



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the **ORDINARY MEETING OF OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL** held on **MONDAY, 3rd AUGUST 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*, Copus, Giles, Stewart, Dobson, Grainger, and Pang, Sergeant Richard Stonecliffe, three members of the public (John Green, Tasha Matthews and `Rachel`) and Christine McIntyre CEO
*Cllr Faithfull arrived late due to transport issues

20/08/01

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Claire Wright

20/08/02

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	INTEREST
Cllr Giles	I(Museum) Trustee of the Heritage Society

20/08/03

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

It was agreed that the following items be discussed in Confidential Session - Item 15 Cemetery (legal issues); Item 19 Tenants and Rent Reduction (commercial sensitivity) and 19A Roofing Quotes at the Station (commercial sensitivity)

20/08/04

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

No questions were raised

20/08/05

POLICE MATTERS - TO INCLUDE A REPORT FROM SGT RICHARD STONECLIFFE

Sgt Richard Stonecliffe had already provided the following crime figures which had been e-mailed to all councillors.

Crimes Recorded - 01/08/2019 to 28/07/2020 - Ottery St Mary Town

Offence	Recorded Crime 01/08/2019 to 28/07/2020	Recorded Crime 01/08/2018 to 28/07/2019	Recorded Crime % Difference
Violence with Injury	32	37	-13.5%
Violence without Injury	49	39	25.6%
Rape	5	2	150.0%
Other Sexual Offences	14	6	133.3%
Robbery	1	0	-
Burglary Dwelling	0	3	-100.0%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	7	6	16.7%
Vehicle Offences	8	7	14.3%
Shoplifting	6	12	-50.0%
Other Theft	16	15	6.7%
Criminal Damage	28	49	-42.9%
Public Order Offences	20	19	5.3%
Possession of Weapons	2	4	-50.0%
Trafficking of Drugs	2	2	0.0%
Possession of Drugs	8	5	60.0%
Other Offences	5	6	-16.7%
Total	203	212	-4.2%

Non Notifiable Offences	15	18	-16.7%
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Incidents Recorded - 01/08/2019 to 28/07/2020 - Ottery St Mary Town

Incident Closing Category	Incidents - 01/08/2019 to 28/07/2020	Incidents - 01/08/2018 to 28/07/2019	Incidents % Difference
Anti Social Behaviour	62	82	-24.4%
Crime Not Recorded	7	13	-46.2%
Crime Recorded	57	58	-1.7%
Public Safety	226	231	-2.2%
Transport	59	82	-28.0%
Total	411	466	-11.8%

Richard advised that crime was down as Coronavirus had had an impact on figures. He advised that the Ottery police team was currently reduced in numbers, due to staffing issues. The PCs had been reduced from three to one, and the PCSOs had been reduced from three to two. However support was being provided by the Honiton and Exmouth teams. Cllr Giles expressed concern as to the sexual crimes figure but Richard explained that more persons were coming forward to report these crimes which had not always been the case, so not necessarily a case of an increase in offences. The Mayor raised the question of police enforcement measures regarding persons not wearing protective masks when they should do so. Richard explained that engagement with the person concerned was priority, to try and persuade them to comply. However the Police could not force persons to wear masks but if they refused, then they would be issued with a fine. Richard would try and attend a further Council meeting in the next few months

20/08/06

APPLICANT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR CO-OPTION

Two applications had been received from Tasha Matthews and John Green, details of which had been e-mailed to councillors separately. Both applicants were present at the meeting and provided a summary of what their contributions would be to the Council and to the Community. A vote was taken and John Green received a majority vote. He was duly co-opted onto the Council and welcomed aboard. The CEO would send him a Welcome Pack. Tasha was thanked for her application and was invited to make an application for the other Tipton St John vacancy which would be considered next month

20/08/07

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 6TH JULY 2020 (MINUTE REFS 20/07/01 – 20/07/39), AND TO APPROVE THE SIGNING OF THE MINUTES BY THE MAYOR AS A CORRECT RECORD

The Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING of 6th July 2020 (minute refs 20/07/01 – 20/07/39) were presented, approved and confirmed as a correct record. They would be signed by the Mayor shortly

20/08/08

TO NOTE AND CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF 7TH JULY 2020 (MINUTE REFS P20/07/01 – P20/07/09),

The Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING of 7th July 2020 were noted and confirmed

