

# OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Tristram, P. Hopkins, A. Welch-Thornton & T. Pepper

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

**Members of Public:** 1

Cllr. Tristram ( the Vice Chair), chaired the meeting

He welcomed everyone to the Council meeting and outlined / reminded everyone of the Covid-19 measures which had been adopted for Council meetings.

### OPEN SESSION

D. Blackmore mentioned that there had recently been a lot of mud on Ramsden Land but that this had now been cleared up.

### COUNCIL BUSINESS

**1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons given (LGA 1972 S.85 (1))**

Cllrs. M. Norfolk, J. Evans, J, and C. Whithear had tendered their apologies. The personal reasons given by them all were accepted and approved by Council.

**2. 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)**

None

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

The minutes were declared a true record of the proceedings, proposed by Cllr. Pepper seconded by Cllr. Welch-Thornton, all in favour.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes**

None

**5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Deferred to next meeting as insufficient Councillors who were present at that meeting

**6. Matters arising from the Minutes**

Deferred to next meeting

## **7. Reports:**

### **a) Police**

The Clerk advised that he had received a Newsletter from the Police but yet again it only showed general crime information for the whole of Honiton Rural and what it showed was for October 2022. Also the Police.Uk website it referred to gave no more recent crime information for Offwell. He said that he had been down to Honiton to speak to the Police at one of their Meet the Police events to discuss this and other matters associated with the Newsletters but there had been no Police present. He will attend one of their future events in the near future.

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

DCC Cllr. Hartnell had submitted a written report which had been circulated and published on the website. This had included a report on the DCC approved budget for 2023/24 and the need for the council to make savings in the region of £47.5 million from elsewhere to balance the books. Most of these savings are earmarked to come from adult social care and they have a series of consultations on proposals to make savings in some specific services.

He said that the Chancellor had announced in the budget earlier in the day that Devon would receive an extra £9.4 million specifically to fund vital highways maintenance improving the condition of the highway network.

EDDC Cllr. Parr gave a verbal report and said that EDDC at its Full Council meeting on Wednesday 22, February, had approved the 2023/24 budget which would result in a (£5 a year (3.19%) increase in a Band D property council tax increase. She mentioned that the District Council were highlighting to residents the need to have the required Voter ID in order to vote at the forthcoming local District, Town and Parish Council elections on the 4<sup>th</sup> May. Full details of the acceptable voter ID etc can be accessed on the the EDDC website and will also be shown in forthcoming email newsletters to residents.

Cllr. Parr said that she would forward a full written report to the Clerk.

### **c) Clerk – May 2023 Parish Council elections**

The Clerk reported that he had received the Nomination Packs for the Parish Council elections on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and gave packs to those councillors present. He will forward digital packs to those Councillors not present at the meeting. He reported that Cllr. Sauvage had advised that he was not standing for re-election. He is posting on both the noticeboards and the website, details of the elections and for any persons interested in standing for election to contact him for further information and a nomination pack.

He reminded Councillors that their term of office will cease on the 4<sup>th</sup> May and that if they wish to continue as a Councillor they have to submit a nomination form to stand for election. . Also that nomination papers must be hand delivered to the Returning Officer, EDDC, Blackdown House, Border Road, Honiton,EX14 1EJ between the hours of 10am and 4pm from 27 March 2023 until 4 pm on Tuesday, 4th April. No forms will be accepted before or after that those times and dates. The official notices of election will be issued by EDDC on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and he will ensure that they are posted on both the noticeboards and the Parish Council website on that date.

He said that that he will also post on the website details of the Voter ID requirements etc.

**d) Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group**

None

**e) Highways Matters**

**1) Village Traffic awareness**

The Clerk advised that he had not received any confirmation of receipt from Devon Highways of the 20mph speed limit application and additional information that he had submitted. He asked DCC Cllr. Hartnell if he could speak to Highways to check that it had been received.

**2) A35 submission to National Highways**

The Clerk advised that the Chair of Kilmington Parish Council would be contacting National Highways shortly for the timetable for their site visits to all the parishes along the A35 route. Also to arrange a further meeting of all the parishes involved.

