weekly bin collection, to be introduced from June 2017, could lead to problems, and the position would be carefully monitored.

17/72. Reports on Village Amenities and Bodies

Councillors reported as follows:

- (i) Trees – nothing to report
- (ii) Footpaths – Cllr Young had been away and then incapacitated, so was not able to give a full report. The Chairman had followed up the concerns about damage caused to gates, finger posts and tracks with Clinton Devon Estates, but had not yet heard back from them.
- (iii) Contracts and Finance – nothing to report.
- (iv) Ladram Bay – it was noted that work was going ahead with the new maintenance yard and associated building. Some residents remained worried about the continuing expansion of the park, and the Council asked if EDDC could be asked to provide the number of pitches/ caravans permitted on the site.
- (v) Football Club – already covered (M17/65)
- (vi) Raleigh Federation – nothing to report other than that from Cllr Channon (M17/58)
- (vii) Twinning – nothing to report.
- (viii) Village Hall – it was noted that a new drop-down screen had been installed, and that the external lighting close to the defibrillator and the Committee Room entrance had been improved.
- (ix) Community Shop – nothing to report

17/73. Police Report

The police report (PC/17/09) was noted.

17/74. Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received, as set out on the agenda, together with another message from EDDC about a review of Hackney Carriages and Licensing, which the Council did not wish to comment on.

17/75. Payments and Receipts for February 2017

The February payments and receipts, which had been set out in paper PC/17/08, were noted, as follows:

Payments	£
<i>South West Water d/d</i>	<i>5.00</i>
<i>Kings Arms – catering for Otter/Exe parishes meeting: 9 Feb</i>	<i>137.40</i>
<i>SLCC Membership – monthly standing order</i>	<i>8.20</i>
<i>North Devon Council – Clerk’s salary (Dec & Jan) and admin charge</i>	<i>457.72</i>
<i>EDDC – dog bin emptying – April 2016 to March 2017</i>	<i>480.00</i>
<i>Village Hall – Committee Room hire – Dec meeting</i>	<i>11.00</i>
Total	1,099.32
Receipts	
<i>EDDC – Grant for Neighbourhood Plan</i>	<i>2,000.00</i>
<i>Donation from Ladram Bay Holiday Park</i>	<i>300.00</i>
<i>A G Real – additional inscription</i>	<i>35.00</i>
<i>VAT Repayment</i>	<i>55.71</i>
Total	2,390.71

17/76. Date of Next Meeting

The Council **AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on Monday 3 April 2017.

17/77. Business for the April 2017 Meeting Agenda

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

- (i) The Review of the Emergency Plan;
- (ii) Section 106 Funding for the Jubilee Children's Playground;
- (iii) A report on the Meeting of the Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group to be held on 15 March 2017; and
- (iv) The Greater Exeter Strategic Plan.

17/78. Appointment of the New Clerk

The Council **AGREED** to confirm the appointment of Mrs Francesca Mills as the new Clerk with effect from 1 April 2017. A contract of employment had been prepared and signed.

17/79. Bus Traffic in the Village

The Council **AGREED** that Dart Line should be contacted about the occasional practice of drivers turning buses at the Cross Trees junction rather than the designated turning area on Ottery Street, which it was felt could be dangerous, and the speed of some drivers in Fore Street.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Mike Miller

Clerk to the Parish Council

17 March 2017