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|  | **Otterford Parish Council** **Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting held on Sunday March 22 2020 at Green Pastures, Bishopswood at 11am** Present: OPC Councillors Mike Canham (Chairman), John Marsden, Lucy Montgomery, Phil Wright, and the Clerk, plus eight parishioners.This meeting was convened by the Chairman - under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part II, Section 9.1 - to discuss the Coronavirus pandemic and the Council's response to it: and held in the open air, as several Councillors and parishioners were self-isolating.  |  |
| Item | Detail | Action |
|  | **Apologies**Cllr Field (away on family matters). |  |
| **2.** | Declarations of Interest 1. *Cllr Canham is a member of the Otterford Parish Hall Committee*
2. *Cllrs Canham and Montgomery 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.** | **Coronovirus (COVID 19) – Establishment of Otterford Helping Hand Scheme**The Parish Council noted and confirmed details of the Scheme; and actions already taken (as agreed previously by email) to establish the Scheme.  |  |
| **4.** | **A Parishioners’ Contingency Fund.**It was agreed that a contingency sum, initially of £500, be established to assist parishioners who are self-isolating and have exhausted their access to cash - as set out in the paper, *Parishioners’ Community Fund* (attached to these minutes). This will be administered by the Clerk.  | **Clerk** |
| **5.** | **Business continuity during the Coronavirus pandemic**The Council agreed a number of business continuity actions, as set out in the document ‘*Business Continuity Motion to the Council’* (copy attached to these minutes)*.* These actions would override the Council’s existing Standing Orders as necessary. | **Clerk/MC** |
| **6.** | **Meetings**Not withstanding the current statutory requirement to meet in person at least four times annually including the APCM, the Council agreed the following (to ensure compliance with the Government’s requirements regarding social distancing and self-isolation): * not to hold an Annual Parish Council Meeting (a statutory requirement, to be held in May) this year and to ‘roll over’ the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman, who would normally be elected at this meeting. The end of year accounts and Internal Auditor’s comments/ recommendations, and all others matters usually considered at the meeting, will be circulated to Councillors by email, and considered at the May ‘virtual’ meeting.
* not to organise an Annual Parish Meeting this year. The Annual Report, and any report from Parish organisations, will be published and circulated with CBO News. Copies will be emailed to anyone who asks for one.
* ongoing business will be co-ordinated by the Parish Clerk via email exchange and ‘virtual’ monthly Parish Council meetings will take place via telephone conference call or Skype (or similar). The Parish Clerk will investigate options, bearing in mind the very poor internet and mobile ‘phone signals locally. The Council agreed to refund any additional costs incurred by Councillors.
* the Council will ratify all the decisions made during this period at a formal meeting when these are able to resume.

Any concerns or challenges to this – however unreasonable they would be in the current exceptional circumstances – will be addressed in due course, once regular meetings have resumed.  | **Clerk****MC****Clerk****Clerk** |
| **7.** | **Forthcoming community events**It was agreed to cancel the VE75 weekend (this had been previously discussed with the owners of the Candlelight Inn), and the BBQ Bake Off. There would be some costs (in the region of £350) arising from the former as acts/performers had already been booked; they will be asked if they are willing to attend a future community event at a later date instead. No costs had been incurred for the BBQ event.Otterford Amble and the July Litter Pick – it was agreed to defer a decision for now; a properly policed walk was still a possibility under the Government’s present advice and the Litter Pick was still some way off. | **MC** |
| **8** | **The Holman Clavel**The pub had closed following the Government’s instructions. The Council understood that staff would be retained and the tenant hoped they would be able to benefit from the Government’s 80% of salary scheme. (This is a matter for tenant/staff). Given the exceptional circumstances, the tenant had asked the Council for a rent holiday for three months. This was agreed with the following caveats: * the loan repayments could also be suspended temporarily for the three months, but these would be added to the end of the loan;
* the tenant would have to continue to repay to the Parish Council the insurance premium (for the fabric of the pub) each month.

