

# DRAFT

## OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Tristram (Chair), C. Whithear, T. Norris, D. Blackmore,  
P. Hopkins, A. Welch-Thornton, M. Norfolk

**In Attendance:** A Jenkins (Clerk), DCC Cllr. M. Hartnell

**Members of Public:** 0

Cllr. Tristram chaired the meeting

He welcomed everyone to the Council meeting and outlined / reminded everyone of the Covid-19 measures which had been adopted for Council meetings.

### OPEN SESSION

No matters raised.

### COUNCIL BUSINESS

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons given (LGA 1972 S.85 (1))**

None

- 2. To receive any declarations of interest relating to items outlined in this agenda (this does not preclude the duty to declare further interests as applicable)**

None

- 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>RD</sup> August 2023**

The minutes were declared a true record of the proceedings, proposed by Cllr. A. Welch-Thornton, seconded by Cllr. Whithear, all in favour.

- 4. Matters arising from the Minutes**

None

## 5. Reports:

### a) Police

The Clerk advised that he had replied to PCSO England with the requested information but that he had not received his response advising when he would be attending Council meetings.

### b) District and County Councillors

The Clerk reported that written reports had been received from both EDDC Cllr. Parr and DCC Cllr. Hartnell and these had been circulated to Councillors.

Cllr. Parr had reported on the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the Verita Report and also on the Full Council Meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> July regarding the motions relating to the agenda items on cash payments for car parking and for improving the Council.

Cllr. Hartnell had reported on the Winter Service preparations for the gritting fleet, the challenges faced by the Gully cleaning crews and an ongoing trial of pre inspecting gullies, the programme to remark approximately 6,000 road markings over a 4-5 year period and DCC's support to an open letter to the Chancellor urging for the protection of cash as a critical payment method for everyone.

### c) Clerk

The Clerk reported that Royal Mail had finally commissioned the replacement post box at Cleave Cross and that it was now in use.

### d) Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group

None

### e) Highways Matters

#### 1) 20mph

None

#### 2) A35

The Clerk reported that he had received an email from Jonathan Hill, the National Highways A35 Route Manager for Devon. They had noted the issues we had discussed with them at the Walk through meeting and set out in the Clerk's report. The issues such as *access to and from the bus stops and the speed off traffic through this section* have been added to their regional list of [Users & Communities](#) sites for consideration. As discussed on site, such matters compete for both priority and funding on a regional & national level so he can't make any guarantees that these areas will be addressed in the near future but it's certainly a positive step to be included in this list. He will keep the Parish Council informed as and when there is any progress with such matters but said it's worth being aware of the significant pressure such pots are under given the current financial climate, inflationary pressures & the fact we're nearing the end of our "Road Investment Strategy 2" funding period.

As regards the other key area of concern - the Y junction @ Ramsden Lane - discussed at the Walk through meeting this is an issue on the local road network and as such will need to be addressed by the local highway authority (Devon CC). He is however happy to share our concerns with them if we so wish.

DCC Cllr. Hartnell said that he had spoken to Stephen Kelly, the local Highways Officer regarding this particular junction and discussed with him the Parish Council's suggestion that the unnamed lane be blocked off at the A35

end with entry/exit to this lane only being allowed from the Tower Road end. He had said that this would never be done as DCC Highways did not close roads and that in his opinion the Y junction was perfectly safe.

The Clerk and Councillors disputed this opinion and said it was not at all safe and was in fact highly dangerous. The Clerk asked if Cllr. Hartnell could refer the matter to the Chris Parkes, the senior Highways officer and request that he attend a site meeting with the Clerk and Councillors. He had briefly discussed the matter with Chris Parkes, at last year's DALC conference and he had at that time indicated a willingness to attend a site meeting. Cllr. Hartnell to speak to him and advise.

With regard to the matter of the eastbound bus stop on the A35, Cllr Hartnell advised that he had asked the DCC Cllr. Lead on Public Transport about the possibility of rerouting the bus service through the village and also the possibility and financial feasibility of the eastern bound bus stop being moved to another location which would allow safe access. He was presently waiting for her reply.

The Clerk advised that the Parish & Town Councils were hoping to arrange a further joint A35 meeting with National Highways in the next few months.

