

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes							
Date & Time	4 th April 2022		Location	Otterton Village Hall			
Councillors Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
Mr T Wright	TW	Parish Councillor	Chair	A Dent	AD	District Councillor	
Mr J Hiles	JH	Parish Councillor	VChair	P Jarvis	PJ	District Councillor	
Mr J Lister	JL	Parish Councillor					
MS Melanie Martin	MM	Parish Councillor					
Mr Richard Witherby	RW	Parish Councillor					
Mrs Julia Bove	JB	Parish Councillor		4 members of the public			

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence	Absent without Apology	Initials	
Jerry Fry	JF	Covid	None		
Jess Bailey	JB	Conflicting Commitments			

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to
F Mills	FM	Clerk	Councillors, website, notice board

Ref	Main meeting agenda item, comment & decision	Action Owner & deadline
1	Welcome & Apologies received as above.	
2	Declarations of Interests: No declarations of interest were made. The clerk reported that all Councillors had completed a Register of Interests form and this will be sent off to EDDC as requested.	
3	<p><i>To accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 7th March as a correct record of the meetings. To consider any matters arising from the minutes, not elsewhere on the agenda, and to ratify recommendations made at the meeting on 7th March as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unanimous recommendation to proceed with the agreed protocols for the setting up of a Otterton Parish Council Facebook page. RATIFIED</i> • <i>It was unanimously recommended that the following are adopted: Protocol for the issue of Agenda & Minutes of OPC Meetings. RATIFIED</i> • <i>Protocol for dealing with communications to the Chair or other members of the Council RATIFIED</i> • <i>A recommendation was unanimously agreed to allocate a budget of £20 for banner advertising the open day & that MM agreed to get quotes. RATIFIED</i> • <i>A recommendation was made to obtain quotes for a No parking' sign to be erected on the virtual pavement to discourage visitors to the village from parking on the hatched lined area. RATIFIED</i> • <i>The Council unanimously recommended that an application for funding for a 20 Mile Per Hour scheme throughout the village should be made. RATIFIED</i> <i>OVA Litter pick – MM Attended on behalf of the Otterton Parish Council and reported a well-attended event with many bags of litter collected. Thanks to Geoff Porter & the OVA for organising this excellent effort.</i> 	

