



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the **ORDINARY MEETING OF OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL** held on **MONDAY, 5TH OCTOBER 2020** at **7.00pm**. The meeting was conducted virtually in accordance with Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020

PRESENT:-Cllr Johns (**Mayor**), Cllr Lucas (**Deputy Mayor**), Cllrs Faithfull, Green, Giles, Copus, Stewart, Shaw, Grainger, and Pang, County Councillor Claire Wright, three members of the public (Ian Holmes, `Martin` and `Paul`) and Christine McIntyre CEO

20/10/01

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none

20/10/02

TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND RECEIPT OF REQUESTS FOR NEW DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIS) DISPENSATIONS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

NAME OF COUNCILLOR	DETAILS OF INTEREST
Cllr Pang	Personal Interest in Item 19 as she had attended meetings attended by Hugo Swire in her capacity as the Chair of the OSM & District Health & Care Forum (Consideration of revelations contained in `Diary of an MP's Wife: Inside and Outside Power` and the actions of former MP Hugo Swire in relation to Ottery Hospital and the Council's response)
Cllr Johns	Interest in Item 11 as husband is trustee of Cricket Club - (Update on Annual Town Council Grants Scheme and consideration of pertinent issues including reconsideration of 2019 funding requests from various local organisations (whom it was previously assumed would receive S106 funding from EDDC and which funding has been delayed) Personal Interest in Item 17 as she is an affiliated member of the Veterans Association (Remembrance Day)
Cllr Giles	Personal Interest in Item 11 as he is a member of Ottery in Bloom - Update on Annual Town Council Grants Scheme and consideration of pertinent issues including reconsideration of 2019 funding requests from various local organisations (whom it was previously assumed would receive S106 funding from EDDC and which funding has been delayed)

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NAME OF COUNCILLOR	DETAILS OF INTEREST
Cllr Faithfull	Personal Interest in Item 19 as he had been mentioned in the book – (Consideration of revelations contained in <i>Diary of an MP's Wife: Inside and Outside Power</i> and the actions of former MP Hugo Swire in relation to Ottery Hospital and the Council's response)

20/10/03

IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 (PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED): TO AGREE ANY ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH AFTER THE PUBLIC AND PRESS HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED

There were none

20/10/04

TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES

There were no issues raised by the members of the public present

20/10/05

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 7TH SEPTEMBER 2020 (MINUTE REFS 20/09/07 – 20/09/43), AND TO APPROVE THE SIGNING OF THE MINUTES BY THE MAYOR AS A CORRECT RECORD

The Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING of 7th September 2020 (minute refs 20/09/07 – 20/09/43) were presented, approved and confirmed as a correct record. They would be signed by the Mayor shortly.

20/10/06

TO NOTE AND CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF 21ST SEPTEMBER 2020 (MINUTE REFS P20/09/01 – P20/09/09)

The Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING of 21st September 2020 (MINUTE REFS P20/09/01 – P20/09/09) were noted and confirmed

20/10/07

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EDDC AND DCC COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Claire Wright

Cllr Wright had submitted a report which had been circulated to all councillors. Her report covered Harpford Bridge; Latest Update re coronavirus and nursing homes in Devon; Update on 20mph limits and Diversity in Devon. She had nothing further to add. No questions were raised by councillors and the Mayor warmly thanked Cllr Wright for her informative report

EDDC Councillor Peter Faithfull

Cllr Faithfull advised that he had attended a meeting this morning with Cllr Wright at which unitary councils were discussed. He was requested by the Mayor to send round an e-mail to all councillors with full information about the topic

20/10/08

POLICE MATTERS

No report had been received by the CEO. The CEO to chase up the last LAG report

20/10/09

TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY

This has been e-mailed to councillors for consideration. It was agreed that this would remain in place until such time as the Policies and Compliance Working Group had had an opportunity to review it

Mayor's Initials.....

