

OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT 7.30PM

ON MONDAY 15th APRIL 2019 IN THE SOCIAL CLUB

Present: Cllrs A Small (Chair), P. Tuke, J. Tristram, D. Millington,
C. Whithear, T. Staunton, M.Mulrain, S Patch

In Attendance: EDDC Cllr. H. Parr, DCC M. Shaw, A Jenkins (Clerk)

Members of Public: 3

OPEN SESSION

Mr Giles-Wilson stated that his 2019/20 Council Tax bill showed that Offwell Parish Council had increased it's precept by 46.5%, queried the reasons for the increase and claimed that this was in direct conflict with the Government's Referendum Principles which restricted the percentage increase that could be imposed unless a referendum on the increase took place. He also questioned how increases could be justified when his requests in the past for financial grants to the Bonfire Night and for tools for the Woodland Trust had been refused by the Council.

The Clerk explained that the Referendum Principles do not apply to Parish and Town Councils (local councils). In 2018-19 the Government decided to defer for three years the setting of referendum principles for local councils and in the Local government finance settlement 2019 to 2020, the Government decided to again defer the setting of referendum principles for parish and town (local) councils.

The Clerk further explained that the Council had some years ago taken a conscious decision to substantially reduce the precept below the annual budget costs by taking monies from it's reserves and had continued to do so for a number of years. This course of action had reduced it's reserves and could not continue indefinitely without the Council becoming insolvent. The Council even with this year's increase in the precept is still taking £3,000 from reserves to support the budget. The Chair said that any requests for financial assistance for an event or for any items to be purchased had to come from the organisation concerned and not from an individual. The organisation in charge of the Bonfire Night had not made any requests for financial assistance. Cllr. Mulrain as a volunteers for the Woodland Trust said that the Trust had not made any requests for financial assistance in purchasing tools as it had secured it's own funding.

It was agreed that the Clerk put an item re the increase in the Precept on the agenda for the next meeting.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Apologies

Cllr. Brake

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th March 2019

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

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Clerk advised that DCC had temporarily suspended the Landmark Tree planting scheme until the next Winter planting season due to low stock levels in the nurseries and the Spring having sprung. In addition to the planting of a Landmark Tree in a prominent location within the Community, their main priority is to encourage landowners to provide land for planting-up of tree clumps, field corners, small copses, hedgerow trees. This will help to compensate for the huge loss of Ash trees which the County will, inevitable face over coming years. The Devon Ash Dieback resilience Forum hopes to offer in connection with DCC and the Woodland Trust a means to either fund some of this planting or to provide free trees.

The Clerk reported that the new grit bin had been received and had been put in place next to the Haycart and been filled with grit.

The Clerk advised that he had advised EDDC to amend the dog waste bin collection service to twice a week and was awaiting their invoice for the 2019/20 year.

He was still waiting the costing for the Colwell finger post from Highways.

5. Reports

a) Police:

The Clerk reported that PCSO England 30017 had sent an update.. His inspector has agreed that he can continue to issue his report out to the Parish Council every month and that if he is working and free that he can drop into the Council meetings to give a quick report. PCSO Shelton who covers Honiton is leaving shortly and then PCSO England will then have to cover both town and rural.

b) District and County Councillors:

EDDC Cllr. Parr reported that in February 59% of waste was recycled with none going to landfill which was twice the rate being achieved in Exeter. EDDC were already achieving the Government's 2030 target of 60%.

She also said that EDDC were paying 90% of invoices within 10 days.

DCC Cllr. Shaw reported that the problems of the CDS Gigaclear rollout had been discussed at the March Scrutiny Meeting and he was hoping that a more definitive update would be given at the June Scrutiny meeting.

He advised that there was a new Making the Connection Grant Funding Scheme which provides small, one-off non-repeatable, grants of up to £300 to support community-led ideas and initiatives. No match funding is required.

He advised that Highways are moving to a more flexible approach in dealing with potholes and a better public information system. Cllr. Whithear said that the pothole in Ramsden lane was reappearing again after it had been repaired and that he had reported it again.

