

**OTTERHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

held on

**THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 at 7.00pm at OTTERHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:**

Lindsey Parsons (Chair), Connie Sanders (Vice Chair), Gina Mear (Clerk), Tina Gardener, Steve Parker, Mike Haycraft, Dave Dodge (late), and six members of the public.

**163/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Carol Bradbury, Cllr Brian Bolt, Cllr Mike Caswell.

**DECLARATION(S) OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations applied for. Member's Interests are disclosed at the time of taking Office. This information can be viewed on the Somerset Council website.

**PUBLIC SESSION (INCLUDING SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

**1. Somerset Council members report**

- Cllr Brian Bolt advised by email that there was a majority vote at council opposing the government withdrawing the winter fuel payment for the majority of pensioners. The council has pledged to ensure all who can claim pension credits are made aware, and to work with voluntary Charity Faith and Social Enterprise (VCSFE) to ensure a substantial portion of the Household support fund is directed towards helping Somerset pensioners struggling with fuel poverty.
- The Council is preparing a Somerset wide plan regarding future housing sites after 2029. It was understood that Sedgemoor's was current until 2032. Cllr Bolt is seeking clarification.

**2. Public**

- Issues regarding the public footpath from Brookside Road towards the school were raised especially where the fields have been ploughed up to the hedges. B Birkenhead to have a look at the third field. Clerk to write to the farmer to advise of regulations for public right of ways through fields.
- Cars speeding through the village especially on Brookside Road was raised.
- Vehicles parked on the verge opposite the Anchor Inn car park – see point 169/24 a.

**164/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10.10.24**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 10.10.24 were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.

**165/24 MATTERS ARISING – NOT COVERED BY A SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM**

- a. Combwich Wharf/Wessex Compound Bypass Track – An email was received from S Walker advising this work had been postponed and she would advise of a new start date.

**166/24 PLANNING MATTERS:**

- a. 13/24/00002 Temporary access arrangement and compound, extension of existing walls either side of outfall structure to link to the raised embankment at Tuckett's Clyce in Combwich (additional works required to support the delivery of the Scheme permitted under the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Order 2022 (SI.2022.299) and associated deemed planning permission). Land to the East of, Combwich Road, Cannington. All councillors agreed to support this application.

**167/24 FINANCE:**

**1. Bank Reconciliation and Budget Statement for October.**

The budget statement and bank reconciliation for October 2024 was circulated prior to the meeting and was agreed. The balance at the end of October was £63,704.42.

**2. The following payments were AGREED:**

- a) G Mear - £579.60 (Clerk salary - September)
- b) Nest - £40.95 (Pension contribution)
- c) Pains Fireworks – £1,146.00 (Fireworks)
- d) Otterhampton Village Hall - £16.00 (Hall Hire – Community Shop)

- e) Somerset Council - £649.20 (Grass Cutting)
- f) Somerset Council - £178.46 (Play Area Bin)
- g) Somerset Council - £892.32 (Dog Bins)
- h) M Haycraft - £73.50 (Medlar Tree)

**3. Income Received:**

- a) None

**4. a) Clerk's Salary – Increment**

Item to be discussed at the December meeting.

**5. a) Lloyds Bank – New account charges**

A letter from Lloyds advised that the treasurer's account will be changed to a Community Account which incurs a £4.25 monthly charge.

**168/24 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- a. None reported.

**169/24 HIGHWAYS (B Bolt)**

Cllr Bolt reported that there is a consultation regarding reducing staff and the time taken to reply to any queries will be longer. There are also reductions being made in PRoW staff.

- a. Inconsiderate parking opposite the Anchor Inn – A few complaints have been received about vehicles parking opposite the pub car park which have caused a few near misses and it is dangerous for children entering/exiting the play area. T Gardener to send photos of the issue to Cllr Bolt for advice. It was also noted that the situation regarding parking on the grass verge at the Ship Lane end of the track will be monitored.
- b. Drains in the turning circle, top of School Lane – It is thought that the drain is not connected as there are severe flooding issues when there is a lot of rain. Clerk to ask Cllr Bolt for advice.

**170/24 WHARF ROAD**

The brook side of Wharf Road has been cleared. The Community Payback Team will be asked to tidy the Estuary Park side. It was reported that people are leaving garden rubbish in this area. M Ingram to be asked to cut back Wharf Road every year.