**7) Other Highways matters**

Cllr. Tristram advised that he had encountered problems with the Devon Highways online problem reporting system. DCC Cllr. Hartnell said he would look into it and asked Cllr. Tristram to advise him of the highways problems he had been trying to report.

**f) Footpaths Report**

Cllr. Tristram advised that he was prepared to resume being the Footpaths officer. Cllr. Pepper proposed, seconded by Cllr. Welch-Thornton, all in favour.

**g) Any Other Reports**

None

**8. Correspondence**

The Clerk advised that he had received correspondence from a resident asking if there is anything the Council can do to 'persuade' the power company to plant a row of trees or shrubs create all round the year cover alongside the sub power station because since the removal of the large trees we are faced with a very ugly power station to see? Councillors asked the Clerk to approach the utility company on the matter.

The Clerk reported that he had received correspondence from Sarah Banks, a resident regarding the matter -of - If you have been into Offwell Woods recently, you will probably have noticed the unfriendly 'Keep out' signs that have been erected there. The new owners of a large section of the woods want to stop anyone from enjoying the footpaths that go through their land and, as well as putting up signs, have also filed an application with Devon County Council to prevent any further rights of access being accrued. A group of villagers had therefore decided to fight back by filing their own application to Devon County Council for the footpaths to be recognised. They had submitted a request that the matter be discussed by the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that he had been in contact with DCC Public Rights of Way (PROW) officers to obtain further information/details on the matter of the land concerned and the relevant tracks and paths and also landowner statements made to DCC.

He said that he was waiting further information from the PROW team and suggested that the Council hold an extraordinary meeting in early April to discuss the matter with an open session for members of Public to speak on the issue. In the meantime he would continue his investigations into the matter to establish the facts and seek advice from the Open Spaces organisation. He would then give a report at the start of the extraordinary meeting. Cllr. Pepper proposed that the Extraordinary meeting be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, seconded by Cllr.

Welch-Thornton, all in favour. The Clerk said he would arrange the meeting for that date with just that item on the agenda and and planning matters which had been received and needed to be discussed.

## **9. Update of standing orders**

Deferred to next meeting

## **10. Finance**

### **a) Current Financial Position**

The Clerk reported that there is £2,157.43 in the general account and £12.09 in the CIL account.

### **b) Expenditure to be ratified**

None

### **c) Expenditure to be approved for which bills have been received**

- 1) Payment of £456.80 for the Clerk's salary for the month of March 2023

Payments proposed by Cllr. Pepper, seconded by Cllr. Hopkins. All in favour.

## **11. Planning Applications**

### **a) 21/1798/FUL - Land On The East Side Of Tower Road Offwell Honiton Change of use of an existing agricultural building and associated works for use as a Livestock Collection Centre.**

The Clerk reported that he had noted that a substantial amount of works had and were being carried out on the site. He had emailed and spoken to the Planning Officer as no documents were shown on the online planning file in relation to these works or any of the planning conditions which had been imposed when permission had been granted in March 2022. The Planning Officer said that the applicants had not submitted any of the reports or the detailed strategies required before any works commenced and as such the applicants were in breach of many of the planning conditions. The Officer had therefore instructed the Planning Enforcement Officer to visit the site and investigate the breaches and to stop the works until the required reports and strategies had been submitted to Planning for consideration and approval.

The Clerk advised that local residents had also reported the matter to the Planning Officer and also to The Health and Safety Executive in respect of the works carried out constructing the two passing bays and also the trench being excavated across the field crossing over the line of the High Pressure Gas Pipeline. This matter had also been reported to the National Grid due to the safety concerns of nearby residents.

The Clerk said that he would keep in contact with the Planning Officer and advise further following the Planning enforcement officer's report back to Planning.

## **10. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Update of Standing Orders

Communication with the community, especially to comments on social media

## **11. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Extraordinary Meeting 7.30pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Ordinary Monthly Meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed *J. Tristram*

Date *19/04/2023*