

OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE REMOTELY HELD PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON MONDAY 15th MARCH 2021 AT 7.30PM

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

Present: Cllrs. C. Whithear (Chair), M. Brake, T. Pepper, P. Hopkins,
J. Tristram, P. Sauvage

(remotely)

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

Members of Public: 1
(remotely)

The 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 audio recorded but that the audio recording will be erased once the draft minutes of the meeting are approved at the next meeting.

OPEN SESSION

No matters raised.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Apologies

None

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 15th February 2021

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

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

The Clerk reported that Highways had replaced the damaged grit bin by the Village Hall Cllr. Sauvage advised that his investigations had revealed there were indeed a few properties where the house name had been changed and which would require noting on the Village map. Due to the covid restrictions, he had been unable to meet with Cllr. Tristram and the Clerk to look at amending the existing map so that the Clerk can get new copies made.

The Clerk advised that the Government had not made any statement about passing new legislation extending the permission to hold virtual meetings beyond the 6th May 2021. All Councils and their associations were continuing to lobby the Government on the matter. The Clerk would continue to monitor the situation and keep Councillors informed.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd February 2021

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

6. Matters arising from the Minutes

See Item 13

7. To consider filling the two vacancies which were advertised and self nominations which were received before the closing date.

The Clerk reported that two persons had submitted a self nomination and that the candidates to be considered for co-option were Alison Welch-Thornton and Malcolm Salter. The Clerk advised Councillors of the procedure to be followed and then the Chair invited Ms Welch-Thornton to speak.

Ms Welch-Thornton said that she had first moved to Offwell 40 years ago and after living elsewhere for a few years ago had now returned to Offwell. She used to be a Neighbourhood Watch Co Ordinator for the village many years ago. She cares deeply about the village and the beautiful countryside that surrounds it.

Cllr. Tristram proposed that Ms Welch-Thornton be co-opted, seconded by Cllr. Hopkins, all in favour.

The Clerk asked Ms Welch-Thornton to sign the form of acceptance of office and to display the signed form to her camera so that it could viewed by the Clerk and all Councillors. She did this and the Chair welcomed her to join the meeting as a Councillor.

The Chair then invited Mr Salter to speak.

Mr Salter said that whilst he was relatively new to the village he had lived in East Devon virtually all his life. He is retired and wants to help the village. The environment is important to him and he regularly walks around the village and the surrounding lanes collecting the roadside litter/rubbish.

Cllr. Sauvage proposed that Mr Salter be co-opted, seconded by Cllr. Pepper, all in favour.

The Clerk asked Mr Salter to sign the form of acceptance of office and to display the signed form to his camera so that it could viewed by the Clerk and all Councillors. He did this and the Chair welcomed him to join the meeting as a Councillor.

8. Reports

a) **Police**

No report received

b) District and County Councillors:

EDDC Cllr. Parr advised that EDDC had resolved to increase the precept by 3.4%. The Chief Executive had recently reported that there was poor staff morale with some disturbing reports of bullying and harassment. The Scrutiny Committee were very concerned and decided that senior management should fully investigate the matter and report back to them with a proposed plan of action to resolve any identified issues and to improve the staff morale.

DCC Cllr. Shaw had sent a written report. The County Council have had to increase spending on Social Care and had resolved to increase the Council Tax by just under 5%. Councillors raised the matter of sub standard pot hole repair work which had been reported to the Highways Officer. Cllr. Shaw will liaise with the Officer and ask him to respond.

c) Clerk – New Website

The Clerk reported that the new website seems to be working well and more positive feedback had been received

d) Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group

Cllr. Whithear advised no requests for support had been received.. The support group was ready and prepared to deal with any requests.

e) Highways Matters

The Clerk reported that the collapsed road edge at the Fern lane junction with the A35 had been repaired.

As regards the problems in Mill Lane where water has scoured out the road edges, the Clerk had sent an email to the Highways Officer attaching a map showing the exact local locations of the various problems with some photographs. He was waiting a response.

f) Any Other Reports

None

9. To consider any matters pertaining to Coronavirus and Offwell Parish

No matters raised.

10. Correspondence

The Clerk advised that he was checking the dates of any forthcoming DALC courses for new Councillors and Chairs, and would advise.

He was due to undertake two training courses himself for creating Word and Excel documents which will meet the new Accessibility requirements. The cost of each course was £36.00 and Councillors agreed with his suggestion that Offwell PC pay for one course and Kilmington PC for the other.

He had also signed up for some free Parish Online mapping courses which had been arranged by DALC.

Other correspondence had been forwarded onto Councillors

11. Finance

a) Current Financial Position

The Clerk reported that there is £4,671.98 in the current account (not allowing for any payments to be approved at this meeting)

There is £112.09 in the CIL Account.

b) Expenditure to be approved for which bills have been received

1) Payment of £318.72 for the Clerk's salary for the month of March 2021

2) Payment of £14.39 to A Jenkins (Clerk) Reimbursement for ZOOM IT Platform Monthly Charge purchased on Clerk's personal card)

3) Payment of £56.00 to A Jenkins (Clerk) for office allowance for the period December 2020 to March 2021 (4 months)

4) Payment of £18.00 to C. Whithear for purchase of engraved plaque for the noticeboard

5) Payment of £36.00 to SLCC for Accessibility documents training webinar for the Clerk.

Payments proposed by Cllr. Brake, seconded by Cllr. Tristram, all in favour.

12. Planning applications

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

Proposed erection of a farm worker's dwelling and erection of a replacement farm storage building.

Revised plans had been submitted with some alterations to the material finishes on the proposed building. Council resolved that this did not alter the Council's previously submitted comments on the application.

13. Haycart

The Chair reported that he had spoken to the Wheelwright who hopes to have completed the new haycart by the end of April. They had discussed and agreed on additional security measures – fitting padlocks and engraving the wheels. The Wheelwright will remove the old haycart when he delivers the new one.

14. Councillor email addresses

The Clerk advised that although Just Host had previously indicated that they were prepared to offer an email only hosting package, they had now said that this was not possible and therefore the Council now had to arrange an email hosting package with another provider. Unfortunately, Weebly (the new website hosting company) do not offer email hosting, so the Clerk is investigating other alternatives and will report further at the next meeting.

15. Agenda items for next meeting

Councillor email addresses

PART TWO Items which may be taken in the absence of the press and public. Cllr.

Whithear proposed that the Council 'Resolve that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for

the following items as they involve the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Seconded by Cllr. Brake, all in favour.

The Clerk left the meeting at this point and was put in the waiting room.

NJC National Salary Award 2020/21 Payscale for Clerks- (Implementation backdated from April 2020)

Councillors resolved to implement the salary award 20/21 payscale backdated to the 1st April 2020 and for a payment in respect of the backdated amount to be paid to the Clerk this month.

The Clerk rejoined the meeting at this point and was informed of the Council's decision. He thanked them for their kind consideration.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Zoom meeting – Monday 19th April 2021 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed.....*C. Whithear*..... Date.....*30th April 2021*.....