20/08/09

TO NOTE AND CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY AND LAND COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 27TH JULY AND 30TH JULY 2020

The Minutes of the PROPERTY AND LAND COMMITTEE MEETING of 27th July 2020 were noted and confirmed. The CEO had not had sufficient time to type up the Minutes of the Property and Land Committee meeting of 30th July and these would be considered at the September meeting

20/08/10

TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROPERTY AND LAND COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 27TH AND 30TH JULY NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The following recommendations were considered:-

- 1.The Council to pay the insurance premium for the Skate Park this year in the sum of £1129.19
- 2.County Cllr Claire Wright to be enlisted to try and resolve the Skate Park access issue
- 3.Repairs to the Station roof to be carried out and the contractor to be appointed at the August Full Council meeting (*this would be discussed in Confidential Session*).
- 4.The agreed Heads of Terms in respect of the lease to the Station to be submitted to the Station in September, as this would give the Property and Land Cttee time to finalise the terms for submission to the Station

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve all the aforementioned recommendations. There were no recommendations to consider re the meeting of 30th July as the minutes had not yet been typed up.

Note: *Cllr Pang abstained from voting in view of her concerns regarding the insurance premium payment for the Skate park*

20/08/11

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EDDC AND DCC COUNCILLORS

Cllr Claire Wright's report had been e-mailed to all councillors. No comments were raised. The Mayor advised that she had participated in a couple of EDDC Zoom meetings. She advised that EDDC did not wish to continue with the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan ('GESP'). However the matter would be referred to Full Council. Cllr Faithfull also mentioned the GESP and advised that the Land of Canaan was now available for events,

20/08/12

UPDATE ON OTTERY COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR OCCUPANCY OF THE COUNCIL OFFICES AND FUTURE ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllr Stewart declared pecuniary interests as they were Directors of Ottery Community Volunteers (the Volunteers). Cllr Faithfull questioned as to the length of time the Volunteers were intending to use the building.. Cllr Lucas and Stewart were of the view it was a long term arrangement. The CEO advised that the Volunteers occupancy was formalised by a licence which could be terminated with minimal notice. The Mayor was of the view that the situation could be reviewed on a regular basis.. It was understood that initially the chamber and the meeting room were being used by the Volunteers. However at the present time they were operating from the meeting room only. After much discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Council note the existing arrangements and approved the continuing arrangement until further notice The Directors did not vote in view of their interests

20/08/13

RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE PROPOSED 2020 CHRISTMAS MEAL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS (SHOULD IT TAKE PLACE)

After much debate it was **RESOLVED** that the Council would in principle support establishing a Christmas party for older and vulnerable persons in the Parish.. It was agreed that an outside organisation should take over the running of the event and that they would need to apply for a grant to fund the event. Cllr Stewart advised that the Community Volunteers (the Volunteers) would be interested in applying for a grant from the Council. Cllr Dobson indicated that he would be happy to run the event through the Volunteers. It was agreed that this be an item on the next Agenda. The Directors of the Volunteers did not vote in view of their pecuniary interests

20/08/14

TO CONSIDER ACQUIRING A SECOND SITE FOR ALLOTMENTS IN THE TOWN

Cllr Grainger spoke about the need for a second allotment site in the town. The CEO advised that there was currently a waiting list for allotments and from time to time the Deputy CEO advertised the allotments in the Gazette which always generated interest and a requirement for allotment plots.. After much discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Council consider acquiring a second site for allotments/community gardens in the town. The CEO would arrange for an article to be placed in the Gazette to see if there were any local landowners willing to provide land for the second site and also to investigate the extent of need from the community

20/08/15

UPDATE ON THE CEMETERY ISSUES CONCERNING THE UNAUTHORISED TREES REMOVAL ETC AND TO AGREE A WAY FORWARD TO BE DISCUSSED IN CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

This item would be discussed in Confidential Session

20/08/16

UPDATE RE PLANTER REQUIRED FOR HIGHWAY VERGE AT EXETER ROAD; CONSIDERATION OF LEGALITIES AND APPROVAL OF LICENCE COSTS

The Council had already agreed to purchase a planter on behalf of local residents. The planter required a licence from DCC. The licence fee would cost £155. The CEO advised that if the Council applied for and was granted a licence, then it would have to take on all the obligations and responsibilities of the licence. There was much discussion. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council have a meeting with the residents (who required the planter) and Ottery in Bloom, and subject to their agreement (that Ottery in Bloom take on the licence and they/residents maintain the planter) then the Council would pay the one off licence fee. It was also noted that Ottery in Bloom had public liability insurance which should satisfy DCC's requirements.

