

Otterton Parish Council

Date & Time	4 th December 2023		Location	Otterton Village Hall			
Councillors Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
MS Melanie Martin	MM	Parish Councillor		Members of the public	12		
Mr Jerry Fry	JF	Parish Councillor					
Mr Richard Witherby	RW	Parish Councillor					
Ms Belinda Shoemaker	RP	Parish Councillor					
Steve Culverhouse	SC	Parish Councillor					
Ian Simpson	IS	Parish Councillor					
Roger Pellow	RP	Parish Councillor					
Peter Wells	PW	Co-opted Councillor					

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence	Absent without Apology	Initials	
Jess Bailey	JB	Personal reasons			
Charlotte Fitzgerald	CF				

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to
F Mills	FM	Clerk	Councillors, website, notice board

Ref	Main meeting agenda item, comment & decision	Action Owner & deadline
1	Welcome & Apologies received as above. The Chair opened the meeting by congratulating IS, Sarah & Team on the success of the Reindeer Run which was a fabulous community event.	
2	Co-opting of Councillors: Local resident Pete Wells sought election to the Parish Council. He was unanimously co-opted & welcomed to the Council. Clerk to organise paperwork	Clerk
3	Declarations of Interests: None	
4	Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 6 th November 23 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting. Matters arising not featured on the agenda: Speed Watch update: Training on equipment now awaited following which the team will be active. Bus shelter: A watching brief is to be maintained on the bus shelter on Maunders Hill.	
5	The chair confirmed the arrangement for public discussion: All members of the public are welcome and comments on items on the agenda will be heard. If you would like to add an item to the agenda, please contact the clerk at least 7 days before the meeting. Public questions by email/letter or in person: A resident mentioned that he would like to set up a Camera/photography Club for local residents. He was immediately offered help by several Councillors who are also interested in this subject. We will await further news.	
6	Correspondence: Geoff Porter has written to OPC stating concern about the pointing on the bridge across the stream at Box cottage. Geoff has written to Devon Highways without response on several occasions. The clerk was asked to bring this matter to the attention of Cllr Jess Bailey.	Clerk to action

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7	<p>Chairman business: The Chair reported a major land slip at Budleigh Salterton. Training for Councillors is being arranged and the Chair requested that all Councillors try to attend. The invitation for training will be opened to other local Councils to mitigate cost and allow for open discussion. Clerk to email when date is confirmed.</p>	MM & all
8	<p>Trees: The quote for tree maintenance including the Tree at Vieux Close provided by Toby Taylor has been accepted by a unanimous vote and work will commence in the New Year.</p>	
9	<p>Ladram Bay: Not in attendance & NTR</p>	
10	<p>Local Planning: 23/2514/TCA - 3 Watering Court Fore Street Otterton Devon. Application approved.</p>	
11	<p>Allocation of responsibilities & reports from Councillors: Where there is nothing to report the following abbreviation will be used (NTR)</p> <p>Village Green (MM). Very wet but all is well.</p> <p>Hall (BS) BS attended her first Village Hall meeting and reported that a discussion took place about the provision of internet in the hall. No action will be taken immediately.</p> <p>Community shop: (SC) Has met with Jeremy Wakeling at the shop and reports that all continues well.</p> <p>War Memorial: A short discussion took place regarding the provision of a 'silhouette' for the War Memorial and this was agreed to consider at a later date.</p> <p>Stantyway recreation ground & Football Club: NTR</p> <p>Raleigh Federation: Very busy with school Christmas events including a nativity in the church to which the village is invited.</p> <p>Jubilee Play Park: IS reported that the Reindeer Run had been a resounding success raising a net £2k. which will be spent on equipment and the renovation of the Jubilee Playpark. IS thanked everyone involved in the organisation of the run & confirmed that feedback had been good and the event was well received by the community. The equipment from the Lime Kiln Playpark is ready to be moved over to the park and once this is installed an inspection of the playpark will take place.</p> <p>Cemetery: Responsibility for the Cemetery is to be taken over by PW and JF will hand over as soon as mutually convenient.</p> <p>Contracts & Finance: NTR</p> <p>Devon Air Ambulance (DAA): NTR</p> <p>Footpaths and Public Rights of Way: Footpath 1 is currently closed for further work.</p>	Clerk to action

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12 Cllr Charlotte FitzGerald, EDDC – Budleigh & Raleigh, December 2023

Poverty Working Panel: In November I learned on the Poverty Working Panel quarterly call about the cross-disciplinary work of the council, along with external partners, to tackle issues arising from poverty.

