

OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT 7.30PM

ON MONDAY 17th FEBRUARY 2020 IN THE SOCIAL CLUB

Present: Cllrs. A. Small (Chair), M. Brake, J. Tristram, P. Hopkins, M. Mulrain, C. Whithear
P. Tuke, S. Patch

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

Members of Public: 3

OPEN SESSION

No matters raised

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Apologies

DCC Cllr. M. Shaw

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th January 2020

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

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

With regard to the Landmark Tree matter, the Clerk reported that he had spoken to the landowner but there was no suitable planting site.

5. Reports

a) Police:

The Clerk reported that he had not received any police report.

b) District and County Councillors:

EDDC Cllr. Parr reported that the Budget Cabinet met on the 5th February and the draft General Fund Budget was adopted. They had approved:-

1. the Net Revenue General Fund Budget of £14.777M,

2. a Council Tax increase of £5 a year giving a Band D council tax of £146.78 a year for 2020/21,
3. the Housing Revenue Account Estimates with a net surplus of £0.927M
4. the Net Capital Budget totalling £8.069M for 2020/21.

Notable Items were:-

£42M is being put into the HRA Capital Budget by means of a loan to pay for retrofitting the council's housing stock- insulation, replace gas boilers with electric/ air source heat pumps et c. @ £10k per dwelling [and some grant funding]

£323k has been included in the Budget to go towards delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan.

It was envisaged that next year there will be a £1.6M gap in funding. The Council's Financial Plan for 2021 has three strands:- 1.Commercialisation, 2.Fit for Purpose and 3. Careful Choices.

Commercialisation is about the Council raising more income from:-

- a. Property investments
- b. The Housing Company, East Devon Homes Ltd.
- c Paid for Services eg. Green Waste Scheme. There are a number of opportunities to develop other paid for services.

Fit for Purpose- Services are constantly reviewed to see that they are efficient and value for money

Careful Choices- prioritising spending

EDDC has also adopted a Climate Change Strategy.

The Clerk reported that DCC Cllr. Shaw had sent a monthly report which had been forwarded to all Councillors and also been posted on the website.

c) A35meeting with Highways England

The Clerk reported that the A35 joint parish councils meeting with Highways England had taken place on Thursday 6th February in Kilminster. He had liaised with Cllr. Tuke and Cllr. Patch ahead of the meeting and had produced a report on the A35 issues within Offwell parish. (he gave copies of this report to all Councillors).

The meeting had been well attended with Councillors from Kilminster, Dalwood, Shute, Widworthy and Offwell, as well the Clerk of Widworthy/Shute and himself for Offwell and Kilminster. The two County Councillors Cllr. Chubb and Cllr. Shaw had also been present together with the two Devon Highways Neighbourhood Officers, S. Kelly and D Ashford. Highways England had been represented by Andy Roberts, A35 Route Manager together with 2 other representatives.

Andy Roberts said that he welcomed the opportunity to meet with the five Parish Councils and other official representatives at this meeting and said that he was prepared to meet on this basis every 6 months.

He gave a presentation of the accident and speed statistics for the length of the A35 as it runs through the five parishes. He also gave an update on the study for the proposed Average Speed Camera scheme and that whilst the expected Benefit Cost Ratio of the scheme had increased, said there was still much more work, studies and planning/costings to do before it is submitted to Highways England/Dept. of Transport for final consideration and decision. He felt that the outlook for the scheme was more positive now that it had been

a year ago. The intention of the proposed scheme was that in addition to the average speed cameras that the various speed limits in force at present would be reduced by 10mph.

Following the presentation there was a Question and answer session.

Those present felt that the meeting had been worthwhile and it was agreed that another meeting be held in 6 months time.

Cllr. Patch reported that she had raised the matter of the road sign at Greystone Cross restricting visibility when exiting the side road onto the A35 and also a manhole and water onto the A35 from a ditch below Featherbed Lane. The A35 representative was going to investigate these matters.

Cllr. Tuke had raised the difficulties at road junctions of trying to join onto the A35 because of the volume and speed of the traffic. Andy Roberts said that he was aware of these difficulties but that roundabouts or traffic lights would not be feasible options to improve matters.

The Clerk said that he had raised the matter of there being no pavement or safe access to the eastbound bus stop and that Andy Roberts had asked the Clerk to write a letter to him on this matter and any other safety matters relating to that particular stretch of road. The Clerk said that he would also ask in the letter that they consider reducing the speed limit by a further 10mph down to 40 mph due to the number of junctions, the bend and reduced visibility

d) Other Reports

None

6. Correspondence

The Clerk advised that he had forwarded on to Councillors all email correspondence received.

The items of note were:-

- a) Email from Carol Hayes attaching her report on the Honiton Health Matters Annual Review which had also been posted on the Website.

She had also requested that the Clerk mention to Councillors at each meeting new information posted on the website that Councillors should be reading and be aware of. The clerk asked Councillors to regularly visit the website to keep updated on matters posted.

