

OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs. J. Tristram, M. Norfolk & J. Evans

In Attendance: A Jenkins (Clerk)

Members of Public: 1

Cllr. Tristram, 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

A resident living at the bottom of the lane down from the Church spoke about the access issues caused by vehicles parking near the church at the top of the lane. It has happened on a few nights recently where the parked vehicles have almost blocked the lane by the Church causing cars great difficulty in getting through. This was causing access problems for residents living down the hill from the Church and also concerns that ambulances and fire engines would be unable to get through in the event of an emergency.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

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

Cllrs. C. Whithear, P. Sauvage, P. Hopkins, C. Whitehead and T. Pepper 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 19th October 2022

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

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

The Clerk will advise re the Cloud Next spam security filters at the next meeting.

5. Reports:

a) Police

No report received. The Clerk was consulting with other Clerks on a joint approach to the Police requesting that they provide Parish Councils with a regular report.

b) District and County Councillors

The Clerk advised that no reports had been received from the County & District Councillors.

c) Clerk

None

d) Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group

None

e) Highways Matters

1) Village Traffic awareness

Cllr. Norfolk reported that the petition had been drawn and had already received many signatures in support including many from people visiting the parish.

2) Additional safety signage on entering the village, e.g. Please slow down children and animals

Cllr. Evans had obtained some costings for signs for the 20 is plenty campaign. He said there are many different options and prices but he looked for the cheapest way of producing the signs with reasonable longevity.

He had found a company who can produce the sign on a 5mm foam board which is suitable for outdoor use. To produce 8 signs would cost £93.86 including VAT and delivery. If however other villages would also like some then the price will come down. The Clerk to enquire if other neighbouring villages would be interested in making a joint purchase.

3) Parking issues near the Church at top of the lane

Councillors shared the concerns expressed by the resident in the open session. The Chair said that he would speak to the owners of the parked vehicles causing the problems and request that they park elsewhere /more considerately.

4) Speedwatch scheme

The Clerk advised that it was possible to apply to the Police for a Speedwatch scheme but that Speedwatch was administered/governed by the Police. They would have to approve the application and the volunteers.

The Clerk to obtain further details of the scheme.

5) Devon Highways Road Warden Scheme

Councillors said they did not believe that there would be any persons prepared to volunteer for a road warden scheme.

6) A35 Meeting with National Highways 27th October 2022

The Clerk advised that he had attended the meeting along with Cllr. Tristram and Cllr. Sauvage.

He reported that the meeting had been well attended with representatives from most of the various Parish and Town Councils from Chideock to Honiton, relevant County Councillors, Cllr. Arnott (leader of EDDC), DCC Highways Officers and a representative from Richard Foord, M.P.,s office.

Ben Hampson and Jack from National Highways (NH) had addressed the meeting and outlined the NH plan for the A35.

They had explained that they had two different budgets:-

a. Safety and Congestion - Safety is reliant upon accident data; and attention is to areas of greatest concern, using “Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI)” statistics to identify areas of greatest concern. This budget is largely “reactive” and requires an evidenced accident profile.

Its important to note that safety and perception of danger are not synonymous when it comes to taking safety interventions

b. Severance (User and Communities) - This budget could be considered as “proactive” and can use anecdotal evidence and reports from customers and stakeholders to initiate assessments. It looks to address community issues such as severance where Villages are severed in half by the A35 , crossings, walking and cycling.

They were asked whether with the new government changes, would NH budgets be affected? They said that NH remain confident that their budgets are “ring-fenced” for the current RIS spending (2020 - 2025) and that budgets will continue to be allocated in future RIS periods of 5 years and not annually.

The Safety scheme, currently coming to the end of the feasibility stage, will look at a range of measures. Improved lining signing, visibility as well as speed reductions and average speed cameras through the villages however, no one specific safety solution suited all sites, and that the consideration would always be for the route overall not specific bits.

The detailed design work should be completed in 23/24, with some work likely to start at the end of 23 and the work carrying on for 2 to 3 years over the whole route of the scheme. The scheme would follow a similar approach through the entire route.

They were asked why do minor accidents not feature as part of the safety evidence, as villagers are often aware of many dangerous situations for potential serious accidents?

They said that Safety is evidence lead and requires an evidenced accident profile, they use numerous data sources and utilise all available data, if incidents are not reported then they have no way of knowing they occurred.