The call included presentations from East Devon District Council's Building Control department, its Benefits and Financial Resilience Team and external partners East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau, South West Water, and Exeter Community Energy (ECOE). The teams laid out how they are working to help residents of the district access practical and long-term support, including improving poor-quality housing, ensuring where applicable that residents were aware of all benefits available to them, tackling issues arising from the cost-of-living crisis and fuel poverty. The Benefits and Financial Resilience Team outlined its touchpoints into the community, including through foodbanks and other agencies present. It also highlighted the mental health aspects of its function. I'm due to meet with this team before Christmas to learn more about this in my capacity as the council's mental health member champion. Building Control officers are sometimes the 'first responders' to pick up on undiagnosed mental health issues, as they visit homes of residents and witness problems with self-care, including hoarding. They are now trained to respond by offering referrals where there is a perceived need. The group inter-refer individuals and families for benefits advice and other financial resilience support where required. For example, an issue that might start with Building Control fixing a damp and mould problem in a home or could lead to a referral to Exeter Community Energy to look at installing home solar panels to improve affordable heating provision, or to the Benefits and Financial Resilience Team to ensure the resident was making the most of all financial support available.

East Devon Citizens Advice presented their involvement in debt advisory, which is significant and an important part of the anti-poverty support network in East Devon – again, they are also a source of referrals that the council might not catch automatically.

Finally, a representative of South West Water presented on its new customer hardship support initiatives, including debt relief funds.

I have since the meeting requested a flyer to be made available to members and parish councils, with some key contacts for the above departments and agencies.

Strategic Planning Committee: We now have a working timetable for work on the Emerging Local Plan (overleaf). This is a working document and will be reviewed monthly by the committee to ensure we remain on track to meet our objective of having an agreed plan ready for submission for inspection by summer 2025. From March onwards we anticipate a heavy workload and will probably be meeting twice a month to discuss each aspect of the plan in detail. The timetable refers only to the committee's work on the Emerging Local Plan: as previously, other items will emerge ad hoc that the committee will also need to consider as part of its regular meetings. **Wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and new year. I will be taking a maternity break in January-February and currently anticipate returning to council work in March.**

Strategic planning committee: HR: South farm road awaits inspection before double lines are put in place. Winter charge £2 for all parking in B/S. Cost of bin collection to be reviewed. Damaged bins can be replaced by use of QR codes. Community football pitch awaited.

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	<p>Cllr Jess Bailey: My report for December 2023.</p> <p>1. Thank you to Cllrs Melanie Martin and Ian Simpson for meeting with me and DCC neighbourhood highway officer Mike Brown to identify blocked drains. Mike advised that the blocked drains on Maunders Hill will be treated as a priority for clearance.</p> <p>2. I will be attending a Devon County Council meeting on Thursday 7th December. I have raised a number of questions about issues across my ward. Of particular interest to the parish council may be my question about street light number 4 on Fore St, close to the village hall. I have been contacted by several residents of Otterton about this, and to-date I have no date for the light to be fixed - hence my formal question to Cllr Stuart Hughes cabinet member for Highways.</p> <p>3. Update on the footpath adjacent to River Otter (30 m stretch north of Clamour Bridge): DCC have now gone to a local contractor to prepare a scheme who I understand is familiar with the area and has done works in the vicinity before - DCC officers had a site meeting with the contractor in August, and have been chasing for the proposed details of the scheme to be provided. I am pressing DCC for progress.</p> <p>The works around Clamour Bridge were discussed at a meeting with CDE back in the summer, which I also attended just before going on holiday. The main action point was for DCC to get details of a scheme from a contractor (which they are pressing for as per the above para). Also at the meeting DCC requested that CDE move back the fence south of the bridge. We also discussed the change from the steps to a ramp and those works have I understand now been completed.</p> <p>4. I have been pressing DCC for months to take enforcement action against Openreach for the noisy manhole cover in Ottery Street. I understand Openreach contractors turned up on Thursday afternoon, however could not complete the works due to parked cars. Enforcement officers at DCC are going to check back on Monday 4th December to see if it has been completed - and if not will chase. I will keep you posted. Best wishes Jess</p>	
13	<p>Financial matters: It was unanimously agreed that all payments listed on agenda 4.12.23 should be paid.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that an increase in Precept of 10% would support the work of the Parish Council in 2024. The clerk was asked to complete the necessary paperwork. The budget for 2024 will see a general increase of 10% across the budget as per precept request. This will include a small increase for the clerk to bring salary in line with other Band 1 Councils in preparation for future recruitment. (salary increase to commence 1.1.24)</p>	Clerk to action
14	<p>Further actions: Village partnership actions to be progressed.</p>	
15	<p>106 Funding: In the region of £8073.00 (Sport) £1683.00 (Recreation). The clerk reminded the OPC of the funds currently being held at EDDC and how these could be used.</p>	
16	<p>Items for next agenda: Dates for 2024 meetings, February 5th, March 4th, April 8th, May 13th, June 3rd, July 1st, September 2nd, October 7th, November 4th, December 2nd.</p>	Clerk to action
17	<p>The next meeting will take place on Monday 5th February @ 7.30.</p>	Clerk to action

The meeting closed with mulled wine and Mince pies at 21.30. Thank you to everyone who attended.