20/10/10

TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL`S ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

This has been e-mailed to councillors for consideration. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Strategy subject to amendments to make it more flexible with regards to investments and therefore should be left `vague`. In addition, as the Council had previously declared a climate emergency then this should be considered when making investments. Therefore it was further **RESOLVED** that an additional clause 3.6 should be included in the Strategy to state `having declared a climate emergency the Council will seek to ensure that its investments are made in accordance with that policy`

20/10/11

UPDATE ON ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS SCHEME AND CONSIDERATION OF PERTINENT ISSUES INCLUDING RECONSIDERATION OF 2019 FUNDING REQUESTS FROM VARIOUS LOCAL ORGANISATIONS (WHOM IT WAS PREVIOUSLY ASSUMED WOULD RECEIVE S106 FUNDING FROM EDDC AND WHICH FUNDING HAS BEEN DELAYED)

Councillors were sent an e-mail on 2nd October with suggestions for payments of grants plus an updated schedule showing payments made and those outstanding. There was some discussion and it was subsequently **RESOLVED** to pay Ottery in Bloom its grant payment of £650. Grant applications had been submitted by the Cricket Club, the Football Club and the Youth Football Club and it was likely that due to their current financial positions that they may now be seeking revised amounts. It was understood that the netball and tennis clubs were looking to use the proposed Muga and were not looking for extra funds.. Cllr Stewart suggested that meetings should take place with the two football clubs and the cricket club. There should also be a Finance Committee meeting arranged to with regards to considering the current outstanding grants and next year`s grants. It was also **AGREED** that as the Council was in a reasonably good financial position that consideration should be given to helping the town in any way possible and ideas should be brought to the next meeting. The item to be included on the November agenda.

20/10/12

S106 UPDATE AND APPROVAL OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS OR PERTINENT MATTERS (TO BE A REGULAR AGENDA ITEM)

There was much discussion about the play provision at Winters Lane. It was noted that the existing play provision could be retained if the equipment was in satisfactory condition and would supplement the new play provision. Suggestions were made for the types of activities/equipment for Winters Lane (including a type of climbing wall). Cllr Stewart advised that the Council could submit all ideas to EDDC for consideration. Cllr Pang raised the issue of funding for the skate park but was advised that although conversations were taking place with the Station about the skate park, the access issues would need to be resolved before any S106 funding could be progressed. Cllr Stewart advised that at the present time funding had been allocated to specific projects only. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council allocate existing CIL funds and Generic Open Space funds to the agreed play funds to create a total pot of around approx. £29,500, and for the Council to use its own funds to top this up to a maximum of £50,000, and confirm to EDDC, to proceed with an assessment of the site and any consultation required to expedite the changes. **Cllrs Pang abstained from voting**

With regards to the Land of Canaan, the Council **RESOLVED** to allocate the £54,000 already collected to formal park provision, specifically to the Land of Canaan park. It would also commit to ensuring that any new structures would be fully compliant with EDDC and other regulations, and would be risk assessed and insured and any planning permissions secured and that any new structures would be warranted and maintained for at least 10 years. Cllr Faithfull raised the issue of the provision of a bridge at the Tumbling Weir and the Mayor had acknowledged the problematic access issues, particularly for a number of retired persons who were living in the vicinity

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20/10/13

REGENERATION UPDATE AND APPROVAL OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS OR PERTINENT MATTERS (TO BE A REGULAR AGENDA ITEM)

Cllr Lucas advised that a further meeting would need to be set up to progress matters. He agreed to arrange this.

20/10/14

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CANCELLATION OF 2020 CHRISTMAS MEAL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Glyn Dobson who had previously agreed to organise a Christmas lunch for the elderly, had informed the Council that he believed it would be a mistake to hold the event this year as he believed the age of the people attending could make them vulnerable to Covid. The Council concurred with this view and it was **RESOLVED** that the event should not proceed and that a notice be placed in the Gazette advising of the Council's decision. However it was agreed, (as previously proposed at a Full Council Meeting), that the Over 60s Club be contacted to see if they wished to apply for a grant for Christmas activities/event

20/10/15

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED PRESENTATION FOR FORMER COUNCILLOR

In view of Mr Dobson's length of service – the policy of the Council was for long serving councillors to be presented with a certificate. However it had been suggested that due to Covid that a formal presentation should not take place until next year and that the Annual Parish Meeting could be the event at which the presentation could be made. It was hoped by that time that the Covid restrictions should be minimised with regards to the numbers of persons gathering. Mr Dobson had confirmed his agreement to a presentation. The Council therefore **RESOLVED** that a formal presentation should take place at the Annual Parish Meeting