Any local knowledge of unreported minor accidents can be submitted by the Parish council as part of a Severance issue submission.

It was proposed that “Village Walk-throughs” with NH representatives would be a good basis for informing NH of the problems and they agreed that they would welcome such village walk throughs going forward in order to best understand the severance issues that each village/parish face.

The Clerk said that the meeting was very informative and that NH wished to have further meetings in 2023 with the walk throughs to take place in early 2023. Cllr. Ball, the Chair of Kilmington Parish Council had chaired the meeting and he would continue to direct follow up with NH and will be pushing for their 'walk through' villages visits to be done as soon as possible next year.

The Clerk said that he was presently researching accident and other anecdotal evidence in order to prepare a detailed report for submission to NH.. This would set out how the A35 affects Offwell Parish and the improvements and speed limits etc the Parish Council are seeking them to make and would form the basis of our discussions with them for the Offwell Village walk through. He will forward the report to Councillors for approval ahead of submission.

7) Other Highways matters

None

f) Footpaths Report

No report received

g) Any Other Reports

None

6. Correspondence

The Clerk advised that he had received an email from Cllr. Whitehead resigning his position as a Councillor for personal reasons with immediate effect .

7. Finance

a) Current Financial Position

The Clerk reported that there is £4,127.18 in the current account..

The CIL account balance remains unchanged at £12.09

b) Expenditure to be ratified

None

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

1) Payment of £333.44 for the Clerk's salary for the month of November 2022

2) Payment of £21.57 to the Clerk to reimburse for renewal of the Just Host domain name *offwell.org*.

3) Payment of £40.00 to The Information Commissioner for renewal of the Data Protection Registration.

Payments proposed by Cllr. Evans, seconded by Cllr. Norfolk. All in favour.

8. Planning Applications

a) Ref. No. 22/2122/FUL – Weetwood, Offwell EX14 9SB

Erection of two storey 4-bed detached dwelling, erection of a detached single garage and demolition of existing dwelling.

The Clerk advised that revised plans had been submitted by the applicant.

Cllr Norfolk proposed following consideration of the revised plans that the Parish Council now withdraw it's previous objection to the application, seconded by Cllr. Evans, all in favour.

9. Devon Community Resilience Forum virtual event 14-16 November

Review of this forum event and consideration of an Emergency Plan Policy deferred to the January meeting.

10. Replacement of Cleave Cross postbox

The Clerk advised that he had contacted Royal Mail a number of times over the last month requesting that the post box be replaced and had now finally received an email reply.

They had advised that the details of our request for a replacement box had been passed to the relevant Collections Planning Manager who'll carry out the necessary investigations to determine if the post box will be replaced.

They informed us; as part of our regulatory requirements, they must ensure that there's a post-box within half a mile of at least 98% of all 'delivery points' (usually a customer's letter-box)

nationally. If the current posting facilities in the above-mentioned area already meet these requirements, the box may not be replaced.

If the Manager believes the box warrants a replacement, they'll be required to liaise with the Highway Authority to obtain clearance for a proposed site, as well as contacting the utility companies to ensure that the proposed site doesn't interfere with existing pipes or cables, etc. This process can take up to twenty five weeks should our request be approved.

With the above in mind, if a post box hasn't been installed within 25 weeks from today, they say it's likely that the current facilities in the area already meet their regulatory requirements and a new post box isn't warranted.

11. Warm Welcome campaign

The Clerk gave brief details of the Operation Rudolf Christmas support event and the Libraries For Life campaign providing a warm space to meet, a warm drink.

12. Venue & Dates for Council Meetings in 2023

The Clerk reported that it was not possible for the Council to revert to holding it's council meetings in the Social Club or the Jubilee Room as the Club was not allowed to sub let. The Council would have to continue holding it's meetings in the Village Hall.

The meeting dates agreed for 2023 are:-

January	Wednesday 18 th	July	Wednesday 19 th
February	Wednesday 15 th	August	Wednesday 16 th
March	Wednesday 15 th	September	Wednesday 20 th
April	Wednesday 19 th	October	Wednesday 18 th
May	Wednesday 17 th	November	Wednesday 15 th
June	Wednesday 21 st	December	Wednesday 6 th

13. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Positon against budget

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

7th December 2023 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed *J. Tristram*

Date *18/01/2023*