

Otterford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 13 November 2018 at 19.30 hrs.

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

Item	Detail	Action
	<u>Community Time</u> None	
	<u>Reports from other organisations</u>	

Report from SCC Cllr John Thorne:

- The Budget – Somerset County Council (SCC) could benefit by about £6.5m from the extra funding being put toward adult and children's social care and learning difficulties, £4m for potholes, and an opportunity to apply for an £85m fund to transform the children's services operational model over the next few years. The costs of children's care can be prohibitive: in October, a single family with substantial care needs moved to Somerset and also had a child remanded in custody by the courts – together costing up to £700k this year.

- Grit bins – With the additional funding from central government, SCC can now afford to fill grit bins this year. It may be a one-off and it's not clear if parishes will be able to collect free bags of rock salt as previously.

**Clerk/
PW
monitor**

- Superfast broadband – JT complained about the poor management of this project by CDS at scrutiny committee on 14 Nov. The gravity of the situation seems now to have dawned on other councillors, and also a recognition that responsibility lies squarely with the board of CDS. Gigaclear have asked for an extension to June 2022. They would still deliver a full fibre network to everybody who has been promised it. The new proposals are still being examined and it will be 'several weeks' before a decision is taken on whether the proposals are practical and acceptable. However, the main public funding streams have to be spent by March 2020 and it is unclear if that deadline can be extended.

- Rights of Way – there are currently more than 3,100 live issues being dealt with by a very small team. It is one of the largest backlogs in the country. Twice as many applications are being received as are being determined, so it is a worsening position.

- Pollinator action plan – An action plan to protect pollinators – bees and other insects – has been agreed and is available on the council's website. In practical terms, it is about reducing things like grass cutting so that areas of wild flowers etc are left for insects to thrive on, and obtaining S106 money from developers to create new green wildlife areas.

- Highways winter service – Fewer roads are being gritted and a map of which ones will be covered can be found here: www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting. SCC are also looking at training community snow wardens.

- Libraries – Proposals for cuts to the library service were approved on 5th November by the Cabinet. There is no change to the main libraries in Taunton, Wellington, and Chard which will continue to be run by SCC. Ilminster will also stay open but with reduced hours.

Cllr Ross Henley reported:

- the Boundary Commission had rejected the alternative boundary proposal submitted by Otterford and neighbouring PCs: its proposed changes to the ward will come into effect in May 2019. Otterford will be part of the Hatch & Blackdown Ward, comprising West Hatch, Hatch Beauchamp, Bickenhall, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, Curland and Churchstanton.
- there is to be a full Council meeting to discuss the lack of progress with the Firepool site in Taunton and a possible vote of no confidence in the Leader of TDBC, Cllr John Williams.

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 9 October

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

3.2 Matters Arising:

3.2.1 Holman Clavel – Tree(s) in Paddock. Cllr Viant had obtained a list of local arboriculturalists from her son, but this had not been progressed yet due to pressure of work on the WW1 weekend. Cllr Field offered had checked the wording of insurance policies generally with a colleague and reported that it was normal not to specify land.

**Clerk /
MC**

3.2.2 Bridleway — the Clerk had been in touch with Peter Hopley (SCC) and asked what the next steps were.

4. Planning

4.1 New applications - None. However, there was a planning appeal to the Secretary of State regarding application no 29/18/0008 Removal of Condition 03 (occupation for holiday purposes only) at Woodend Farm, Bishopswood, Chard. The Council's previous objections would be submitted and there was no need to submit further comments.

4.2 Applications granted- 29/18/0011, Installation of underground Calor Gas tanks to serve housing development at Church Barton, Otterford Road, Culmhead.

4.3 Applications refused/withdrawn – None.

5. Other Matters –

5.1 World War 1 Commemoration Weekend & *Otterford Remembered* Book. The weekend had gone really well apart from the football match which had to be postponed for safety reasons as there was a storm. Cllr Canham and the Clerk were formally thanked by the Council for all their hard work, and Tanya Hetherington for her excellent design work with the *Otterford Remembered* book.

- 5.3 Road Gritting & Salt Bins – two new salt bins had been ordered. SCC would be informed of the replacement bin at the bottom of the village once it had been sited and asked to fill it. **Clerk**
Options for gritting were discussed and it was agreed it was probably too onerous to buy in a gritting service based on forecasts of poor weather; someone would have to decide when gritting should take place and if a poor decision was made which resulted in an accident the Council might be liable. **Clerk**
It was agreed to obtain costings from SCC to add the road through Bishopswood to the Skanska grit run, and also to cost purchase of a grit trailer for the Council's own use. **Clerk**
- 5.4 Otterford Playing Fields – Alvia had completed the work on the 'castle' play equipment. A new waste bin had yet to be sourced. Cllrs Viant and Campbell would carry out the six-monthly inspection of the field during the next week. **RV/SC**
6. **Correspondence**
Noted.
7. **Financial matters**
- 7.1 Deposit accounts – the Clerk apologised that she had still not had time to set up the second account but would do so at the first opportunity. **Clerk**
- 7.2 Half-yearly summary of receipts and payments accounts – noted.
- 7.3 Monthly financial summary – noted **Clerk**
- 7.3 Payment of invoices – agreed. It was agreed to consider getting a Council Credit card so that the Clerk/Chairman didn't have to use their own money for Council purchases and reclaim it. Clerk to look into this. **Clerk**
8. **Date of next meeting:** 7.30pm, Tuesday 11 December 2018 in the Wright Room, Otterford Parish Hall.