

# OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MONTHLY ORDINARY MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2022 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Tristram, A. Welch-Thornton, M. Norfolk, P. Hopkins,  
J. Evans

**In Attendance:** A Jenkins (Clerk), EDCC Cllr. Parr

**Members of Public:** 0

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

No matters raised

### COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. **To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons given (LGA 1972 S.85 (1))**  
Cllrs. C. Whithear, C. Whitehead, P. Sauvage, T. Pepper, EDCC. Cllr. P. Arnott,  
DCC Cllr. M. Hartnell
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 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022**  
Cllr. Norfolk proposed that the minutes be declared a true record of the proceedings,  
seconded by Cllr. Hopkins, all in favour.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes**  
None
5. **Reports:**
  - a) **Police**  
No report received.
  
  - b) **District and County Councillors**

EDDC Cllr. Parr reported that EDDC were seeking to build a new town in East Devon in the North West of East Devon and were also looking at development sites in other areas.

EDDC Cllr. Arnott had submitted a written report which had been circulated to Councillors.

c) **Clerk**

None

d) **Offwell Neighbourhood Support Group**

None

e) **Highways Matters**

The Clerk advised that he had written to both DCC Cllr. Hartnell and the Highways Officer seeking answers to the matters the Parish council had raised some months previously and also because of the recent serious accident on the lane running from the A35 to the Bishops Tower.

The Highways Officer had replied stating with regards to the grit bin, the location that was chosen was not appropriate as it was too close to the carriageway so could not be accommodated there. The other location suggested on site was a private junction so we could not put it there either. After the site meeting he drove to Colwell and back to Offwell, there were actually two grit bins near the location the Council want a grit bin. One was on the way to Colwell the other was heading back to Offwell, he did not think another grit bin is needed at the location.

With regards to the stop/give way sign, he has spoken to the traffic team and they advised there are already give way markings at this location and a sign was not necessary here.

With regards to the lane that runs from the A35 to Bishops Tower, the view is that this lane has always been like this and there would not be any reason to put a no through road restriction on this section of road. The current financial situation also means that new schemes such as altering the restrictions on roads need to be considered on a priority basis and lane in question would not be considered a priority.

With regards to the potholes here some defects had been reported previously however the contractor would only repair those that meet defect criteria, a 40mm vertical edge and at least 300mm in diameter. He will have another look and see if any meet defect criteria and if so these will be sent to the contractor to repair.

Councillors and the Clerk felt that this response from Highways was insufficient and not satisfactory but that this should be discussed with Cllr. Hartnell at the next meeting he attends.

f) **Footpaths Report**

No report received

g) **Any Other Reports**

None

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

None

## **7. Correspondence**

Correspondence had been forwarded onto Councillors. An email had been received DCC regarding Emergency Planning/Flood Warden. The Clerk said he was concerned that the Parish council had no Emergency Plan policy and that the parish council should consider the matter. He said that he would research a suitable policy for the Council and agenda the matter for a future meeting.

## **8. Finance**

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

The Clerk reported that there is £3,021.26 in the current account, not allowing for any payments to be approved at the meeting.

The CIL account balance remains unchanged at £12.09

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

1) Payment of £416.80 for the Clerk's salary for the month of August 2022

2) Payment of £25.00 to the Clerk to reimburse for purchase of the Garden Centre gift voucher for P & M Jolly.

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

### **c) Option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements.**

The Clerk had forwarded to Councillors the email received from the SAAA. He explained that the SAAA are responsible for appointing external auditors for all smaller local authorities and that they appoint the auditors for a 5 year period. The next 5 year period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27 and the auditor procurement exercise is now proceeding.

However, all authorities are given the option to opt out of the central procurement and appointment scheme and appoint their own external auditor for the next 5 year period.

The process to do so is very complex, onerous and costly for smaller authorities and the advice from NALC, DALC and the Clerk is for Offwell to remain opted in to SLCC is to remain opted in to the central scheme. Cllr. Norfolk proposed that the Council remain opted in, seconded Cllr. Evans, all in favour.

## **9. Planning Applications**

### **a) Ref. No. 22/1627/FUL – Old Parsonage Bungalow Wilmington EX14 9SG**

Construction of a replacement single storey 2-bed detached dwelling with associated drainage works and demolition of existing dwelling.

Cllr. Hopkins proposed supporting the application, seconded by Cllr. Welch-Thornton, all in favour.

## **10. Councillor Training**

The Clerk advised that he was awaiting confirmation from DALC as to suitable October dates for the training

## **11. Website & Councillor email accounts and email issues.**

It had been reported to the Clerk that some Councillors had received scam phishing emails supposedly from another Councillor asking if they could do him a favour as he was busy in a meeting. The favour was to purchase some I tune gift cards.

The Clerk said that this type of phishing email was now becoming a common and often reoccurring problem, particularly for business organisations. It was not the case that the organisations website/email system had been hacked but that the criminals were using publicly available information published on the organisations website. In the case of the Parish Council the Councillors names and email addresses are published on the Offwell website. The criminals then use this information to send an email from Councillor A but using a fake email address to other Councillors

proper official email accounts. If the recipient Councillors reply to that email then they are drawn into further emails trying to get them to purchase voucher type items so that the criminals can elicit the voucher details or attempt to get financial information.

The Clerk said that it is not possible to prevent receiving such emails but the important thing to do is be very vigilant when receiving and opening emails, to look carefully at the actual email address it has actually come from. If it is not from the Councillors official email address then delete it immediately and do NOT reply to it. He said that the wording and greetings used in these emails often seem strange and usually indicate that it a fake email. Cllr. Norfolk said that he was also aware of these type of emails and echoed the advice that the Clerk had given.

#### **12. Offwell Haycart Planting & Sponsorship**

The Clerk had previously reported that he had approached Mr & Mrs Collins of Honiton Garden Centre to ask if they would sponsor the planting costs of the Haycart. He had spoken to them again and they had now very kindly agreed to sponsor the planting to a cost of £170 for the coming year.

The Clerk and Chair would be meeting with them shortly to agree the details.

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

Asset Register

An any other business item

Documentation

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

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

The Meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed *J. B. Tristram*

Date **28/09/2022**