20/08/17

RECONSIDERATION OF RETAINING THE PAYPHONE IN HIND STREET AND IF AGREED, TO PROVIDE REASONS (TO BE SUBMITTED TO EDDC)

It was **RESOLVED** that the payphone be retained. It was agreed that in these turbulent times many parishioners may be unable to continue to afford the costs of a mobile phone and cancel phone contracts and some parishioners may not have a mobile phone at all. In addition, the Hind Street phone box was the only remaining phone box in the town which was still being used and therefore it was essential that it should be retained

20/08/18

CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST FOR A DONATION TOWARDS PRIZES FOR THE OTTERY WRITERS GROUP CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

It was **RESOLVED** to make a donation of £30 as a contribution towards the prizes being offered

20/08/19

REQUEST BY TENANT FOR A RENT REDUCTION AND OTHER TENANT ISSUES

The matter was discussed in Confidential Session

20/08/20

APPROVAL OF CONTRACTORS TO CARRY OUT ROOFING WORKS AT THE STATION

The matter was discussed in Confidential Session

20/08/21

CONSIDERATION OF THE RE-OPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUNDS

It was **RESOLVED** that this item be referred to the next Regeneration Cttee Meeting.

20/08/22

WEBSITE ISSUES

The CEO advised as to the delay with progressing the Council's website upgrade due to workloads. Cllr Lucas advised that there were website companies which would completely project manage a new website but the Council would have to provide copy and also there would be cost implications. The CEO advised that new regulations meant public sector organisations had a legal duty to make sure websites and apps met accessibility requirements. She had asked Vision ICT to make sure the website was compliant with the Regs but was aware that the cut of date for compliancy was 23rd September. In response to Cllr Stewart's question, the CEO advised that candidates for the Receptionist/Administrator post would be interviewed in September but the successful applicant would be unable to commence his/her duties until the Council Offices were re-opened. Therefore at the moment the Council was having to manage with minimal staff.

20/08/23

TELEPHONY ISSUES

The CEO advised that Office 1 had been redecorated and carpets would be fitted shortly; however she wished to know when the telephone system could be installed. Cllr Lucas advised that there was no reason why the hardware couldn't be put in place in readiness for the upgrade to the IT infrastructure; however in the interim the existing telephone system could be run off the ports in the office. Cllr Lucas advised that a consultant would need to come in and test and check the existing system and then make recommendations as to which system would work immediately but which could also be integrated with the new system once the broadband upgrade (which would benefit the Council Offices) had been completed.

20/08/24

S106 UPDATE AND CONSIDERATION OF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS (IF ANY)

Cllr Stewart advised that he had not taken notes at the meeting.. He advised that he wished to go through the NPS Survey report with the CEO re the Alfington Play Park at some point. He reiterated that EDDC were not chasing developers contributions due to Government policy resulting from Covid19. However EDDC had contributions of £88,000 in its bank account to enable some S106 projects to be progressed.

20/08/25

FINANCIAL MATTER

a. To approve the July 2020 Council Schedule of Payments

The Schedule has been e-mailed to all councillors. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the July 2020 Council Schedule of Payments in the sum of £13,203.33

b. To approve the Council's quarterly accounts

The quarterly accounts had been e-mailed to all councillors and it was **RESOLVED** that they be approved

20/08/26

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor thanked everyone for all their hard work during the pandemic. She was proud of the community and how it had pulled together. She also thanked the CEO and Deputy CEO for all their hard work and support

20/08/27

REPORT FROM THE CEO

1.The library had re-opened on 3rd August, with reduced opening hours. Xanthe Waite, librarian had requested that the toilets and the Information Centre remain closed.. Xanthe had minimised the amount of flyers on the Information Centre table. There was much discussion and It was **RESOLVED** that the toilets be re-opened subject to EDDC having the manpower to be able to keep them regularly cleaned in accordance with Government guidance

2.A member of the public had asked for Council meetings to be streamed. However under the Council's Scheme of Delegation the Mayor, Deputy, Chair of Finance and the CEO had decided that this was unnecessary as the Zoom platform was working well, and to stream would incur further expense

