



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF Full Council Meeting [In-person] held on **Monday 12 January 2026** at **19:00**. The meeting was held in the **Ottery St. Mary Town Council Offices, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary EX11 1BZ**

Present: Cllrs Dean Stewart, Peter Faithfull, Richard Grainger, Richard Copus, Vicky Johns (Mayor), Janice Aherne, Sarah Martin and Robyn Bennett

In Attendance: EDDC Cllr Bethany Collins, DCC Cllr Jess Bailey, Kerry Kennell (Town Clerk) Geoff Chamberlain (St Mary's Parish Church), Kerry Carr (Library Supervisor) and 22 members of the public.

Minute Taker: Kerry Kennell, Town Clerk

C/26/01/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Cllr Feasey and Cllr Peka.

C/26/01/02 DECLARATIONS AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

Cllr Aherne	Agenda item 16 – Cllr Aherne declared an 'affects NRI' as a resident of Tipton St John.
Cllr Copus	No interests declared.
Cllr Faithfull	Agenda item 23 – Cllr Faithfull declared that he is the Council representative for Friends of Ottery Library.
Cllr Bennett	No interests declared.
Cllr Grainger	No interests declared.
Cllr Martin	No interests declared.
Cllr Stewart	Agenda item 11.2 - Cllr Stewart declared an 'affects NRI' in relation to agenda item FSP/25/12/06 as the Ottery Larder collaborates with Project Food on some projects but not the project in question.
Cllr Johns	Agenda item 11.2 - Cllr Johns declared an 'affects NRI' in relation to agenda item FSP/25/12/06 as the Ottery Larder collaborates with Project Food on some projects but not the project in question.

C/26/01/03 ADMISSION TO MEETINGS

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

Chair's initials _____

It was **RESOLVED** that Agenda item C/26/01/11.2 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the committee would be discussed in Confidential Session as they include information relating to the organisation finances. It was **RESOLVED** that C/26/01/15 Human Resources Committee would be discussed in Confidential Session as it relates to staffing matters.

C/26/01/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To allow members of the public present to submit questions/comments for consideration
Individual contributions will be limited to 3 minutes

It was AGREED that members of the public could speak in relation to the agenda items that they were interested in.

C/26/01/05 MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of 1st December 2025 (*minute refs C25/12/01-C25/12/25*) and to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Mayor as a correct record

The minutes of 1st December 2025 were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the meeting.

It was **AGREED** that due to the volume of public present the agenda order would be changed to cover the items that members of the public wished to speak in relation to:

C/26/01/07 To consider the installation of vehicle activated signs in Fairmile

C/26/01/08 To consider concerns with regards to hedgerow removal within the parish and to make decisions as appropriate

C/26/01/09 To consider how the council can support the parish church with their lottery / heritage fund bid and to make decisions as appropriate

C/26/01/23 To consider a response to the DCC Shaping the Future of Devon's Library Service consultation

C/26/01/22 To consider a response to the EDDC Second Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation (Nov 2025 to Jan 2026)

The remainder of the agenda will be followed as published except for C/26/01/15 Human Resources Committee which will be discussed in Confidential session at the end of the meeting.

C/26/01/06 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE EDDC AND DCC COUNCILLORS

(if any)

EDDC Cllrs Johns, Collins and Faithfull sent written reports which are available on the Council website.

DCC Cllr Bailey advised that there is finance available for bus stop upgrades. It was AGREED that Councillors will notify the Clerk of any bus stops within the parish which need to be upgraded. Cllr Bailey has objected to the Gerway Farm application. A meeting was held at DCC regarding the postponement of elections in May 26 – Cllr Bailey does not support this. Cllr Bailey is meeting with DfE regarding Tipton St John Primary School. At the EDDC

Chair's initials _____

Strategic Planning Committee Cllr Bailey has advised that EDDC should set up their own grant scheme for the creation of Neighbourhood Plans now the government scheme has been scrapped.

C/26/01/07 TO CONSIDER THE INSTALLATION OF VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS IN FAIRMILE

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will pay for the sign to be installed in Fairmile. DCC Cllr Bailey and DCC Cllr Connor are each contributing £500 towards this work from their locality budget. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will write to Talaton Parish Council to request written confirmation that they support the project which will directly benefit residents of Ottery St Mary and Talaton parish. The Council are disappointed that Talaton Parish Council has chosen not to make any donation towards the project which will directly benefit their residents by improving road safety.

