

# OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE REMOTELY HELD PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.30PM

via Zoom platform as per legislation contained within section 79 of the Coronavirus Act 2020

**Present:** Cllrs. M. Brake (Vice Chair), P. Hopkins, J. Tristram, C. Whithear  
(remotely)

**In Attendance:** A Jenkins (Clerk)  
(remotely)

**Members of Public:** 1

The Vice Chair welcomed Councillors, to the Council's Zoom virtual remote meeting, made necessary by the current CV-19 situation which requires social distancing measures. He advised Councillors that the meeting is being recorded but that the recording will be erased once the draft minutes of the meeting are approved at the next meeting.

### OPEN SESSION

Questions were asked how the Council proposed to fill the vacancies on Council. The Vice Chair advised that notices would be displayed in the Noticeboard and on the website and that Councillors would be actively contacting parishioners and encouraging them to apply.

### COUNCIL BUSINESS

#### **1. Apologies**

DCC Cllr. M. Shaw

The Clerk read out a letter of resignation he had received from the Chair, Cllr. Small resigning with immediate effect. Cllr. Small was however prepared to continue as the Snow Warden for the time being.

Councillors asked the Clerk to write thanking him for the considerable contribution he had made to the Parish in his 9½ years service as a Councillor and in more recent years as Chair, and to send a Card with the Council's best wishes for the future.

#### **2. Declaration of Interests**

None

#### **3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

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

#### 4. **Matters arising from the Minutes**

The Clerk reported that the Highways Officer had advised that the repair work at the junction of Fern Lane with the A35 was now in the program and that he would try and escalate the priority. We were still waiting a response from Highways on the complaint about the replacement road markings at Four Acres Close following the resurfacing.

The Clerk would now contact the Highways Officer to arrange the 'Doing what matters' meeting. Cllr. Mulrain said that the resurfacing work had been excellent and the contractors had been courteous and helpful to parishioners whilst the road closures/diversions had been in place. He asked that the Council express this to Highways.

#### 5. **Reports**

##### a) **Police**

The Clerk advised that no report had been received.

##### b) **District and County Councillors:**

The Clerk advised that EDDC Cllr. Parr had reported earlier in the month that EDDC had withdrawn from the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. The Full Council voted on the 20 August not to consult residents on the Draft GESP and to withdraw from this project.

The Clerk advised that no report had been received from DCC Cllr. Shaw since his end of August report at the last meeting.

##### c) **Clerk**

None

##### d) **Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group**

Cllr. Mulrain said that there was nothing to report but that everything was in place to support parishioners should there be a resurgence of the virus in East Devon.

##### e) **Highways Matters**

The Clerk reported that notice had been received of a road closure for the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October on Ramsden Lane when South West Water were due to carry out works outside Carpenters. The Clerk believed that this may be in connection with a water leak from a water meter in the highway outside Brentwood.

The Clerk advised that the next Zoom meeting of the Seaton & Colyton Traffic Group was scheduled to take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November. He would forward on the meeting joining details to Cllr. Mulrain and Cllr. Patch when received from DCC Cllr. Shaw.

##### f) **Any Other Reports**

None

#### 6. **To consider matters pertaining to Coronavirus and Offwell Parish**

No matters raised

#### 7. **Correspondence**

The Clerk advised that EDDC had asked if any further sandbags were required for the winter. It was agreed that the Council order 60 sandbags. The Clerk to pick them up and retain 40 at his property and for the Vice Chair to retain 20 at his property in the village centre.

## 8. Finance

### a) Current Financial Position

The Clerk advised that the Council had received the second precept instalment of £3,014 on the 1st September.

The Clerk reported that there was £10,024.99 in the current account (after allowing for 2 uncleared cheques but not allowing for the 10b payments below).

There was still £3,362.09 in the CIL Account.

It should be noted that the Council had resolved to make a commitment to spend £2,250 from this CIL monies on playground equipment for the Project. The Clerk had been advised that a revised playpark scheme was now going ahead with an expected installation/completion in late October. The Play equipment supplier would be invoicing the Parish Council directly for £2,250 in respect of the playground equipment item being purchased using the CIL money. It was agreed that this invoice be paid immediately on receipt.