### **3) Bus Service**

Cllr. Norris advised that there were certain bus services which went through the village and suggested that the information on these services be put on the website. The Clerk to investigate the available services and arrange for these to be posted on the website.

### **4) Other Highways matters**

Cllr. Whithear raised with DCC Cllr. Hartnell the matter of the particular pothole on Ramsden Lane which was being repeatedly repaired and had been for many years by Highways without them trying to solve the matter once and for all by putting a small pipe under the road to divert the spring water into a roadside ditch. Cllr. Hartnell said that the Highways financial budgetary restraints often limited their ability to carry out any underlying structural repair works causing the pothole and only enabled them to carry out the pothole repairs. Cllr. Whithear said he could possibly accept this budgetary restraint in the short term but not when the pothole had been repeatedly repaired over many years. It was a false economy and Devon Highways was wasting public money in continually filling in the pothole and not dealing with the underlying cause.

DCC Cllr. Hartnell undertook to discuss this particular matter with Stephen Kelly, the local Highways Officer and ask him to investigate and report back.

Cllr. Tristram asked if Cllr. Hartnell could also ask the Highways Officer to investigate the matter of one of the grit bins which had disappeared.

### **f) Footpaths Report**

Cllr. Norris advised that the parishioner had received a reply from Devon County council PROW about his complaint about Footpath 16. They had advised that the footpath had not been ploughed and that the growing maize crop had not interfered with the footpath. They had however asked that the farmer cut back the hedge along the fenceline adjoining the footpath.

**g) Any Other Reports**

None

**6. Correspondence**

The Clerk advised that EDDC had written asking if the Parish Council required a further supply of empty sandbags. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk request and collect 50 sandbags. The Clerk reminded Councillors that whilst the Parish Council can supply the empty sandbags to parishioners, it does not supply the sand to fill them and that it would be up to parishioners to obtain sand and fill the bags. He suggested that the 50 bags be distributed amongst all the Councillors, so that if contacted they can give them to parishioners who may be in need of them in an emergency.

**7. Finance**

**a) Current Financial Position**

b) The Clerk reported that there is £5,904.58 in the general account and £12.09 in the CIL account.

**c) Expenditure to be ratified**

None

**d) Expenditure to be approved for which bills have been received**

- 1) **Payment to A.Jenkins for the Clerk's net salary after tax/NIC deduction for the month of September (31/08/2023 to 28/09/2023) and to HMRC for the appropriate amount based on a gross salary amount of £365.44**

Payment proposed by Cllr. Norris,, seconded by Cllr. Welch-Thornton. All in favour

**8. Planning Applications**

**a) 21/1798/FUL - Land On The East Side Of Tower Road Offwell Honiton**

**Change of use of an existing agricultural building and associated works for use as a Livestock Collection Centre.**

The Clerk advised that he had spoken to the Enforcement Officer who had advised that they were still waiting for the applicants to

address the breaches and submit the required documentation to Planning for their consideration.

**b) 23/0735/FUL – Land North Of Honiton Golf Course Northleigh Hill Road Honiton**

**The construction of a Youth Football Facility, including clubhouse, parking, storage and football pitches to suit all age groups.**

The Clerk advised that the application had not been reinstated onto the planning website.

**10. Electricity Sub Station**

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the technician responsible for the sub station. He had advised that he was still waiting for the quotation from contractors for the removal of the tree stumps.

**11. Update of Standing Orders**

Deferred to next meeting

**12. Email Accounts & Cloud Next Renewal**

The Clerk advised that the Cloud Next hosting email package was due for renewal on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and that the renewal premium is £49.99. Cllr. Norfolk proposed that the Council not renew the Cloud Next package and that the Councillors instead set up new gmail email accounts themselves to use for their Councillor roles. These gmail accunts are free to set up and use. Seconded by Cllr. Norris, all in favour.

The Clerk requested that they all set up the gmail account in the format example of [cllr.mnorfolk@gmail.com](mailto:cllr.mnorfolk@gmail.com) so that everyone will have a similar type format and should avoid the problem that someone else may have already taken it.

**13. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Update of Standing Orders

Electricity Sub Station

**11. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.50pm