C/26/01/08 TO CONSIDER CONCERNS WITH REGARDS TO HEDGEROW REMOVAL WITHIN THE PARISH AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

Four members of public spoke about their distress caused by the removal of hedge. It was noted that EDDC are responsible for the management of the hedge. EDDC Cllr Johns and DCC Cllr Bailey are liaising with EDDC. They felt strongly that the action to remove a hedgerow makes a mockery of planning process. Residents want to know why the landowner is not being held to account. The importance that the Tree Preservation Orders are confirmed and made permanent was noted. It was also noted that traffic was stopped whilst this work was carried out without the appropriate authority.

It was **AGREED** that the Council will write an open letter to EDDC to express their disappointment at the lack of enforcement in relation to the hedge removal. This letter will be sent to Wendy Ormsby, EDDC Planning - Development Manager - copied to Ed Freeman, DCC Cllr Bailey, EDDC Cllrs Johns, Faithfull and Collins, Cllr Paul Arnott, Tracey Hendren, Cllr Olly Davies, Richard Foord MP, Cllr Geoff Jung

DCC Cllr Bailey will raise with DCC Highways Officer about the unofficial closing of the road while the work was carried out and will copy her communication to the Health and Safety Executive.

It was **AGREED** that the Council support the TPOs being made permanent.

C/26/01/09 TO CONSIDER HOW THE COUNCIL CAN SUPPORT THE PARISH CHURCH WITH THEIR LOTTERY / HERITAGE FUND BID AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

Geoff Chamberlain who is an Ottery Parish Church Assistant Governor in a fundraising role gave a presentation to explain their National Lottery Heritage Fund bid. It was **AGREED** that the Council will write to express its full support for the Parish Church's application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

C/26/01/10 PLANNING

C/26/01/10.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 15TH DECEMBER 2025 (MINUTE REFS P/25/12/01-P25/12/10) AND 6TH JANUARY 2026 (MINUTE REFS P/26/01/01-P26/01/10)

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The minutes of 15th December 2025 and 6th January 2026 were noted.

C/26/01/11 FINANCE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

C/26/01/11.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 9TH DECEMBER 2025 (MINUTE REFS FSP/25/12/01 - FSP/25/12/14)

The minutes of 9th December 2025 were noted.

C/26/01/11.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- £250 is awarded to Project Food for the first course and if it is successful (attended by at least 6 Ottery St Mary residents who complete the course) a further £250 will be awarded. *Cllrs John and Stewart abstained.*
- the updated Strategy and Youth Strategy documents are adopted by the Council. *Cllr Faithfull abstained.*

C/26/01/12 TO APPROVE THE BUDGET FOR 2026/27

It was noted that the Council employ DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd to assist with budget setting. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget for 2026/27. *Cllr Faithfull abstained.*

C/26/01/13 TO APPROVE THE PRECEPT FOR 2026/27

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a Precept for 2026/27 of £447,029.00. *Cllr Faithfull abstained.*

C/26/01/14 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

C/26/01/14.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 15TH DECEMBER 2025 (MINUTE REFS CI/25/12/01-025/12/20)

The minutes of 15th December 2025 were noted.

C/26/01/14.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that the Shop Front Fund Policy is approved with the following amendments: Applications for the same (similar) work can only be made every five years; For any additional works one claim can be made every financial year that the scheme runs for; If a building is situated within the conservation area all rules and regulations must be adhered to; 2026 Scheme Dates: Scheme Opens for Applications: 15th March 2026; Deadline for Applications: 31st May 2026; Earliest Work Date 1st June 2025; Work Completion Date: 30th September 2026; Final submission of Receipts 31st October 2026.

C/26/01/15 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

To be discussed in Confidential Session at the end of the meeting.

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C/26/01/16 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER TIPTON ST JOHN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL TO THORNE FARM, OTTERY ST MARY

There was no update other than reported by DCC Cllr Bailey.

C/26/01/17 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE COLERIDGE PRE-SCHOOL BUILDING AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS/DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

There was no update.

C/26/01/18 COMPLIANCE WITH ASSERTION 10 – SECURE USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES FOR COUNCIL BUSINESS

To review and agree on measures ensuring compliance with Assertion 10 regarding the secure handling of council information when councillors use personal devices.