Cllr. Shaw had sent an April 2019 report which had been forwarded to all Councillors and published on the website.

c) Other Reports

None

6. Correspondence

The Clerk advised that he had forwarded on to Councillors all email correspondence received. These had included: -

- a) Newsletters from Offwell C of E Primary School
- b) Devon & Cornwall Police Alerts re: Fake virgin media emails, High Value burglary in Uplyme, an escaped prisoner from Newton Abbot prison
- c) Email re East Devon AONB Heritage Conference at the Norman Lockyer Observatory on the 27th April, Cost £20 pp
- d) Email from Devon Highways re Devon Roadworks Permit Scheme Jan 2020
- e) Email from Devon Highways re update Spring 2019
- f) Email from Jamie Buckley EDDC re Community buildings Fund
- g) Email from DCC re changes to Local Bus Service 4/4A/4B from 26/05/2019

7. Finance

Cllr Tristram proposed, Cllr. Whithear seconded, all in favour that:

- a) £250.12 be paid to the Clerk for the period 7th January 2019 to 7th February 2019.
- b) £49.00 be paid to HMRC for PAYE for period 4th February 2019 to 4th March 2019.
- c) £124.48 be paid to Glasdon UK Ltd for new Grit Bin.
- d) £95.36 be paid to DALC for the outstanding 2018/19 membership fees.
- e) £48.00 be paid to DALC for attendance of Clerk on HMRC and PAYE course.
- f) £36.00 be paid to DALC for attendance of Clerk at Elections 2019 course.

8. Bank Statements

The Clerk advised that there was £10,386.62 in the current account (after allowing for uncleared Cheques but not allowing for the above payments) and £1,433.97 in the dedicated CIL account. He passed for Councillors perusal the Bank Statement dated 1st April 2019.

9. Planning Applications

18/2657/ADV – Non illuminated hoarding sign for the Grazing Cow situate (A35 Opposite) Windmill House, Offwell, Honiton

The Clerk advised that no decision had been made as yet.

19/0022/FUL – Rookery Cottage, Offwell, Honiton EX14 9SL

The Clerk advised that the planning application had been withdrawn.

10. Gigaclear

The Clerk reported that he had heard nothing further from Gigaclear since the last meeting but that Kier contractors working for Gigaclear had been seen doing some remedial work to previous works done by the previous contractors in Bluebell Lane.

11. Parishes Together Grant Work

Cllr. Patch advised that there were 4 ditches which had required work. They were:-

- a) Easements on the lane from Drummerstone Cross (Grid Reference ST19604 00270) down to and just past Spillcombe corner (Grid Reference ST19724 00647). This is the lane which Highways had recently resurfaced but water is collecting on the lane due to the existing easements being blocked. Work - to clear the easements.
- b) Easements along the unnamed lane past The Bishops Tower and Tower View Fruit Farm EX14 9RW (Grid Reference ST18544 00458). Work - to clear the easements.
- c) Roadside Ditch on side of lane by Barton Hall House, Rock Lane, Offwell (Grid Reference SY1948699542). Work - to clear the ditch.
- d) Roadside Ditch on side of Mill Lane EX14 9SR at Grid Reference SY19679 98270
Work – to clear ditch/easements.

The Clerk advised that Devon Highways, Devon Foodrisk and the Environment Agency had confirmed they had no objections to the work being carried out.

The work had been carried out by Andrew Tucker, the contractor engaged by the Council. Cllr. Patch said that some additional work had been necessary at ditch no. d) above, on the opposite side as water had been collecting on the road following works carried out by the Gigaclear contractors.

The Clerk advised that he had received two invoices from A R Tucker Ltd. One for the four ditches in respect of the Parishes Together Grant Work - £480.00 incl.VAT and the other for the additional work necessary at Mill lane - £67.50.

Cllr. Tuke proposed, seconded by Cllr. Mulrain, all in favour that:-

- a) £480.00 be paid to A R Tucker Ltd.
- b) £ 67.50 be paid to A R Tucker Ltd.

12. Elections 2019

The Clerk reported that EDDC had only received seven nominations for the Offwell Parish Council 2019 elections and as such had declared an uncontested elections with all seven persons duly elected. The official declaration results notice had been posted on the website and on the noticeboard. There would be two vacancies on the new Council. The Clerk said that he would include this as an agenda item at the May meeting for the new Council.

13. CIL

The Clerk advised that the Council would be receiving a further CIL payment of £826.34 from EDDC later in the month, which would then increase the CIL monies held to £2,260.31.

14. Annual Parish/Council Meeting

Councillors resolved for the Annual Council Meeting to commence at 7.00pm in the Jubilee Room followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8.00pm.

It was suggested that the Clerk approach Mr Andrew Roberts of Highways England to give the talk/presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting and if unavailable, then Devon Freewheelers.

It was proposed by Cllr. Tuke, seconded by Cllr. Whithear that the Council provide some wine and nibbles for the Annual Meeting, up to a cost limit of £50.00. The majority in favour.

Cllr. Tristram tendered his apologies in advance for both meetings.

15. Agenda items for the Annual Council Meeting

Parish Council Precept for 2019/20

Vacancies on the Council

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting

7.00pm on Monday 20th May 2019 for the Annual Council Meeting, followed at 8.00pm by the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

.Signed

A. Small

Dated

20th May 2019

