

OTTERTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018

Thursday 19th April 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Minutes

In attendance:- Cllr Fudge in the Chair, Cllr Hiles, Cllr Young, Cllr Bennett, Cllr Pride, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Lister, Fran Mills as Clerk

6 members of the public.

Apologies:- Cllr Farrington, Cllr Simpson.

1. Welcome by the Chairman.
2. To receive the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10 April 2017 and to consider any matters arising from them. It was agreed there were no matters arising and the minutes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
3. Chairman's Annual Report.

Parish Councils have 3 main areas of responsibility;

1) Representing the local community, 2) Delivering services to meet local needs, 3) Improve the quality of life and well being on the community

We are a relatively small parish with just over 600 inhabitants and our main areas of responsibilities are therefore:

The Village Green, the War Memorial, the Cemetery, the Jubilee Playground, Stantyway Recreation Area

Our other responsibility include: Maintaining PROW'S, Flood Defence and, Maintenance of Bus Stops

We also have the opportunity to object to Planning Applications that we feel are inappropriate although I have to say that the Planning authorities do not always agree with what we recommend. In the last 12 months we have considered some 10 planning applications.

We hold monthly meetings normally of the first Monday of the month and each of our councillors has a specific area of responsibility on which they report back to the council.

These include; The Village Green, the War Memorial, Stantyway Recreation Ground, the Jubilee Playground, the Cemetery, Parish Trees, Footpaths and PROW's, Contracts and Finance, the Football Club, the Raleigh Federation, Twinning, The village hall and the village shop

Our year runs from May to April and every year we are awarded a precept by the District Council which they claw back through your council tax. The precept for the current year was £10,520 some of which we spend on all of the projects and services we have responsibility for. So tonight is about us, The Parish Council, telling you, the parishioners, how we have spent your money and some of the activities we have undertaken.

In May we hold our elections and I was appointed as the new Chairman and Councillor John Hiles as the new Vice Chairman.

We lost 2 Councillors, Councillor Whittingham and Councillor Davies and I am pleased to say that those vacancies were filled by Councillor Valerie Pride who joined us in June and Councillor Laura Wilson who joined us in January of this year.

Also, at the beginning of our year The Government Boundaries Commission changed the boundaries which meant that we are now part of Otter Valley Division. This meant that we lost

Devon County Councillor Christine Channon who had served us for many years as our representative on DCC and we gained Councillor Claire Wright. Both Councillor Wright and EDD Councillor Geoff Jung regularly attend the Parish Council meetings.

In June we spent our £1,000 flood defence grant on a new sandbag filling machine, a sand storage bin, sandbags and a shovel. All of this equipment is now in the safe hands of Mr Philip Greenhow for use by members of the community.

We also erected a new Parish Notice Board inside the bus shelter at the top of Fore Street which I am pleased to say seems to be constantly in use. I would like to thank Mr Iain Ure for his donation towards the cost and to Ladram Bay who erected the sign on our behalf.

In July The Parish Council together with Councillor Claire Wright and Councillor Geoff Jung were invited to meet the management of Ladram Bay. Also present was a Highways Officer and a Planning Officer from EDDC. At that meeting one of the directors agreed to attend a public meeting later in the year.

In October we arranged for further defibrillator training by SWAS which was held here in The Village Hall and we plan for this to be an annual event.

In the same month, with the help of a number of parishioners, we cleared the stream at the top of Ottery Street and at the top of Fore Street. I would like to thank those members of the community that helped and also Ladram Bay for the loan a small tractor which helped facilitate the removal of much debris.

In November, the management of Ladram Bay hosted a public meeting on their premises. Those that attended will know the outcome which I must say was a surprise to me as I did not realise the strong feeling of some members of the community towards Ladram Bay and in particular the traffic problems caused by large vehicles travelling to and from the site. Since that meeting The Vice Chairman and I have had several meetings with the management and I feel that there is a willingness on their part to explore ways whereby traffic problems can be mitigated. It was agreed that we meet with them on a regular basis.

Further to the November meeting at Ladram Bay Councillor Claire Wright and Councillor Geoff Jung arranged a public meeting which was held on the 9th January in the Village Hall. The idea was to help residents understand the complex planning process and to record the main concerns regarding planning and the traffic volumes in the village.

It was obvious that one of the biggest challenges facing this village is the concern about traffic. Specifically the volumes and speed of traffic together with the lack of parking. This was borne out when the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaires were returned and analysed earlier this year. A further concern was the continued development at Ladram Bay with its obvious potential for increasing the level of traffic travelling through the village.

On the 23rd of February The Parish Council met with Sir Hugo Swire our local MP when topics and concerns were discussed including traffic, The LORP and future planning at Ladram Bay.

I am pleased to report that after much delay the 106 funding awarded by EDDC for improvements to The Jubilee Playground is finally under way. This week the playground equipment company 'Rhino Play' have installed a new play house, a balance frame and a new rope walk. A new see saw will be in place by the end of the month. The Parish Council will also consider some form of skateboarding facility which seems to be a major priority for a number of young residents.