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4	<p>The chair confirmed the arrangement for public discussion: All members of the public are welcome and comments on items on the agenda will be heard. If you would like to add an item to the agenda, please contact the clerk at least 7 days before the meeting. Public questions by email/letter or in person:</p> <p>There were no questions or matters of concern raised by the public in the meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk reported a phone call received from a resident with concerns over parking in the village particularly on the hatched lines/virtual pavement. The clerk responded that the Council are looking into signage to remind visitors and residents not to park on the lines to ensure safe thoroughfare for pedestrians.</p> <p>JH reported a request from a resident regarding a coordinated approach for families offering accommodation for Ukrainian refugees. A short discussion took place regarding the benefits of a central coordination and the clerk was asked to contact EDDC to find out what is available and to put an appropriate message in the Parish News. The person with responsibility for liaison of refugees within the vicinity is thought to be John Golding of EDDC. (Parish news)</p>	Clerk
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5	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>The following letter was circulated to Councillors before the meeting. In a 'holding response the author was thanked for taking the time to give feedback which is always welcomed to improve the work of the parish Council.</p> <p>The points raised in the meeting in response to the feedback are detailed in italics.</p> <p>I would like to draw your attention to some parts of the Council's Standing Orders, as I do not think that they are being followed correctly at present.</p> <p>Section 1 on Meetings at 1.3 requires agenda to be placed on the Parish notice board a minimum of 5 clear days before the meeting is held.</p> <p><i>Whilst it was acknowledged that this has happened recently it is a rare occurrence and every step will be made to ensure all agendas are displayed on the Parish notice board for 5 clear days before any meeting. On the recent occasion when the agenda was not correctly displayed the council took steps to ensure procedurally no rules were broken.</i></p> <p>Section 31 on Planning Applications at 31.2 requires the full details, ie</p> <p>(i) the date of its receipt,</p> <p>(ii) the name of the applicant,</p> <p>(iii) the place to which it refers and</p> <p>(iii) its planning reference number</p> <p>to be displayed on the Parish notice board within 2 days of receipt. This does not seem to happen at present.</p> <p><i>Full details of planning applications are discussed at meetings and the application number & address are displayed on the agenda & minutes of the meeting together with the resulting comments/decisions from the meeting which are then appropriately uploaded to the EDDC planning portal for public view. It was noted that to comply with GDPR names should not be added to the details of planning applications.</i></p> <p>Item 24 on Accounts and Financial Statements at 24.2 requires a statement of accounts at the end of the financial year. Whilst a 'statement' is helpfully displayed on the website, it has insufficient detail to be considered as a proper Statement of Accounts. I would like a much more detailed breakdown of the categories and monies, so it is clear what has been spent and where.</p> <p><i>The Otterton statement of accounts on the website complies with all requirements of our internal auditor and was suggested as a helpful format by a previous internal examiner. A copy is sent annually to the external examiner for all Parish Councils as part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Returns (AGAR) and has not received any recommendation to amend. The accompanying bank account reconciliation details all ins & outs and this will be displayed on the Parish notice board and on the website.</i></p> <p>I hope this is helpful, and you can action these matters. I presume that the List of Members' Interests is also in hand, as the information on EDDC's website was last updated in January 2020. Please see note in agenda item 2.</p> <p><i>It was recognised by Councillors that Standing Orders are 'guidelines' to ensure that procedures are properly followed however, it was also acknowledged that with changing technology and programming, systems can evolve and therefore standing orders can become out of date. The current orders have not been updated since 2016 and it was unanimously agreed that a working party would be set up to review the Otterton parish Council Standing Orders to ensure that all activity complies with the stated guidelines.</i></p>	
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6	<p>Chair's report: The past year has been challenging in many ways but the village responded well and displayed great community spirit. Our village shop proved to be invaluable and a life saver to many. It was very generous of the shop committee to issue vouchers to reward its loyal customers. The shop volunteers deserve a great all our thanks. We now have the Devon Air Ambulance landing lights installed so that will be available during hours of darkness. It is something one of us hope to need but it is comforting to know it is there.</p> <p>The parish council also went through a difficult time. A number of long serving Cllrs resigned last year so that there was a strong possibility that the council would not be able to continue and we would have needed an election to select as new council. On the advice of the district councils head of legal service our 3 district Cllrs were 'licensed' to act as parish Cllrs at a meeting where new candidates to sit on the council were appointed so we could continue. That meeting appointed 4 new Cllrs, I was one of them, and a further resident came to forward and has been appointed. We now have 7 Cllrs but there is room for another.</p> <p>I would like to thank John Hiles for being the chair of the council for the past 3years, Due to the number of new Cllrs recently appointed last month we held a 'Get to know your council@ event in the village hall. Other organisations came to tell us what they did and it was deemed to be a very worthwhile occasion. We intend to do something similar later this year. There will be the usual refreshments to tempt you.</p> <p>We are also organising a Jubilee event; tickets will soon be on sale but you can register your interest now at the shop. Melanie will be able to give more information on what should be a super village occasion.</p>	
7	<p>Village Events: Platinum Jubilee event Sunday 5th June 2022. MM Reported that plans are on track and good progress is being made. Tickets are being printed and will be on sale in the Otterton Community Shop. MM previously state that she may need more tables but has now been able to obtain a number from Clinton Devon Estates. The Community shop proposes to run an ice cream stall.</p> <p>MM requested a budget to cover expenses for the event and was asked to put together a proposal which will be circulated and discussed at the next parish Council meeting.</p> <p>A request was made by JH for a 'curtain side' lorry to act as a stage for the band. Steve Harper-Smith from Ladram Bay agreed to try and source one and will report at the next meeting.</p>	
8	<p>Feedback from the 'Meet the Councillors Village open Day: MM was congratulated for a very well received event and thanked by the Council for her hard work in making this happen. The Council agreed to consider making this an annual event and further discussion will take place at the November Parish Council meeting when budgets are set for 2023. Mrs Angie Wright was thanked for her help on the day.</p>	Agenda November Meeting. Clerk
9	<p>Devon Air Ambulance Landing site: the site was officially opened on 18th April having become fully operational on 17th April. COMPLETE</p> <p>Defibrillator training: This will take place in the Otterton Village Hall on 25th April @ 15.00. The provision of training is free of charge as part of the contract the Parish Council has with the Devon Air Ambulance Trust and is offered free of charge to all attendees. Currently the Otterton Parish provides the Defibrillator for the benefit of the Otterton Community at a cost of £1, 000 per annum. The clerk was asked to put a message in the Parish News encouraging businesses to provide their own unit if appropriate.</p>	Clerk

