OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2026 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs. J. Tristram (Chair), T. Norris, D. Blackmore, M. Norfolk, P. Hopkins

In Attendance: C Holland (Clerk), EDDC Cllr. H. Parr

Members of Public: 1

Cllr. Tristram chaired the meeting. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Council meeting.

OPEN SESSION

COUNCIL BUSINESS

25/113 **To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons given** (LGA 1972 S.85 (1))
EDCC Cllr. P. Arnott; Cllr C. Whithear;

25/114 **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)

25/115 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th January 2026**
The minutes as amended were declared a true record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr. Norfolk, seconded by Cllr. Blackmore.

25/116 **Matters arising from the Minutes**
Clerk to follow up with Zach Bricknell on hedge reinstatement

25/117 **Reports:**

a) Police
The Clerk reported on a meeting with PCSO England and Inspector Gray who emphasised the importance of signing up for Devon and Cornwall Alert to improve response times to incidents. PCSO England gave his assurance that he would attend a Parish Council meeting after his rota change in March.

b) District and County Councillors
EDCC Cllr. H. Parr provided the following report:

1. Local Government Reorganisation
The Cabinet approved the appointment of specialist advisers to work up the detail of the 4-5-1 model of Unitary governance, on behalf of the 7 District and Borough Councils putting forward this proposal.

The total cost of this work over the next 6 months is expected to be £175k, to be shared between the Councils promoting this plan. The cost to EDDC will be £25k to be met out of existing budgets.
https://democracy.eastdevon.gov.uk/documents/s29901/LGR%20Cabinet%20February%202026.pdf

2. **Community Grant Fund applications**

A new community grant fund has now opened, scheduled to close on 27 February 2026 at 4pm.
£204,000 of funding has been allocated for grants, half for this first round, and the remainder for the next round later in 2026/2027.
£300 - £1,500 will be available for small community grants and £500 - £10,000 available for community buildings.
https://news.eastdevon.gov.uk/applications-open-for-community-grants-that-will-fund-voluntary-community-projects-and-buildings/
More info on the EDDC website-
https://eastdevon.gov.uk/grants-and-funding/grants-available-from-us/the-community-grant-fund/

3. **Consultation on Local Government Review proposals**- give your views on the 5 different Unitary options for Devon put forward to government
https://news.eastdevon.gov.uk/lgr-consultation/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

c) Clerk

The Clerk reported that she has now completed two training courses with DALC.

d) Highways Matters

1) 20mph

Nothing to report

2) A35

Nothing to report. The Clerk to submit a Freedom of Information request.

3) Other Highways matters

The householder at Old Trout Farm, Hayne Lane, Wilmington reported that a massive amount of spoil from the unmade county road known as Cleave Lane, leading from the Offwell/Cotleigh road to Hayne Lane, Wilmington had washed out and deposited onto Hayne Lane. The nearest householder has used his own equipment to make Hayne Lane passable but the county road is now also unusable, probably even on foot. It was noted that the Chair had informed Cllr Arnott at DCC.

e) Footpaths Report

The annual survey provided by Hilary Thompson was discussed. It was noted that four footpath issues have been reported on the DCC website. The Chair informed the meeting that the footpath starting at Bagwells Cottage, Mill Lane, the first 50 odd yards of which are in Offwell parish, now has drops of about 6 ft, so is unusable.

f) Defibrillator

Nothing to report

g) **Neighbourhood Watch**
It was noted that the coordinator had been contacted but has no developments to report. It was agreed to include an article about the scheme in the Link magazine.

h) **East Devon Playing Pitch & Outdoor Strategy**
Cllr Norris reported that EDDC had deferred the item to an unspecified further date due to a material planning consideration. He distributed a draft response from the parish council for approval. The response was agreed and Cllr Norris was tasked with its submission.

i) **Any Other Reports**
None

25/118 Correspondence

Nothing to report

25/119 Governance

1) Standing Orders. The previous Clerk advised that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had already been adopted in September last year although not updated on website. Clerk to investigate for next meeting.
2) Adoption of the IT, Data Protection and Website policies was postponed to the next meeting.
3) Working party for new website. It was agreed that the working party would comprise Cllr Norris, the Clerk and one local resident. The Clerk is to check the Assertion 10 requirements to confirm whether there is a deadline for a new website and Councillor emails.

25/120 Finance

a) **Current Financial Position:**
The Clerk reported that the bank statements were still being sent to the previous Clerk with the balance to be confirmed.

b) **CIL Deadlines**
The Clerk confirmed the deadline for use of CIL money is five years from receipt with the current CIL income being received during the tax year ending 31 March 2024.

c) **Expenditure to be ratified**
None

d) **Expenditure to be approved for which bills have been received**
1) Payment of £737.60 to the Clerk
2) Payment of £126 to SLCC
3) Payment of £55 to Lawson Design
4) Payment of £36 to DALC

All payments were approved with all in favour.

e) **Banking – Instruction to Vary Authority**
The recent news of the Honiton branch being scheduled to close was discussed. It was agreed to change the address to that of the new Clerk, to add all Councillors as signatories and to sign up for online banking.

25/121 - Planning Applications

a) **25/2425/FUL - Colourwheel Nursery Site Tower Cross Honiton Devon**
It was noted that the application had been refused.

25/122 - Co-option

None

25/123 - Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Review of the IT, Data Protection and Website policies

25/124 - Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed: Date:

DRAFT