It is obvious that due to government cutbacks DCC are asking local Parish Councils to carry out many of the tasks that they were once responsible for and to this end I am pleased to report that in March Councillor John Hiles was appointed as our Road Warden. This means

that we will be able to carry out minor repairs to our streets by borrowing various pieces of equipment from DCC.

In addition to the specific areas of responsibility by Parish Councillors we are also a member of 'The Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group' which meets 3 or 4 times a year. Unfortunately, a recent application for a £2.4M grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund was rejected which is obviously a major set back.

We also attend the 'Parishes Together' meetings where we meet with other Parish Councillors and Clerks to discuss common problems.

During our year we have made donations to The British Legion, Little Otters and to the CCTV system recently installed in the village shop and outside of the village hall.

Future projects include replacement of the existing plant pots on The Green to give a more substantial display and the planting of 16 small trees on Stantyway Recreation Ground to commemorate the 16 villagers who were killed in the First World War. This year of course being the 100th anniversary of the end of that terrible conflict.

Our grass cutting contract has been awarded to Halcyon-Landscapes who carry out work for other parish councils and we look forward to having neat and tidy grassed areas this summer.

The 'Parishes Together' funding for animal and plant signage around the river areas has been put on hold until we know more about the intended routes of the FAB and LORP.

Finally, The 'Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group' now have most of the information they require to move to the next stage which will be to write a plan. When this is completed it will be submitted to EDDC for approval.

I would like to thank the Clerk and all members of The Parish Council for their support throughout the year and for carrying out their specific areas of responsibility and especially to Councillor Roy Young who continues to trudge the many miles of footpaths in all weather conditions to report back to the council on any repairs that need carrying out.

I would also like to thank Councillor Geoff Jung and Councillor Claire Wright for their continued support.

4. To receive the Financial Report for 2017-18 – see attached.
5. To receive the Annual Police Report - Not available.
6. To receive a Statement from County Councillor Ms Claire Wright.
Cllr Wright confirmed intention to pursue a 20 MPH speed limit for the village.
She also outlined the current pressure on hospital beds locally and her support to improve this situation.
7. To receive a Statement from District Councillor Mr Geoff Jung.
I have been your District Councillor for the last 3 years and I have enjoyed attending Parish meetings and helping Otterton Residents on District Council issues.
You are all very privileged living in a special location and I hope my contribution is helping to preserve this village for in the future.
Regarding Ladram Bay Holiday Park. It is an important and nationally recognised well-run tourist location that employs many local people.

The park is here and we must live with it! Yes, if a planning application was submitted now it would not be supported but we must make the best of what we have got.

Regarding the planning issues outstanding. I am endeavouring to sort out all the outstanding planning contraventions and Licencing requirements and therefore have a defined and clear understanding of the defined boundary, the agreed maximum of caravans and the specified open green spaces required within the camp.

It is in the interests of the owners of the site to have a well-run, efficient site that does not spoil the local area and it's important for local people that they continue to liaise and work with the directors and management of the park, and I'm pleased to hear that the chair and councillors are keeping up a dialogue with them.

Looking at the future our Council leaders seem to be attracted to the bright lights of Exeter and its expansionist growth, yes, its right to discuss joint planning schemes and improvements for the whole Greater Exeter area, but do we ignore our other neighbours in Dorset who want to create a Jurassic National Park which would include the AONB area of Woodbury Common and here in Otterton.

I personally see that allowing some further expansion of Greater Exeter makes sense, but I also see that preserving as much of the Exe Estuary, our rural Parish and pebblebed heaths also makes sense. The greatest selling point to the City of Exeter is its proximity to the Devon rural landscapes the Exe Estuary and the Jurassic Coast.

Why destroy the key aspect of why people want to live here?

Managed careful growth with the new town of Cranbrook and a new Mid Devon garden town, with better transport links, sort out the bottle necks on our roads especially in Exeter. But at the same time, we need to work with Dorset and help create a new National Park from here to Poole Harbour for the benefit of the increasing population to breath fresh air and enjoy this unique and beautiful area.

So, thank you for the last 3 years and I look forward to continuing as your District representative for my final year.

8. To receive questions from the Floor

- Contracts and specification should be discussed in public not as confidential business. A request was made to make specifications available for examination by the public.
- A member of the public queried the use of Council Funds to make safe the septic tank at Stantyway Recreation Field, and to mend a fence owned by Clinton Devon Estates without reference to the Parish Council. It was confirmed that matters which could affect health & safety needed to be dealt with in a timely fashion and the use of email agreement speeds up the process.
- Timeline for Jurassic Coast National Park. Parish Clerk to find more information.
- A question was asked about Commemorative Beacons for WWI celebrations. Parish Clerk to find more information
- Query regarding offer of snow clearance by Management of Ladram bay. It was confirmed that this offer had been made but in line with the advice given by the Met. Office for people to stay indoors unless in an emergency it was decided not to clear roads as this may encourage the use of unsuitable vehicles outside the village.

The meeting closed at 9.00 O'clock.

Francesca Mills

Parish Clerk

April 2018