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10	<p>Ladram Bay: Steve Harper Smith reports that the season has started to become busier but that bookings are currently not at the same level as 2021 although it is anticipated that bookings will increase in the present financial & political climate. Staffing levels at the Ladram Bay will increase in line with demand with many staff coming from the locale area.</p>	
11	<p>Comment on planning applications. 22/0401/FUL - 11 Rolle Barton Church Hill Otterton Budleigh Salterton received 9.3.22. Unanimously supported.</p>	
12	<p>Parking in village: Cllr Fry sought agreement for a 'No parking' sign to be erected on the virtual pavement to discourage visitors to the village from parking on the hatched lined area. A recommendation was made to obtain quotes for signs which contain a visual explanation of the nature of the virtual pavement this was unanimously agreed. Clerk to obtain quotes for signs to discourage parking on virtual pavement. Ongoing.</p>	Clerk
13	<p>Allocation of responsibilities & reports from Councillors: Where there is nothing to report the following abbreviation will be used (NTR) Village Green: MM See minutes reference 14. Community shop: JH - (NTR) The War memorial: JH – (NTR) Raleigh Federation: RW – (NTR) Stantyway recreation ground: JF – an email was received from JF in advance of the meeting stating that all was well at Stantyway recreation Field and that Andy Mitchell was happy with the arrangements for grass cutting FootballClub: JF See above. Jubilee Play Park: JB Reported that the ROSPA inspection is still awaited and once the report she will bring a proposition for replacing equipment to the Parish Council. Regarding replacement of the climbing wall please see agenda item *** JH reported that a concern had been raised regarding a barbed wire boundary fence at the playpark that has fallen into disrepair. After examining the fenced area JH reported that this lies between an area bordered by a hedge and brambles and a cattle fence surrounding the next field. It was felt therefore that it was unnecessary to replace the original barbed wire fence as the natural growth would form a boundary marker and be more effective in stopping children going through it. Cemetery: JL - The cemetery fence is in need of repair and JL recommended that 4 inch posts should be used. Clerk to instruct Halcyon Landscapes to repair (in progress) Village Hall: MM - (NTR) Contracts & Finance: (NTR) Devon Air Ambulance (DAA): See Minutes reference 9 above.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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14 **Wild flowers: The following letter was sent to the Parish Council by Mr Geoff Porter.**

Dear Councillors,

Proposed additional pollinator planting on The Green, Otterton.

I have been liaising with Melanie Martin regarding the planting of wildflower seed in the village. I understand from Melanie that she plans to talk about further planting at your April meeting so I thought it would be helpful to outline my proposals.

The triangle on The Green has now been planted with wildflower seed. The fundamental reason for planting wildflower seed in public spaces is to provide food for pollinating insects and to encourage members of the public to hopefully decide to plant wildflower areas in their own gardens. The seed mix used contains both annual and perennial seed but I would like to suggest the addition of a few extra plants.

We are all aware of the current conflict in Ukraine and one of their national symbols is the sunflower. These are excellent flowers for bees and other insects as well as providing seed for birds. Adding some shorter multi-headed sunflowers most like the original native plants would both recognise the Ukraine and add a useful pollinator. Buddleja or Butterfly Bush is also loved by insects especially butterflies. I have a couple of small potted plants that I am happy to donate. These would be planted to the rear of the area.