20/10/16

UPDATE ON THE SHOP FRONT SCHEME

The Council has recently paid out grants to the Samosa Lady and K & M Butchers. The CEO had written to Pullen and Syme; Easterbrooks; Papadom and Prospect Beauty advising that if she didn't hear from them by 30th September that she would assume they no longer wished to proceed with the grant scheme. She had not received a response. Dilly's were in the process of submitting photos and receipts. Hall and Scott may submit a late application (which the CEO and Cllr Lucas would have discretion to accept at this late stage). The CEO had already e-mailed Hall and Scott an application form, to forward on to the new owner of the business. Cllr Lucas advised that he had received invoices from Pullen and Symes which he would pass to the CEO to progress the grant payment. Liz Graveney had approached grant recipients for positive feedback which would be published in the November edition of the Gazette.

20/10/17

REMEMBRANCE DAY UPDATE AND APPROVAL OF PERTINENT COSTS

The CEO had spoken to the owner of Sonic, the Council's usual maroon supplier (and other firework suppliers) and it appears that maroons cannot be used for Remembrance Day in view of an EU directive. The owner of Sonic had tried to source a product from China that would meet the EU requirements but the new product would not be available until later on in November. It was **AGREED** that in view of the EU directive that there could be no maroons this year at Ottery or Tipton St John. It was also **RESOLVED** to pay the full cost of a Veterans Wreath and the CEO would advise the Veterans point of contact of the Council's decision.

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20/10/18

CONSIDERATION OF UPDATE FROM TOM BUXTON-SMITH RE FENITON ROAD FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

Tom`s report has been e-mailed to councillors. There was some discussion and it was **AGREED** that Tom should be invited to a future Town Council Meeting and Cllr Faithfull to ask Gosford residents to attend.

20/10/19

CONSIDERATION OF REVELATIONS CONTAINED IN `DIARY OF AN MP'S WIFE: INSIDE AND OUTSIDE POWER` AND THE ACTIONS OF FORMER MP HUGO SWIRE IN RELATION TO OTTERY HOSPITAL AND THE COUNCIL`S RESPONSE

There was much debate about this item. Anger was expressed as to the extracts in the book alleging that Hugo Swire had involved himself with the future of Ottery Hospital purely as a means of causing annoyance to County Councillor Claire Wright and not to support the community in their attempts to retain the hospital. . However Cllr Pang read out a statement in which she considered that Mr Swire was a man of integrity and had good intentions and was honest and sincere in respect of the hospital.. Cllr Giles had prepared a list of actions which he hoped would be agreed to by the Council and to which Cllr Stewart had suggested an amendment. Cllr Lucas was of the view that there was no benefit in making any statement as Mr Swire would not be bothered and it wouldn`t achieve anything.. It was better to move on and engage with Simon Jupp MP and hope that he became involved and take positive action, with supporting the retention of the hospital;. There was further discussion and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Giles` proposals should be separated and Point 4 deleted, resulting in the Council issuing a statement expressing displeasure as to the actions of Hugo Swire and that we write to Simon Jupp with the intention that he becomes progressively and constructively involved with retaining the community hospital for the benefit of the community. **Cllrs Faithfull and Pang abstained from voting**

20/10/20

CONSIDERATION(AND APPROVAL IF RELEVANT) OF THE COST OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND THE `SWITCH-ON` CEREMONY

Councillors were of the view that as so many Christmas events were being cancelled in the town, they wanted to make the town look especially festive this year, with its lighting display, to lift people`s spirits. After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the budget for this year`s lights would be £10,000 plus Vat. It was understood that next year a complete rewiring job would be required at an approx. cost of £10,000. Cllr Stewart advised that last year other contractors had been approached for quotes re lighting but none were willing to fit their lights to the present wiring in situ. Cllr Pang expressed concern about possible safety issues. It was understood that the existing wiring had been provided by Torbay Lighting who had installed lighting in the town for many years. If they were awarded the lighting contract then they would be willing to connect their lighting to their wiring. The CEO would ensure that a copy of Torbay`s public liability insurance certificate was obtained prior to them installing the lights. It was further **RESOLVED** that immediately the lights were installed that they would be switched on without any special ceremony.