The rent holiday will be reviewed at the end of the three month period. Cllr Marsden would write to the tenant setting this out, urging him to take up the various Government assistance offered, and offering support in the meantime. Separately, the Clerk would speak to SWATDC regarding the precept – to ask if a supplementary precept could be introduced/requested during 2020/21 to try to mitigate the loss of income to the parish. Whatever the answer no decision to do so has yet been taken. | **JM****Clerk** |
| **9.** | **Otterford Playing Fields**After discussion, it was agreed to leave the Playing Fields, and the play equipment, open for now - on the grounds that they do not tend to be crowded, and parents can use their discretion to decide whether they are safe to use. Local householders are asked to keep an eye on the fields and report any misbehaviour by teenagers. This decision will be continually reviewed in line with updated Government advice/requirements.  | **Clerk** |
| **10.** | **AOB**Councillor Marsden’s suggestion that overtime be paid to the Clerk for additional administration work on ‘Coronavirus matters’ was agreed.(The Clerk stressed that she did not want to be paid for the voluntary work helping to coordinate the ‘Helping Hand’ Scheme).   | **Clerk** |
| **11.** | **Date & Time of Next Meeting:**  The next ‘virtual’ meeting will be held on Tuesday 11 April, starting at 7.30pm. The Clerk will advise dial-in/log-on details in due course. |  |

**OTTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**OTTERFORD HELPING HAND - PARISHIONERS’ COMMUNITY FUND**

1. The Fund

It is possible (probably likely) that some people will run out of cash: not everyone will have access to online banking.

Otterford Parish Council may be able to assist by cashing a small cheque, accepting an IOU, or providing cash following a BACS transfer (to the Parish Council).

2. Amount of Cash Provided

Up to £50 cash will be provided following a BACS transfer or receipt of a cheque. No further cash will be provided until the transfer/cheque are fully cleared.

Up to £50 cash per household will be provided against an IOU.

3. Procedure

If a request for cash is received, the volunteer should explain the options (see 1 above):

> In the first instance the person should be asked if they can BACS-transfer the money to the Parish Council account. **Account Name**: Otterford Parish Council **Sort Code**: 608301 **Account No**: 20389727

 Once done, the person needs to notify Penny Hart (Parish Clerk) – contact details below.

 When the transfer shows on the Parish Council account (usually the next day) the money can be collected from Penny Hart by the volunteer.

> If BACS is not possible the person should be asked if a cheque – payable to Otterford Parish Council – can be provided. The cheque can then be collected from the person by a volunteer in the same way, and with the same precautions, as a shopping list.

 Cheques should be taken to Penny Hart and the cash collected.

> If BACS is not possible, and the person does not have a cheque, they should be asked to sign an IOU (copy attached) – which should be collected from them in the same way as for shopping lists.

 The IOU should be taken to Penny Hart, and the cash collected.

Contact details for Penny Hart (Parish Clerk)

Green Pastures, Bishopswood TA20 3RS 01460 234639

Version 2 (22nd March 2020)

**OTTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**OTTERFORD HELPING HAND**

**PARISHIONERS COMMUNITY FUND**

**IOU**

**I acknowledge receipt of ££20/£30/£50 cash from Otterford Parish Council.**

**This will be repaid when I am next able withdraw cash from my bank account.**

**(signed) ……………………………………………………………………….**

**(name) ……………………………………………………………………..**

**(date) ……………………………………………………………………..**

Business Continuity Motion to the Council - 22nd March 2020

In light of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and government advice, this Council resolves that:

(a) Should the Council be unable to meet for whatever reason, the Clerk be given delegated authority to progress all ongoing matters and projects and authorise all regular payments and incur expenditure in line with the Council’s agreed budget.

(b) Any decisions taken under resolution (a) above will be taken, whenever possible, in consultation with all Councillors by exchange of emails or conference call. A record of all decisions and expenditure incurred under delegated authority will be kept and reported to members when the Council next meets.

(c) The authority to decide the Council’s response to planning applications be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation (by exchange of email) with all Councillors. Councillors will be informed of applications out for consultation, and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk within usual deadlines.

(d) The provisions outlined in resolutions (a-c) above will override any requirements to the contrary in the Council’s standing orders, financial regulations or terms of reference.

(e) Should the Clerk be unable to perform her duties, the Chairman will assume the role of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer in an unpaid capacity.

(f) The Clerk may incur expenditure (initially up to a maximum of £500) on the Parishioners Community Fund (Otterford Helping Hand Scheme) where such expenditure will help the community’s efforts to support those in need of assistance or prevent social isolation.

(g) The Council will establish a conference call facility to allow meetings (or shadow meetings) to take place.