3.A business owner had reported the theft of a charity collection box from his premises and asked if the CCTV footage from the library would throw any light as to the culprit. Unfortunately the camera did not have the range to pick up images outside the business owner's property. The CEO had asked Al Findlay to assist with various issues she had with the CCTV system. Al changed the password and was also able to establish that data was only being retained for 10 days on the system (and then being recorded over), which was well within Government guidelines. The CEO advised that the system was located in a cupboard in the gentleman's toilets and suggested the Council consider works be carried out to enable any footage to be assessed remotely which would be so much easier. It was agreed that the item be included on the September agenda. Cllr Stewart suggested that consideration be given to installing CCTV in the entrance of the Council Offices

20/08/28

TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION AND ANY LATE CORRESPONDENCE

Councillors have been e-mailed details of Pavement Licensing Applications from EDDC Licensing

20/08/29

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

The CEO has not received any reports

20/08/30

COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS

1. Cllr Stewart advised that there had been a number of positive comments received regarding the shop front grant scheme. There were several shops which had been redecorated under the scheme and which had enhanced the main street
2. Cllr Copus reminded everyone of the Planning Cttee meeting tomorrow evening at 7.00pm
3. Cllr Pang questioned as to the progress of the Emergency Plan. The CEO advised that due to pressure of work she had not been able to progress the Plan as it was a major project (which would need the assistance of councillors and volunteers). Other matters were having to take priority. She also mentioned that the Council had been unable to recruit volunteers to assist with the Project despite previous attempts through advertising in the Gazette etc.

The Public Part of the Meeting ended

CONFIDENTIAL SESSIONAL ITEMS

20/08/31

UPDATE ON THE CEMETERY ISSUES CONCERNING THE UNAUTHORISED TREES REMOVAL ETC AND TO AGREE A WAY FORWARD

There was much discussion about the three land owners at Abbotts Close and the issues with the illegal removal of the trees and bushes on the Devon bank and the relocation of a boundary fence in the Council's cemetery. The CEO was of the view that a trespass, criminal damage and theft had been committed. In addition the cemetery land was consecrated so this made the matter more serious. It was understood that one property owner had admitted responsibility for the removal of trees and bushes at the rear of his property and would be willing to work with the Council on a tree planting scheme which he would be happy to contribute to. The CEO advised that another property owner had denied all liability and was unwilling to co-operate. The property owner who had moved the boundary fence maintained that he had not incorporated any of the Council's land within his garden. After much discussion it was **RESOLVED** to i. contact the Exeter Diocese to advise them of the issue; ii. to put all three property owners on formal notice that the Council was aware that illegal work had been carried out and any future interference of the Council's land would result in the matter being progressed through legal channels; iii. to progress a tree planting scheme and to contact relevant providers for quotes/advice and then ask the relevant Abbott Close occupiers to contribute to the costs

20/08/32

REQUEST BY TENANT FOR A RENT REDUCTION AND OTHER TENANT ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED IN CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

1. Men`s Shed were intending to resume their occupancy on 1st September of their porta cabin. They were seeking a rent reduction. It was **RESOLVED** that Men`s Shed could pay a reduced rent up to 31st March 2021 and then they would need to apply again to the Council, for a further concession, should they need it

2. Ottery Help Scheme had not taken over Office 3 yet in the Station but was likely to do so some time in August. They had resumed occupancy of their other office in the Station. The Scheme was seeking a reduction of the rent on both offices. It was **RESOLVED** that
i. a reduction be applied until the end of December (when the Council would review it) and
ii. to offer the Scheme accommodation at the Council Offices, at a subsidised rent, which would reduce their overheads

A tenant at the Station had advised the CEO that as she had resumed occupancy of her accommodation on 1st June, that she would resume payment of rent. However she had not paid any rent and was now three months in arrears. The CEO had written to her asking for information as to her situation but despite an assurance to pay, no payments/explanation had been forthcoming. It was **RESOLVED** that the non payment rent procedures laid down in her lease, be applied

20/08/32

APPROVAL OF CONTRACTORS TO CARRY OUT ROOFING WORKS AT THE STATION

Three quotes had been received. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from R W Dacks subject to them providing a 15-20 year guarantee on the works. The Mayor did not vote as she knew one of the contractors

The meeting ended at 9.40pm

SIGNATURE OF MAYOR	
DATE OF SIGNATURE	
DATE/VENUE OF NEXT MEETING	Monday 7 th September 2020 by Zoom or in the Council Offices if public meetings are resumed