20/10/21

CONSIDERATION OF SIMON JUPPS` RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL`S LETTER RE PROPOSED PLANNING CHANGES AND TO FORMULATE A RESPONSE THERETO

Cllr Copus advised about the exchange of e-mails he had had with Simon Jupp regarding the proposed planning changes. There was some debate in which it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Giles would formulate a letter of response which would be sent round to all councillors for approval prior to it being sent out

20/10/22

UPDATE ON HOMELESS PERSON IN THE CEMETERY

A homeless person had been living in a tent at the far end of the cemetery which was on scrubland forming part of the cemetery land. . The tent was quite obscured so not obvious to people visiting the cemetery. PCSO Jon Simms had visited the site and was not sure

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whether the man (who is known to the authorities including EDDC) was still living in his tent. The CEO had reported the matter to EDDC and Streetlink which was an organisation which existed to help end rough sleeping by enabling members of the public to connect people sleeping rough with the local services that could support them. The Council had no wish to take proceedings to evict the person from their land, as they were not aware he was causing any unsocial behaviour issues. It was requested that the CEO raise the matter again with Streetlink. The Mayor advised that it had also been reported to her that someone appeared to be living in a car in the town which she was investigating

20/10/23

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE TO HONOUR CITIZENS OF THE TOWN

The Mayor explained that she was aware of persons in the town who were working hard behind the scenes, helping their community without any formal recognition (‘Unsung Heroes’) and hence she thought it was a good idea to have a Commemorative Plaque so that these persons could be named and officially recognised for what they were doing and had done in the past. It was suggested that the Council should talk to the Museum as there may be people in the past who should be recognised for their contributions thus adding a bit of ‘history and colour’. It was **AGREED** that the Mayor should come back with further information to a future Town Council Meeting. . It was also **AGREED** that Citizen of the Year could run along side the proposed Commemorative Plaque

20/10/24

CONSIDERATION OF RETAINING THE COUNCIL’S PRAYER

The CEO has been asked by Cllr Faithfull as to why the Council’s prayer has been left off Council agendas. The CEO had inadvertently missed it off the agendas in view of the meetings being in the Zoom format. Legislation had now made it possible for councils to choose as to whether they wished to include a prayer on their agendas. There then followed a rather vocal debate about the Council’s Prayer. There were arguments for and against the abolition of the prayer. It was **RESOLVED** that whilst Zoom meetings were taking place then the Council Prayer would not be included on agendas. However once physical meetings were resumed then the matter of reinstating/retaining the Council’s Prayer would be reconsidered.

20/10/25

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING THE COUNCIL’S STANDING ORDERS (TOGETHER WITH AMENDING THE FINANCIAL REGS; TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES AND POLICY DOCUMENTS THAT DOVETAIL IN WITH THE STANDING ORDERS)

A report prepared by Cllr Lucas has been e-mailed around to all councillors for consideration, in respect of this issue. Cllr Lucas advised that the purpose of looking at the Council’s documents, which underpinned the workings of the Council, was to try and make things more stream lined for the running of the Council, its councillors and employees. It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to carry out the following:- i. to set up a working group to manage the project ii. to have professional consultation to ensure any proposed amendments were up to speed with local authority legislation and guidelines (and that the CEO has some distance from the project in view of her work commitments) and iii the project to be approached from a position of caution initially and in small ‘bites’ to prevent major issues subsequently arising from the incorporation of any proposed amendments

20/10/26

CONSIDERATION OF A SHARED GARDEN SCHEME

The documentation has been e-mailed to all councillors. Brian Bird started such a scheme in Exmouth and thought the Council may be interested in considering the same for Ottery. It was **AGREED** that the CEO obtain further information from Brian Bird and the matter be referred to a future agenda

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20/10/27

THE MUSEUM AND THE STATION – UPDATE AS TO THE CURRENT TRUSTEES

There had been confusion about Michael Patrick status as a trustee, The Charity Commission website was showing that he was not a trustee of the Heritage Society (Charity number 1087086) but was showing that he was a trustee of the Heritage Society CIO (Charity number 1179598). Robert Neil was sorting this out with the Charity Commission. For information purposes the current trustees of the Station are Mac Dick, Roger Chambers, David Thomas, Ian Holmes, Jane Ross, Lorna Brice Nye, John Campion. Glyn Dobson was currently being registered at the Commission as a trustee

20/10/28

CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORTING THE DIVERSITY IN DEVON CAMPAIGN