### b) Expenditure to be approved

- 1) Payment of £318.72 for the Clerk's salary for the month of September
2. Payment of £14.39 to A Jenkins (Clerk) Reimbursement for ZOOM IT Platform Monthly Charge purchased on Clerk's personal card)

Proposed by Cllr. Tristram, seconded by Cllr. Hopkins, all in favour.

### c) Forthcoming expenditure to approve

The Clerk firstly presented the present position against Budget as at 21-09-2020. He advised that the present spend to date was £2,382 with a further projected spend of £5,286 by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, giving a total projected spend of £7,668 against the 20/21 budget of £7,428. The extra spend being due to an anticipated need for training of new councillors and defibrillator battery and pads replacement costs likely to be necessary before the end of the financial year. The projected balance at the end of the financial year would be £4,700.

Councillors discussed the matter of the Website and website accessibility (Item 11). The Clerk and the Vice Chair gave an overview of the present position of replacing the existing website with a new modern website which would be more user friendly with a much clearer layout and accessibility to the various documents, information and links to both local, regional, national and official organisations. Parish websites have become vitally important in the relaying of official information and documents and other matters relating to services and parish organisations and events. Parish and Town Councils now had a requirement that their websites meet new accessibility regulations. In view of this, the Clerk and Vice Chair said that the Council needs to instruct a professional website designer to design a new website to meet our expectations, comply with regulations, be easy to navigate and to update with information. They had researched the matter and believed that Lawson Design based in Kilmington would be the appropriate design company to use, as they are a local Company with prior experience of designing a Parish Council website. They had designed the excellent KilmingtonVillage website which has received good feedback from Kilmington Parish Council and villagers and has just the right modern look etc that we are looking for. They have quoted an estimated cost of £800 - £1,000 for designing a similar new website dependent on the exact amount of content to be copied over. They would be happy to show how we could update the website ourselves or alternatively, as with Kimington Parish Council they could arrange an ongoing monthly fee (presently £50) to cover administering all updates to the website. We would also need to purchase a hosting package which are presently about £80 for one year, £100 for two years dependent on the Dollar to Pound exchange rate and any offers on at time of purchase.

Cllr. Tristram proposed that the Council instruct Lawson Design to proceed to design a new website, seconded by Cllr. Mulrain, all in favour. The Clerk will advise Carol Hayes of the Council's decision and instruct Lawson Design to proceed.

The Clerk advised that Cllr. Small, Cllr. Whithear and himself had inspected the existing Parish Council and Village noticeboards. They had both deteriorated and were no longer fit for purpose. The Clerk had taken measurements for replacement boards and provided details of quotations he had obtained from one of the leading suppliers. Cllr. Whithear said that he was waiting for quotations from alternative suppliers and it was agreed that the matter be further considered at the next meeting. Cllr. Mulrain proposed that Council apply to DCC Cllr. Shaw for a grant of £1,000 from his locality fund towards the cost of new noticeboards, seconded by Cllr. Tristram, all in favour. The Clerk to complete and submit the application.

## **9 Planning applications**

20/1103/FUL Melcombe Offwell Honiton EX14 9SD

20/1039/FUL Land On The East Side Of Tower Road Offwell Honiton

The Clerk advised that these planning applications were still awaiting decisions.

## **10 Councillor vacancies**

The Clerk advised that he would advise EDDC of Cllr. Small's resignation and issue the appropriate notices.

The Clerk advised that he was presently waiting for EDDC to confirm that the Parish Council could proceed to fill by co option the vacancy created by Cllr. Tuke's resignation. As soon as he received this confirmation, he would then draw up an advertisement notice for the two vacancies which Council can proceed to fill by cooption and post this notice on the noticeboard and Website. Councillors and the Clerk also said that they would actively speak to people and encourage them to submit an application.

## **11 Website, Accessibility and Accessible Documents Statement**

Discussed under Item 8c

## **12 Agenda items for next meeting**

None

## **14 Date and Time of next meeting**

The next Zoom meeting will be on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

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