

Otterford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12 February 2019 at 19.30 hrs.

Present: OPC Councillors Mike Canham(Chairman), Rosie Viant (Vice Chairman), Steve Campbell, Charlie Field, and Phil Wright; TDBC Councillor Ross Henley, the Clerk and one parishioner.

Item	Detail	Action
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Community Time

A parishioner, Mr Godsmark, was concerned about the poor state of Cobblers Cottage, in Bishopswood, which was deteriorating. Cllr Canham explained that the Council had raised the matter with the TDBC empty homes officer some years ago, following earlier complaints received, but they had taken no action after discussion with the owner.

He also asked about the bridleway and was updated (see 3.2.1 below). The Clerk asked him, as one of the Trustees of the Otterhead Estate, to note the poor condition of the footpath around the lower lake. She was concerned that someone would injure themselves as it was now so uneven and falling into the lake in places. If the Trustees needed some volunteers to help repair the path, she would try to muster some. He agreed to raise this at a future meeting.

Reports from other organisations:

SCC Cllr John Thorne was unable to attend but sent a written report:

- 2019-20 finances – the current year's out-turn forecast is now for a near-£1m underspend. This means £1m could have been spent on services which have been cut. The underspend will probably be put towards the £15m funding gap for the coming financial year. Of the £15m, SCC have already made £7m savings through some of the emergency measures approved in September. This leaves £8m of savings to be found; £6m from back office and monetary functions, £2m affecting frontline services, including further reductions of £90k in verge cutting, £80k on urban gully cleaning and £80k on flood schemes. Cllr Thorne has expressed strong reservations that these sorts of cuts are impacting unfairly on rural communities as opposed to urban areas. Rural council taxpayers pay the same council tax as urban residents but are not getting the same level of services for their money. This vi
- Broadband – The members' briefing paper on Connecting Devon and Somerset /Gigaclear which was promised for January did not materialise. It will be going to the Scrutiny Committee in March. ew has been refuted by SCC officers. The budget will be debated and voted upon at the full council meeting on February 20.
- Highways capital grant – SCC appear to be adding on works to existing major road schemes such as the Junction 25 enhancement to use up this fund.
- Junction 25 – the work is planned to start on site in March. ERDF grant has been accepted, and a decision to accept TDBC's contribution was taken on Friday.
- Volunteer drivers – SCC are seeking people to help drive people to vital medical appointments, day care centres, schools, etc. Mileage will be reimbursed at up to 50p per mile. Drivers must be over 18, have a four-door car, a current driving licence and commit to as little as one hour per week. www.somersetvolunteer.co.uk.

- SEN shop - An online one-stop-shop for education, health, and social care information for children with Special Education Needs has been launched. Called the Local Offer website it can be found here: <https://choices.somerset.gov.uk/025/local-offer/>. The site gives clear information on what provision is available across the county and how to access it.

Cllr Ross Henley (TDBC) – reported that SCC had discussed gritting routes at its most recent Cabinet Meeting and had provisionally decided to re-instate gritting from April 2019 (ie for next winter). Cllr Henley believed that this was because SCC had received many complaints about the effect of gritting cuts during the recent poor weather. The Council welcomed this reversal but was concerned there was still plenty of the current winter to come this year (see item 3.2.3 below).

Avon & Somerset Constabulary – not present.

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of Interest

1. Cllr Canham is a member of the Otterford Parish Hall Committee

2. Cllrs Canham and Viant are Trustees of the Otterford Charity

There were no further Declarations of Interest in agenda items that accord with any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (s31 & 33 of the Localism Act 2011).

3. Meeting of 8 January

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

3.2 Matters Arising:

3.2.1 Bridleway – Peter Hoblely (SCC) had apologised for the delay and explained that his engineer was very busy. He would chase him.