An e-mail has been forwarded to councillors from Claire Wright regarding the `Black Lives Matter` campaign. Cllr Stewart advised that if there was to be the renaming of roads, street or buildings that Sir Walter Raleigh had been a slave trader and there were a few `Raleighs` in Ottery. With regards to the name `Coleridge`, Cllr Stewart advised that Coleridge was an apologist for the slave trade. However Cllr Giles had a contrary view stating that Coleridge was the exact opposite. He concluded that we shouldn't be going down this route. Cllr Giles understood that Sandra Sanena; Anoo Kakalamundu; Lizzie Kilbride and Flo Nash had worked alongside County Councillor Clare Wright to put a motion that would see DCC pledge its support for the `Black Lives Matter` campaign and concluded that they should be warmly thanked for their efforts. The Council **RESOLVED** to support the Campaign. Cllrs Stewart and Pang abstained from voting

20/10/29

CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR A REPLACEMENT `TWINNING SIGN` AT CLAREMONT FIELD

A parishioner had asked for the twinning sign (which has been removed as it was damaged) to be replaced. It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a replacement sign at a cost of approx. £200 to be sited at Gerway Close, thus replacing the sign currently in situ which stated:- `New Road Layout`

20/10/30

CONSIDERATION OF EDDC`S – STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2021 – 2026 (CLOSING DATE FOR COMMENTS - 1ST NOVEMBER)

This has been e-mailed to councillors. The Council had no comments to make at the meeting. However the Mayor suggested that if any councillor wished to submit comments then they should do so via the CEO before the 1st November.

20/10/31

FINANCIAL MATTERS

TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 2020 COUNCIL SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

These had been e-mailed to all councillors. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the September 2020 Council Schedule of Payments in the sum of £ 12,271.41

Cllr Faithfull abstained from voting as he had not seen the Schedule

20/10/32

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor advised that DCC were refusing to alter the proposed road closure (Paternoster Row) date which was fixed for 14th-18th December which could dramatically effect businesses during their Christmas trading period if people were unable to access the shops. In addition it was likely to have issues for parents trying to take their children to school. It was **AGREED** that a strongly worded e-mail should be sent by the CEO to Mike Brown – DCC Highway Officer to try and persuade DCC to have a re-think particularly as many businesses had suffered financially due to Covid. Cllr Stewart would advise the local businesses of Mike Brown's e-mail address so that they could make individual representations

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20/10/33

REPORT FROM THE CEO

The CEO advised that the Council was now able to co-opt for the Town Ward and hopefully there would be applicants who would attend the November meeting who could be considered for the vacancy. A new member of staff had been appointed - Jane Bushby who would be the new Receptionist/Administrator and would be starting in a couple of weeks time. The CEO had e-mailed out the Council's Delegated Authorities which provided authorities to committees and individuals, to progress certain actions without the need of having to obtain the consent of Full Council. The CEO advised that correspondence had been received from Devon CC re Recycle Devon which had been forwarded to all councillors

20/10/34

TO NOTE ANY REPORTS PREVIOUSLY E MAILED BY COUNCILLORS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Lucas spoke at length about the current high workloads of staff. He advised that he had spent time with staff so fully understood their dilemma and that staffing levels now needed to be urgently reviewed. He stated that there was no contingency plan if the CEO was taken out of circulation and if this was to occur it would have serious implications for the running of the Council. The Council also had a duty of care to its existing employees to ensure that their workloads were manageable. He advised that an HR Meeting was urgently required to examine the issues to which the Council unanimously agreed. Cllr Lucas asked for delegated authority to make decisions instead of requiring Full Council consent. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree to this.

Note this item was not a specific agenda item on the agenda so decisions should not have been made. However the consent of the Council to hold a future HR meeting is not required and also the HR Cttee already has delegated authority to recruit employees.

20/10/35

COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS

Cllr Stewart mentioned about the inclusion of the `reconsideration of the Pixie Day grant application` at the proposed Finance Cttee meeting. The CEO was of the view that when she prepared the agenda, she would simply have a general item on grants, to ensure all matters pertaining to grants (which came in between now and the meeting), could be considered, thus ensuring no applications were ruled out.

The meeting ended at 9.35pm

SIGNATURE OF MAYOR	
DATE OF SIGNATURE	
DATE/VENUE OF NEXT MEETING	Monday 2 nd November 2020 by Zoom or in the Council Offices if public meetings are resumed

Mayor's Initials.....

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