My final proposal is to add three smaller plants to the front of the plot just behind the Brook wall. First, the Council could purchase some packs of red poppy seed which could be easily added and provide bright, early colour. I also have some small pots of primrose and violet taken from our garden that I am again very happy to donate. Both would add colour to the front edge of the plot and they would spread over time as they self seed.

I do hope that these proposals will be seen as helpful. A reminder that the Otter Valley Association is making up to £500 available to the Council. May I take this opportunity to thank Melanie, Richard Witherby and the other residents who helped with the work on the Green.

The Parish Council thanked Mr Porter, the OVA & Councillors for their work in readying the ground for the sowing of the wild flower seeds and eagerly await the 'fruits of their labour'. A discussion took place regarding Mr Porters further proposals and were grateful for the advice and expertise offered by MM. The following points were unanimously agreed:

The planting of Sunflowers in the triangle would be appreciated as both an additional pollinator but also in recognition of the conflict in Ukraine.

It was suggested that all residents could be encouraged to also plant sunflowers in collaboration with the pupils at Otterton School and it was wondered if the OVA would agree for seeds to be purchased to facilitate this from the £500 grant?

MM advised that poppies seed are included in the seed mixed used but that more poppies would add colour and an additional pollinator.

The planting of primroses and Buddleia, whilst both recognised as attractive plants which provide useful pollination were not thought to be in keeping with the native wild flower theme in the cultivated area on the green and the proposal was therefore respectfully declined.

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15	<p>Cllr Alan Dent: Cllr Dent confirmed that parking prices are to rise throughout East Devon and encouraged visitors to Budleigh or Sidmouth to buy an Annual Parking ticket from EDDC which Represents excellent value for money. AD also reported that beach huts for hire continue to be available at Budleigh Salterton.</p>	
16	<p>CLLR JESS BAILEY – DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (OTTER VALLEY) APRIL 2022</p> <p>Otterton Open Morning: Thank you for inviting me to Otterton Open Morning on 19th March. It was an excellent event – I found it really informative talking to the different community groups in the village and my daughter and I both very much enjoyed the refreshments!</p> <p>20 mph zones: I am really pleased that Otterton PC has submitted an expression of interest to be one of the new 20mph zones to Devon County Council – as soon as I hear any more about the timescales etc, I will get in touch with you.</p> <p>Race Equality Audit at Devon County Council: Earlier this year Devon County Council published the findings of a race equality audit. The report, which contains very concerning findings, concluded that “structural racism exists within DCC because of inaction from White stakeholders and the absence of clear, structured and sufficient leadership”. The full report can be found here https://www.devon.gov.uk/equality/performance-and-monitoring/raceaudit21 Devon County Council are seeking to address the issues raised in the report through the scrutiny committees, and by bringing an action plan first to cabinet and then full council. I anticipate that the action plan will be brought to the cabinet meeting on 20th April, but the agenda has not yet been published.</p> <p>Sewage discharges in Otterton and across East Devon: As you may be aware I am working hard to try and bring about improvements to the terrible sewage discharges by South West Water into the River Otter, and other rivers around the district. EDDC’s scrutiny committee is actively considering sewage as an issue under the chair Cllr Tom Wright, following my proposal to the committee. If you want to see how bad things are in the River Otter, you could take a look at the website ‘Top of the Poops’ which shows how bad the problem is in our district https://top-of-the-poops.org/map.html?c=East+Devon. In 2021 there were 785 separate incidents and sewage was discharged for 7627 hours by South West Water into the River Otter. In Otterton sewage was discharged from the combined sewage overflow at the Green 14times for 27 hours. This situation cannot be allowed to continue</p>	