- b) Email from DCC Highways advising on Drainage Maintenance responsibilities.

7. Finance

a) Current Financial Position

The Clerk advised that there was £7054.55 in the current account (after allowing for uncleared cheques but not allowing for the below payments).

There was now £3,362.09 in the CIL Account

It should be noted that the Council has resolved to make a commitment to spend £2,250 from this CIL monies on playground equipment for the Project.

b) Intervening Expenditure to approve

None

c) Expenditure to be approved

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

1. £318.72 be paid to the Clerk for salary period from 6th January 2020 to 3rd February 2020
2. £100.94 be paid to A. Dimond for copier toner and copier paper
3. £52.90 be paid to the Clerk to reimburse for the purchase of a new imaging drum unit for the copier.

d) Forthcoming expenditure to approve

None

8. Planning Applications

20/0041/FUL-The Grazing Cow Offwell Honiton Devon EX14 9RR

Extension to accommodate toilet and shower facilities and an undercover seating area

Councillors perused the application and resolved to support the application. Proposed by Cllr. Whithear, seconded by Cllr. Mulrain, all in favour.

9. Councillor vacancy

The Clerk reported that he was awaiting the official notification from the EDDC Returning Officer to confirm that either an election was necessary or whether the Council could proceed to fill the vacancy by cooption.

10. Lengthsman

The Clerk reported that Buckerell PC used Chris Drake, the same contractor that Cllr. Patch had suggested. The Clerk had obtained a quotation from him. His rate is £45.00 per hour plus VAT. This is to supply a JCB 4CX wheel digger with a chapter 8 ticketed operator and fuel and also supply Chapter 8 signs. The machines are charged from the time when they leave Land Solutions yard in Newton Poppleford EX10 0BY until the time they return. There is a minimum charge of 8 hours.

The Clerk had contacted a number of other Parish Councils and the only other contractor which was recommended is the one that the Parish Council used last year but he is unable to take on any further work at present.

At the January meeting, it was resolved that the budget for any required ditch works be £500 and for the Chair and Cllr. Patch to agree the ditch work that was required and then appoint the contractor to do the work.

The Clerk had calculated that the £500 would equate to 9.25 hours. Assuming that the travelling time is 40 minutes each way, it would leave approx. just under 8 hours working time.

The Clerk advised that Devon Highways were due to undertake some work this financial year in the Parish dealing with Flooding and blocked drains namely, Blocked Drains at lane from Colwell Barton to Slade Dairy, Offwell. (Devon Highways Reference W201296518). He suggested that the Chair and Cllr. Patch speak to Stephen Kelly, the Devon Highways Officer to check if there was any other work due to be undertaken by Highways so as to avoid any unnecessary duplication of work.

The Chair and Cllr. Patch said that they would shortly meet to inspect what work was required and then meet with and appoint the contractor to proceed with the work.

Cllr. Patch left the meeting at this point.

11. Offwell Haycart

The Clerk advised that the Council's insurers had quoted an approximate annual cost of £25.00 for adding the Haycart to the Council's policy.

Following discussion it was resolved that the Council formally adopt the Haycart. Proposed by Cllr. Whithear, seconded by Cllr. Tristram, all in favour.

Cllr. Whithear said that he would regularly check and report on the condition of the Haycart.

12. Colwell Finger Post

Cllr. Tristram reported that the sign had been bent and damaged by person/persons unknown. Cllr. Tristram had removed the damaged sign and advised that it should be possible to straighten it and then refix it to the post which appeared undamaged. Cllr. Whithear and Cllr. Tristram volunteered to undertake this work. Cllr. Tristram had written an article on this vandalism for inclusion in the next edition of the Link magazine.

13. Parish Council Website

Cllr. Brake advised that he was continuing to work on a website and that the sub committee should have a further meeting to discuss progress. He would contact the others to agree a suitable date.

14. Council Meetings

The Chair queried whether the Social Club was available for the forthcoming meetings as concerns had been expressed about the suitability of the large Village Hall for the monthly Council meetings particularly on cold winter nights. Mrs Richards said that the Social Club was not available for the next meeting but would be for the following months meetings. The Village Hall was available for the next meeting on Monday 16th March and the Social Club would be available on Tuesday 17th March. Following discussion on the suitability of the Hall, it was proposed by Cllr. Tuke that the date of the next meeting be changed to Tuesday, 17th March and that it be held in the Social Club. Seconded by Cllr. Small, all in favour.

15. Parish Council Website

The Clerk advised that Cllr. Brake had done further work on a new website and had requested another meeting of the sub committee to confirm the direction and make further progress.

16. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

None

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be Tuesday, 17th March 2020 at 7.30pm in the Social Club.

The Clerk advised that he was having great difficulty in posting the Minutes, Agendas and Notices in the Notice Board as the doors had swollen so much that it was impossible to open them without the risk of them breaking. Cllr. Whithear advised that nothing could be done to ease the doors until there was a spell of dry weather and the wood dried out, but would then try and rectify the matter.

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed..... Date.....

