



## Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF Full Council Meeting [In-person] held on **Monday 13 April 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 Peter Faithfull, Richard Grainger, Richard Copus, Vicky Johns (Mayor), Nick Sneller, Janice Aherne, Ben Feasey, Robyn Bennett and Emily Peka  
In Attendance: DCC Cllr Jess Bailey and Kerry Kennell, Town Clerk  
Minute Taker: Kerry Kennell, Town Clerk

### **C/26/04/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Cllrs Martin and Stewart (Deputy Mayor).

### **C/26/04/02 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 Feasey	No interests declared.
Cllr Aherne	No interests declared.
Cllr Copus	No interests declared.
Cllr Bennett	No interests declared.
Cllr Faithfull	No interests declared.
Cllr Peka	Agenda item C/26/04/13.2 - Cllr Peka declared a personal interest as an allotment holder.
Cllr Grainger	Agenda item C/26/04/13.2 - Cllr Grainger declared a personal interest as an allotment holder.
Cllr Sneller	No interests declared.
Cllr Johns	No interests declared.

### **C/26/04/03 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

It was **RESOLVED** that the following agenda items would be discussed in Confidential Session: C/26/04/14 - To receive an update following a meeting with the Ottery Heritage Society and to make decisions as appropriate due to commercial sensitivity. During the meeting it was **RESOLVED** to discuss agenda item C/26/04/17 – To receive

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an update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building and make decisions/recommendations as appropriate due to personal and commercially sensitive circumstances.

**C/26/04/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

There were none.

**C/26/04/05 MINUTES**

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of 2nd March 2026 (*minute refs C26/03/01-C26/03/30*) and to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Mayor as a correct record

The minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were updated to show that Cllr Peka only declared her interest once. The minutes were then approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the meeting.

**C/26/04/06 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE EDDC AND DCC COUNCILLORS**

(if any)

A written report was received from Devon County Council (DCC) Cllr Bailey. DCC Cllr Bailey also reported on matters discussed at a recent meeting organised by Ottery Valley Association (OVA) regarding the state of the River Otter. It was noted that the River Otter is currently identified as the most polluted river in Devon.

It was noted that East Devon District Council (EDDC) Cllr Johns had been on annual leave. Cllr Johns visited the Veterans With Dogs charity offices and find out more about the great work they do.

No report was received from EDDC Cllr Collins.

The Council noted concerns raised by residents of Harpford regarding the volume of vehicles travelling through the village. While the Council sympathised with these concerns, it was acknowledged that residents had taken some action themselves. It was further noted that the condition of the road surface has deteriorated due to increased traffic, and it is hoped that this can be addressed when the road reopens.

It was AGREED that information clarifying the responsibilities of the relevant authorities be shared via social media.

EDDC Cllr Faithfull reported that East Devon District Council currently has a 3.5-year housing land supply. It was also noted that EDDC has commissioned a Water Cycle Study, which is presently being checked for accuracy.

**C/26/04/07 TO CONFIRM THE PURCHASE OF VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS IN FAIRMILE**

It was **RESOLVED** that a vehicle activated sign (VAS) will be purchased for use in Fairmile. The total cost would be £5,545.59. £1000 would be given jointly by DCC Cllrs Bailey and Connor. The remaining £4545.59 would be paid by the Council.

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**C/26/04/08 TO CONSIDER CONCERNS WITH REGARDS TO HEDGEROW REMOVAL WITHIN THE PARISH AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

An update from EDDC was noted. The Council is encouraged that EDDC appear to be pursuing the reinstatement of the hedgerow. Everyone was reminded that if they see any hedgerows or trees being removed please highlight them to ensure the appropriate permission has been obtained.

**C/26/04/09 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING FADED ROAD MARKINGS THROUGHOUT THE PARISH AND SPECIFICALLY RECENT ACCIDENTS AT BATTS LANE AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

There was no update from Devon County Council (DCC) regarding the timing of the proposed line-marking works. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to DCC, copying in Cllr Bailey, to highlight that the issues remain ongoing and that, with the forthcoming tourism season, traffic levels are expected to increase.

**C/26/04/10 PLANNING**

**C/26/04/10.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 10TH MARCH 2026 (MINUTE REFS P/26/03/01-P26/03/10) AND 30TH MARCH 2026 (MINUTE REFS P/26/03/12-P/26/03/21)**

The minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

**C/26/04/11 FINANCE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**C/26/04/11.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 10TH MARCH 2026 (MINUTE REFS FSP/26/03/01 - FSP/26/03/13)**

The minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

**C/26/04/12 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

**C/26/04/12.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 16TH MARCH 2026 (MINUTE REFS C/26/03/01-C26/03/23)**

The minutes of 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

**C/26/04/12.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would:

- Write to DCC to request a bus stop by Salston Corner and Kings Reach.
- Request a bus shelter by Sainsburys which is sympathetic to the conservation area.  
*Cllrs Sneller abstained.*
- Authorise In Post lockers to be installed at the Station Hub stipulating that if any damage occurs it must be repaired and left in a safe state as this is a community building. *Cllr Sneller abstained.*

**C/26/04/13 OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

**C/26/04/13.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF 26TH MARCH 2026 (MINUTES REFS O/26/03/01 - O/26/03/19)**

The minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

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**C/26/04/13.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Allotment Waiting List Policy is adopted.