**Clerk
(Mar
PC)**

3.2.2 Village Green Lease – this had been signed.

- 3.2.3 Salting and gritting roads – Recent snow and icy conditions had caused significant problems in the parish, with a number of near accidents including the recycling lorry skidding, narrowly missing a car and a wall and getting stuck broadside across Royston Rd for nearly three hours. The Clerk had contacted SWP who had not been advised by SCC that the village was no longer being gritted!
- Cllr Wright, now an approved snow plough sub-contractor, had not been contacted by Skanska to clear the roads. Clerk to raise with SCC. **Clerk**
- SCC had refused the Council's request to pay for extending the grit run through Bishopswood. The Clerk had appealed against this decision on 15 January, but no reply has been received to date: she will chase. **Clerk**
- The salt bins had still not been re-filled. Clerk to chase this as well. **Clerk**
- Councillors have continued to receive complaints from parishioners about the lack of gritting through Bishopswood. The Council noted the refusal by SCC to add Royston Road back in to the gritting programme – despite the gritting lorry passing through the village between gritting elsewhere, and the Parish Council's offer to pay for the salt - and the continuing absence of Royston Road from the gritting programme this winter (see Cllr Henley's comments above). It was agreed that these complaints should be directed to the appropriate authority: that is to the County Council: and further agreed to issue a statement to CBO News, and the Somerset County Gazette, with a copy to Rebecca Pow MP. **Clerk**
- 3.2.4 Fly tipping in the Goyle – the Clerk had that day seen IDVerde (TDBC contractors) collecting the 5 tyres dumped last month by Star Mobile Tyres. She had also chased up James Hay at TDBC about enforcement action against the company for fly tipping: his feedback is awaited. **(Clerk)**
- 3.2.5 Corfe Hill fingerpost – Cllr Wright to speak to his contact who might be able to repair it. **PW**

4. Planning

- 4.1 New Applications: 29/19/0002/LB Erection of a single storey extension on the northwest elevation with various internal and external alterations at Woodend Farm, Whatley Rd, Bishopswood, and 29/19/0001 Erection of single storey lean-to extension on the front elevation at Woodend Farm, Whatley Rd, Bishopswood. These applications related to the farmhouse and were revised from an earlier application which had been withdrawn and to which the Council had objected. The Council agreed this was a more modest and sympathetic application to a listed building and would not materially change its appearance. It would therefore make no comment on the application, other than to remind of the Grade 2 listing. **Clerk**
- However, the Clerk was asked to contact the planning officer to ask about a new access route which was shown on the plans in blue (ie not included in the application) accessed from the parking area behind 1-3 Woodcroft Meadows, and running alongside the back of the village hall car park. **Clerk**
- 4.2 Applications granted - none

5. Other Matters –

5.1 Assets of Community Value – TDBC has advised that land/properties nominated as Assets of Community Value have been removed from the Register at the end of five years. It was agreed in principle that Bishopswood Chapel, Otterford Playing Fields and the Candlelight Inn should be re-nominated under the ACV scheme. Each of the Trustees/owners to be contacted by the Council for prior discussion. **Clerk (Cllrs)**

5.2 Holman Clavel 6-monthly inspection – Cllrs Campbell and Viant submitted a report following their inspection. There were no significant outstanding issues.

5.3 Trees at Holman Clavel – BoskyTrees' survey report was considered. It was agreed to obtain three quotes for the necessary 'non-urgent' work recommended. **Clerk**

5.4 Local elections 2019 - District and Parish Council elections would be held on 2 May. The notice of election would be published on 18 March and then nominations from those wishing to stand as a councillor can be submitted. All current councillors wishing to stand again have to stand down and be re-elected. Nomination packs will be sent to the Clerk when the notice of election is published.

5.5 Grants Policy & Parish Council Grants 2018/19.
It was agreed to continue the existing grants policy for a further three years – with annual grants to each of St Leonard's Church (£150), Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance (£150), St Margaret's Hospice (£150), and the Blackdown Support Group (£100). A contingency of £200 will be held annually to consider any requests for one-off grants. **Clerk**
No specific requests had been received during 2018/19, and no additional grants will be made.

6. Correspondence

The Clerk had received a thank you letter from the Royal British Legion for the donation (jointly with Buckland St Mary PC) from the WW1 raffle. The Council had not been successful in the draw for a place at the Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

7. Financial matters

7.1 Monthly financial summary – noted.

7.2 Payment of invoices – agreed.

7.3 Credit Card - investigations into obtaining a Council credit card are ongoing. **Clerk**

8. Any Other Business

8.1 None.

9. Date & Time of next meeting:

7.30pm, Tuesday March 12 2019 in the Wright Room, Otterford Parish Hall.

All