It was AGREED that this will be carried forward to the next meeting.

C/26/01/19 TO NOTE THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

There is no update.

C/26/01/20 TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING A NIGHT BUS AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

It was AGREED that the Clerk will write to Honiton Town Council to see if there is support for a night bus.

C/26/01/21 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE EDDC HERITAGE STRATEGY 2024-2042 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

[Heritage Strategy 2024-2042 Public Consultation - East Devon](#)

It was AGREED that the Clerk will invite Cllr Copus and other Councillors in to work on the response.

C/26/01/22 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE EDDC SECOND REGULATION 19 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION (NOV 2025 TO JAN 2026)

[Second Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation \(Nov 2025 to Jan 2026\) - East Devon](#)

A member of the public requested that the Council request that Otry_21 is removed from the emerging EDDC Local Plan. Concerns were raised that Ottery St Mary is an unsuitable location for large-scale development due to traffic issues, environmental impact on the River Otter, and lack of supporting infrastructure or employment opportunities. The Neighbourhood Plan states no further development is required. Councillors highlighted that demand is for smaller, affordable/social housing for local people, not large executive homes, and stressed that current proposals do not meet Ottery's needs.

It was AGREED that the Clerk will invite Cllr Grainger and other Councillors in to complete a response to the consultation.

Chair's initials _____

C/26/01/23 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE DCC SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DEVON'S LIBRARY SERVICE CONSULTATION

[Have Your Say Today - Shaping Devon's Library Service - Commonplace](#)

Kerry Carr, Devon Library Supervisor gave a presentation regarding the DCC Shaping the Future of Devon's Library Service consultation.

It was AGREED that the Council will encourage as many people as possible to take part and will share the link to the on line survey and have paper copies of the forms available for residents. Residents are encouraged to consider what the library means to them.

It was AGREED the Clerk will submit a response on behalf of the Council and will also write to DCC separately to voice the Council's concerns on the proposed changes – particularly the impact of being closed on their busiest days and the potential impact on the footfall in the town if the library opening hours are reduced.

C/26/01/24 TO ELECT A DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr Stewart was proposed by Cllr Aherne and seconded Cllr Copus. All voted in favour. *Cllr Faithfull abstained.*

Cllr Stewart advised that he intends to resign as Chair of Community Infrastructure Committee.

C/26/01/25 TO CONSIDER NEXT STEPS TO AGREE PROPOSED AREAS FOR INSTALLATION OF 20MPH ZONE OUTSIDE OF THE TOWN AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

There is no update.

C/26/01/26 CONFIRMATION OF DECISIONS MADE UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

- Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority to authorise Stephens Scown to review the PlayZone contract at a fixed fee of £950
- Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority to accept the quote from Clubspark at a cost of £4,640 for the PlayZone management software
- Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority regarding point 3 of the PlayZone contract to confirm there would be no financial recompense for delayed installation
- Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority for the Clerk to complete a grant application for Talaton Parish Council in relation to a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS)

C/26/01/27 FINANCIAL MATTERS

To consider and approve the December 2025 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the December 2025 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports.

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C/26/01/28 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor's report was noted.

C/26/01/29 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK

The Clerk's report was noted.

C/26/01/30 TO NOTE ANY SPECIFIC CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Correspondence was noted from Honiton Town Council in relation to the Deer Park Charity Ball they are holding; EDDC in relation to an application for Otter Morris and from a resident in relation to site Otry_21.

C/26/01/31 TO NOTE ANY REPORTS PREVIOUSLY E-MAILED BY COUNCILLORS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED

The minutes of the November meeting of the Exeter Airport Consultative Committee which was attended by Cllr Stewart were noted.

C/26/01/32 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS

Cllr Faithfull asked whether there was a plan to spend the Neighbourhood CIL money given to the parish. It was confirmed this money will be used towards the wayfinding project.

The Clerk will speak to the Heritage Society to see whether they have any plans to upgrade any further information boards and to update them on the wayfinding project.

Under s.1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the council resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

C/26/01/33 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

C/26/01/33.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 8TH JANUARY 2026 (MINUTE REFS HR/26/01/01-026/01/09)

The minutes were noted.

C/26/01/33.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that all recommendations from the Committee were approved.

Reports & Appendix 1

Meeting concluded at 21:30

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