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	<p>CLLR JESS BAILEY – DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (OTTER VALLEY) APRIL 2022</p> <p>Children’s Scrutiny Committee at Devon County Council</p> <p>This Wednesday 6th at 10.30 am there is a children’s scrutiny committee which is being convened to consider the Ofsted Visit Letter dated 6th March 2022. Although I am not a member of this committee this is a really important matter which I feel should be brought to your attention. This can be watched live via Teams from a link on this page https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=428&MId=4650&Ver=4. In March 2020 Ofsted’s inspection found that there were serious failures in the services provided to children and young people in Devon. There were two monitoring visits in September 2020 and May 2021 and this latest letter follows on from a further visit in February this year.</p> <p>The headline finding of the Ofsted Visit Letter dated 6th March 2022 are: <i>A surge in referrals about children who may be in need or at risk of harm during the COVID-19 pandemic, acute staff shortages and high caseloads in the initial response teams (IRT) are all contributing to many children and families not yet receiving the help they need at the time they need it most.</i></p> <p><i>In particular, many children for whom there are concerns of significant harm are not seen quickly enough. Some families are unnecessarily subjected to repeated child protection investigations; managers’ recommendations are not always followed, and their application of thresholds for different levels of intervention is inconsistent. Professional curiosity is hampered by a lack of time to reflect on the best way forward for families. Consequently, many children remain in unsafe and neglectful circumstances for too long.</i></p> <p><i>However, in the last four months, a permanent senior leadership team with a clear understanding of what needs to improve has begun to address the serious weaknesses in Devon. During this time, the introduction of a new practice model, supported by external partners, has become increasingly understood by social workers and they are enthusiastic about the future. Elected members and corporate leaders now prioritise children and families and acknowledge the need to make changes more quickly.</i></p>	
16	<p>Financial matters:</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that all payments listed on agenda 4.4.22 should be paid. It was further agreed to pay the following: Clerk’s expenses £21.28 (£15.00 agreed for Christmas cards in item 17 November meeting) MM has purchased spring bulbs for the planters on the greens and will be reimbursed £75.00</p> <p>It was agreed that an allowance for planting would be agreed in next year’s budget. A budget of £20 was agreed in the meeting of 7.3.22 for a banner advertising the open day. The actual cost was £48.13 including postage and VAT which was unanimously agreed to be paid as it may be used again.</p>	Clerk to action
17	<p>Further actions: Ongoing: Bespoke emails set up for all Councillors on basis of area of responsibility. Clerk to forward details & passwords in conjunction with webmaster.</p>	Clerk to action
18	<p>Emergency Plan: This is a large multi sectional document. For efficiency of time a small working party has been formed to review & update. A meeting will be arranged with JF, RW & the clerk, unfortunately this meeting has been delayed due to COVID.</p>	

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19	106 Funding: An email was received 4.4.22 received from Sulina Tallack of EDDC stating that a climbing wall would be an acceptable use of the sports element of the 106 funding due to Otterton parish Council. Sulina also said 'There are so many types out there that if you are open to it, it would be great to find 3 types that the PC find acceptable and undertake a spot survey on a nice day in the play area@ This was unanimously agreed by the parish Councillors and JB has agreed to get 3 quotes for climbing walls. 106 funding available approximately £6k	
19	Items for next agenda: 106 funding, OVA Wildflowers, Personal Signage in village, Street Scene re signage, Review of Standing Orders.	
20	The next meeting will take place on the 9th May. @ 7.30. It is hoped that a member from the LORP team will give an update presentation at this meeting and the clerk will advertise this in the Otterton Parish news. TW to action.	TW

The meeting closed at 21.10

2022 meeting dates: 9May(Annual meeting), 6Jun, 4July, 5Sept, 3Oct ,7Nov, 5Dec

Bespoke emails addresses as follows:-

vicechairOPC@otterton.info	Cllr John Hiles
cldrjubileeplayground@otterton.info	Cllr Julia Bove
cldrrottertoncemetery@otterton.info	Cllr John Lister
cldrillagegreen@otterton.info	Cllr Melanie Martin
cldrraleighfederation@otterton.info	Cllr Richard Witherby
cldrstantywayrf@otterton.info	Cllr Jerry Fry
cldrwarmemorial@otterton.info	Cllr John Hiles
cldrillagehall@otterton.info	Cllr Melanie Martin
cldrfootballclub@otterton.info	Cllr Jerry Fry
cldrcommunityshop@otterton.info	Cllr Community Shop

The address can be accessed using the following address <https://mail.ionos.co.uk/>