

Otterford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 November 2023 at 1930 hrs in Otterford Parish Hall

Present: OPC Councillors Mike Canham (Chairman), Charlie Field (Vice Chairman), Lucy Montgomery, John Marsden, and Simon MacLeod, SC Councillor Sarah Wakefield, one parishioner and the Clerk.

Item	Detail	Action
	<u>Community Time</u> <p>Cllr Wakefield explained the difficult situation vis-a-vis the Council's budget for 2024-25. The letter from the Leader of the Council to parish and town councils advising that next year the Council might only be able to provide services which they were statutorily obliged to provide was discussed. It was not clear at present exactly what services would be cut. OPC already carried out and funded some activities and could not commit to doing more without specifics. Cllr Wakefield said this should be clearer when SC receive notice of the government settlement before Christmas. The budget would be set in February.</p> <p>Mr Godsmark attended on behalf of the Trustees of the Otterhead Estate Trust. He reported that work replacing the second footbridge was nearly complete and the hydro electric scheme was finished apart from some wiring work which would be done in December.</p> <u>Reports from other organisations</u> <p>None.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><u>Apologies</u><p>None.</p><u>Declarations of Interest</u><p>Cllrs Canham and Montgomery are OPC-nominated (nominative) Trustees of the Otterford Charity. Cllr Canham is Chairman of Otterford Parish Hall Committee. He represents OPC at the BHPN and is also a member of the Steering Group, and a representative on the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Group.</p><u>Meeting of 10 October 2023</u><ol style="list-style-type: none">3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.	

3.2 Matters arising

5.3 – Darren's Den still to deal with minor issues identified in Annual Safety Inspection[post-meeting note – reminded].
Brazier pole still in situ.

Clerk

- Contractors advised to take care when strimming near rubber matting

- Clerk still to send proforma for Cllr's inspections to Cllr Montgomery

Clerk

- benches still to be investigated

Clerk

5.4 – one expression of interest so far. Deadline end November.

5.5 – parishioner at cottage at Culmhead crossroads content about rumble strips.

4. Planning

4.1 New application (EDDC): 23/2196/FUL Woodhayne Farm, Bishopswood, TA20 3SB - Extension to existing guest house to accommodate 3 additional guest bedrooms and associated landscaping arrangements. The Council had no comment.

Clerk

4.2 Granted or refused applications: None

5. Other matters

5.1 Projects/activities/events – update.

An updated list was circulated and noted. River testing – the Otter and the Yarty are already being monitored at the West Country Rivers designated locations, so no further action was required.

Dr Poland had written to Sir David Attenborough to let him know of the conservation initiatives this council was taking and had received a handwritten reply.

5.2 Climate & The Environment Project- Update on Project Action Plan

The update was noted.

Still no details of thermal imaging camera training.

5.3 Otterford Playing Fields

The Clerk proposed to negotiate a further (probable) 1 year grass cutting contract with SC(South Somerset). This was agreed.

Clerk

5.4 Chard and Blackdown LCN, 23 October

Cllr Montgomery reported that the aim of this meeting had been to identify 3 areas of interest which working groups could take forward. She thought this could prove difficult in terms of continuity of attendance and the amount of input required from smaller councils. Somerset Intelligence Planning(an arm of SC) were collecting data from the meetings.

The next two meetings had been scheduled for 17 January and 13 March.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Financial matters

- 7.1 Monthly Financial summary – October.
Noted.

8. Other business.

The Council noted that the Local Government Services Pay agreement for 2023 had finally been agreed, backdated to 1 April 2023. The Clerk would adjust her monthly salary payments accordingly and arrange a change to the monthly standing order with Unity Trust.

Clerk

There were just two copies of "From the Milking Stool" left. Cllr Canham had explored the possibility of having further copies printed but this was un-economic.

Cllr Canham advised that he would miss the next meeting. Cllr Field would chair.

9. The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 12 December, in the Wright Room, Otterford Parish Hall.

Penny Hart, Clerk, November 2023