**C/26/04/14 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH THE OTTERY HERITAGE SOCIETY AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

*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.*

The Council noted the letter received from the Ottery Heritage Society together with the report from the Clerk. Having considered the matter, the Council **AGREED** the points discussed and **RESOLVED** to progress the sale.

*The Confidential Session ended.*

**C/26/04/15 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE RECRUITMENT OF AN ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

It was noted that an Assistant Town Clerk has been appointed and subject to all the pre employment checks will be starting work on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**C/26/04/16 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER TIPTON ST JOHN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL TO THORNE FARM, OTTERY ST MARY**

There is no update.

**C/26/04/17 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE COLERIDGE PRE-SCHOOL BUILDING AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS/DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

*Confidential Session:*

There was no update to report at this time. Owing to a change in personal circumstances, it was noted that the Clerk would contact Devon County Council regarding the matter.

*Confidential Session ended.*

**C/26/04/18 TO NOTE THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

A consultation response was submitted by the Clerk reflecting the varying views of the Council. There is no further update.

**C/26/04/19 TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING A NIGHT BUS AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

The Council expressed a wish to investigate the provision of a night bus service further. It was agreed that a public consultation would be undertaken to seek residents' views on whether such a service would be supported, used or beneficial within the parish. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk

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would contact Honiton Town Council to confirm whether they are content for the Council to proceed with this consultation.

**C/26/04/20 TO CONSIDER NEXT STEPS TO AGREE PROPOSED AREAS FOR INSTALLATION OF 20MPH ZONE OUTSIDE OF THE TOWN AND TO MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

Cllr Bailey highlighted that any infrastructure changes to the highway network can be difficult to implement. Following discussion, it was AGREED that the Council would undertake a consultation on 20mph zones to seek residents' views, including whether there is local support for such measures. It was further AGREED that Devon County Council (DCC) would be contacted for advice, including any suggested wording or questions to support the consultation.

**C/26/04/21 TO REVIEW THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE**

Cllr Feasey reminded the Council of the importance of the Strategic Plan, noting that it is a five-year plan and that progress against it must be monitored and reported back to the parish. Cllr Feasey will speak to the Chair of each committee regarding how progress against the Strategic Plan is best tracked, with the intention of drawing this together into a consistent reporting model for the Council.

**C/26/04/22 CONFIRMATION OF DECISIONS MADE UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The following decisions were noted:

Cllrs Johns, Stewart, Feasey and Grainger gave delegated authority to arrange a survey by the Valuations Office Agency at a cost of £1800 plus VAT.

Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority to make the first payment of £7,500 plus VAT for materials for the outdoor project at the Station Hub.

**C/26/04/23 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

To consider and approve the March 2026 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the March 2026 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports.

**C/26/04/24 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION**

This is a duplicate agenda item to C/26/04/18.

**C/26/04/25 TO NOTE THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING TAKING PLACE AT 7PM ON THURSDAY 30TH APRIL**

It was AGREED that the Annual Parish Meeting will now take place at 7pm on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**C/26/04/26 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor sent a written report.

**C/26/04/27 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK**

The Clerk sent a written report. It was agreed in principle that the Council would support a Gate to Plate event to be held in the town in 2027. The Council further agreed in principle that, should

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East Devon District Council contribute £5,000 to the first event and £2,500 to the second event, the Council would also contribute £2,500 towards the second year.

**C/26/04/28 TO NOTE ANY SPECIFIC CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

A request was received regarding the potential provision of a community minibus. Councillors noted that further information would be required. It was discussed that a community grant could potentially be available to support a local organisation, or group of organisations, operating such a service. It was noted that the League of Friends had previously operated an ambulance service. The Council acknowledged that there are residents within the parish who experience difficulties accessing transport, including at weekends. The idea of a community transport scheme was supported in principle; however, it was agreed that the Council would require a clearer proposal, including a business case. Options such as a car-share scheme were discussed, although it was recognised that this would not be something the Council could operate directly. It was agreed that the Clerk would undertake further research into the legal and practical implications, including governance, insurance and potential operating arrangements, and that the requesting organisation would also be asked to carry out further work to develop the proposal, including consideration of need, delivery model and a business case, with both to report back to Council

**C/26/04/29 TO NOTE ANY REPORTS PREVIOUSLY E-MAILED BY COUNCILLORS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED**

A report from Cllr Aherne was noted.

**C/26/04/30 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS**

Cllr Faithfull suggested that the size of the Council be increased through a governance review. It was agreed that the clerk would write to EDDC to understand whether this would be affected by local government reorganisation and the expansion of many parishes throughout EDDC.

Cllr Feasey provided an update on the carers event taking place at the Station Hub on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June. This event is open to both the carer and the person they are caring for.

**C/26/04/31 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 11TH MAY 2026**

Reports & Appendix 1

Meeting concluded at 21:14

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