**171/24 ENHANCEMENTS**

- a. Village Gardener – The clerk had sent through a list of jobs but it appears that this may not have been received. Clerk to chase.
- b. Use of Pesticides – Regarding the use of an alternative non-pesticide weed killer system, D Dodge has tried to contact A Laver at WWT but has not heard from her yet. A Darch will be asked to make contact. D Dodge has a few ideas in mind for contracting out the system. A second-hand system could be purchased for approximately £8,000. T Gardener will raise this at the next Dowsborough LCN meeting to see if there is any interest from parishes in the area. An application will be made to OPPT for funding in case a second-hand unit becomes available. D Dodge to put together a business plan.

**172/24 SALC – COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAMME**

An application for grant funding needs to come from the community and there are quite a few ideas from various groups. S Parker to put an article in Otter Tales.

**173/24 EMERGENCY PLAN**

Latest draft to be sent to all councillors for approval at December meeting.

**174/24 MEETING REPORTS**

- a) **11.11.24 Village Hall** – The heating will be sorted out in the next couple of weeks and a new system will be installed. R Navoy is chair until the end of December. P Cashin has now officially finished as treasurer and L Parsons is doing invoices. Hall hire can be booked online. The AGM is on 11<sup>th</sup> December. Feedback received at the parish council meeting was that the hall logo is not a good representation of women.
- b) **28.10.24 SSG** – The SSG is just for nuclear fuel on site so does not apply to HPC yet. Discussions around issues on the motorway and roads in the area was discussed as this affects workers getting to the site. B site will be defueled by the middle of next year. The labs at Combwich will no longer be active and will be moved on site. It was mentioned that the parish

council should be contacted regarding this matter. The next meeting will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025.

- c) **04.11.24 School** – There are currently 65 pupils at the school. There has been a drop in pupils due to the population. The Safe Streets scheme is working well but will fail if more volunteers can't be recruited and may finish at the end of the six-month period. L Parsons will speak to C Luce about the banner at the village entrance as it is in a poor state. The next meeting will be in January.
- d) **13.11.24 Partnership Meeting** – T Gardener and S Parker attended. More physical training is going to be offered by SALC. The Service Asset devolution is taking time to implement. More foster carers are needed in Somerset. The Somerset Charter, between parish councils and Somerset Council was discussed.

#### **175/24 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

- a. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (B Birkenhead) – B Birkenhead is happy to attend the training for PRoWs. Clerk to send through the information. A stile between a field and the C182 was blocked after the farmer had cut the hedges but had been cleared by a member of public. D Dodge put a post on the Combwich Facebook page on how to report a blocked right of way.
- b. OPRA (T Gardener) – The fireworks display was the best attended so far and over £400 in donations was received. OPRA are looking for volunteers for future fireworks displays to help set off the fireworks. At the recent AGM, no more volunteers for events came forward. Next year is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and OPRA will be putting on some events to mark the occasion. The next events are the Christmas meal on 7<sup>th</sup> December and the Christmas tree light switch-on on 8<sup>th</sup> December.
- c. Steart Ward (D Dodge) – The winter route is closed and the tower hide is open.
- d. Social Media (D Dodge) – The clerk will put a note in Otter Tales asking for people to have a go at designing a logo for the parish council. The parish website needs redesigning but OPRA/the parish council need to have full ownership of it but neither do at present.
- e. Otter Tales – It was suggested to add an agenda item for items to be included in the Otter Tales report. In the next edition, it was agreed to ask if groups in the parish would like to have a report included in future meetings.

#### **176/24 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:**

1. 14.11.24 – Transport Forum
2. 11.12.24 – Village Hall AGM
3. 11.12.24 - LCN

#### **177/24 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

- a) Connecting Devon & Somerset Update – An email was received to say this will no longer be going ahead in the parish due to restructuring at Airband, the company contracted to supply the broadband.
- b) Somerset Council – Local Plan Engagement – Somerset Council is developing a new local plan for Somerset and parish councils have until 30<sup>th</sup> November to give feedback.
- c) Boundary Commission Consultation – There is currently a consultation taking place due to a reduction in the number of Somerset Council councillors.
- d) No Through Road Sign – River View – A member of public said a lot of cars are going up River View and maybe are not aware that it is a no through road. There has never been a no through road sign at the bottom of the road.
- e) Code of Conduct Training – All councillors should have attended this training. New councillors can do this training when doing the new councillor training due to take place in the new year.
- f) Somerset Rivers Authority – Community Flood Action Fund – The SRA is launching a fund to help local organisations take steps to reduce flooding. Clerk to look into this.
- g) Somerset Day 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Organisations are encouraged to get involved and organise events for this weekend.

**178/24 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 7.00pm at Otterhampton Village Hall.

The meeting finished at 8.55pm.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024