



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF Annual Town Council Meeting held on **Monday 11 May 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, Janice Aherne, Ben Feasey, Sarah Martin, Robyn Bennett and Emily Peka
In Attendance: One member of the parish and Kerry Kennell (Town Clerk)
Minute Taker: Kerry Kennell (Town Clerk)

*Meeting order: Please note that agenda item **C/26/05/26 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** was discussed after **C/26/05/36 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS** to enable the member of public present to listen to the rest of the meeting.*

C/26/05/01 ELECTION OF THE MAYOR OF OTTERY ST MARY FOR 2026/27 - TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS AND TO CARRY OUT A VOTE ACCORDINGLY

Cllr Johns was proposed as Mayor of Ottery St Mary for 2026/27 by Cllr Aherne and seconded by Cllr Martin. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Johns be elected as Mayor.

C/26/05/02 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE BY THE MAYOR

Following the election of the Mayor and pursuant to the provisions of S83 of the Local Government Act 1972, the person elected to be Mayor of Ottery St Mary shall make a declaration of Acceptance of Office in the prescribed form

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by the Mayor.

C/26/05/03 ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF OTTERY ST MARY FOR 2026/27 - TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS AND TO CARRY OUT A VOTE ACCORDINGLY

Cllr Stewart was proposed as Deputy Mayor of Ottery St Mary for 2026/27 by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Aherne. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Stewart be elected as Deputy Mayor. .

C/26/05/04 TO REMIND ALL COUNCILLORS TO REVIEW THEIR REGISTER OF INTERESTS FORM AND NOTIFY THE TOWN CLERK OF ANY CHANGES

[Ottery St Mary Town Council - East Devon](#)

All councillors were reminded to review their Register of Interests form. The Clerk will send a blank ROI form to all councillors.

Chair's initials _____

C/26/05/05 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Cllr Sneller, EDDC Cllr Collins and DCC Cllr Bailey.

C/26/05/06 ELECTION OF COUNCILLOR WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCE ("TREASURER/CHAIR")

Cllr Stewart was proposed as Councillor with special responsibility for Finance ("Treasurer/Chair") by Cllr Grainger and seconded by Cllr Martin. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Stewart be elected as Councillor with special responsibility for Finance ("Treasurer/Chair")

C/26/05/07 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	Agenda item 28 – Cllr Aherne declared an ‘affects NRI’ as a resident of Tipton St John.
Cllr Copus	No interests declared.
Cllr Faithfull	No interests declared.
Cllr Peka	No interests declared.
Cllr Bennett	No interests declared.
Cllr Grainger	No interests declared.
Cllr Martin	No interests declared.
Cllr Stewart	No interests declared.
Cllr Johns	No interests declared.

C/26/05/08 ADMISSION TO MEETINGS

In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Action 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/26/05/24/24.1 **C/26/05/24.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE** (supporting information only); C/26/05/26 **C/26/05/26. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE** and C/26/05/27 **C/26/05/27 TO CONSIDER SHOP FRONT FUND APPLICATIONS AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE** (supporting information only).

C/26/05/09 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chair’s initials _____

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

Nothing was raised.

C/26/05/10 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EDDC AND DCC COUNCILLORS

A written report was received from DCC Cllr Bailey.

It was noted that EDDC has not updated its housing targets, despite Government indications that the required housing numbers have been reduced. It was further noted that the Government has acknowledged that there are no associated financial savings with Local Government Reorganisation.

A written report was also received from EDDC Cllr Collins. The Council noted that some residents only received notification of the EDDC Planning Committee meeting (regarding application 25/2468/MOUT) on the day before the meeting, limiting the opportunity for engagement.

It was noted that EDDC Cllr Johns has been dealing with confidential housing matters. EDDC Cllr Faithfull advised that Strategic Planning has agreed to extend the submission deadline for the EDDC Local Plan. It was further noted that the self-build register is currently under review, with only eight individuals registered. Cllr Faithfull has promoted the register via social media.

C/26/05/11 TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND PROPOSED CHANGES AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

It was AGREED that no changes are required to the current committee structure.

C/26/05/12 TO APPOINT MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR EACH

1. Planning Committee

The following membership was agreed: Cllrs Johns (**Ex Officio**), Stewart (**Ex Officio**) Copus, Aherne, Grainger, Martin, Peka

Cllr Grainger was declared elected as Chair of the Planning Committee.

Cllr Copus was declared elected as Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

2. Finance and Strategic Planning Committee

The following membership was agreed: Cllrs Johns (**Ex Officio**), Stewart (**Ex Officio**), Aherne, Feasey and Grainger

Cllr Stewart had been elected as Chair earlier in the meeting.

Cllr Feasey was declared elected as the Vice Chair of the Finance Committee.

3. Human Resource Management Committee

The following membership was agreed: Cllrs Johns (**Ex Officio**), Stewart (**Ex Officio**), Aherne and Grainger

Chair and Vice Chair: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor were declared elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the Human Resource Management Committee respectively.

4. Operations Committee

The following membership was agreed: Cllrs Johns (**Ex Officio**), Stewart (**Ex Officio**), Feasey, Grainger, Aherne

Chair's initials _____

Cllr Feasey was declared elected as the Chair of the Operations Committee.

Cllr Grainger was declared elected as the Vice Chair.

5. Community Infrastructure Committee

The following membership was agreed: Cllrs Johns (**Ex Officio**), Stewart (**Ex Officio**), Sneller, Copus, Bennett, Peka and Faithfull.

Cllr Martin was declared elected as the Chair Community Infrastructure Committee

Cllr Peka was declared elected as the Vice Chair.

Appendix 1 attached shows the Committee membership as agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the elected Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the Council's Committees.

It was AGREED that if any councillor wishes to join any additional committees they will contact the Clerk.

C/26/05/13 WORKING GROUPS:

It was RESOLVED that the Emergency Plan Working Group will cover the scope of the Community Safety Working Group which will cease to exist.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following working groups are extended until

31/05/2027: Events; Emergency Plan; Asset Delivery; Youth Engagement Working Group; Safe Cycle and Pedestrian Access and Community Safety Group

C/26/05/14 TO APPOINT MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUPS

Events Working Group	Cllr Johns, Stewart, Aherne and Feasey
Emergency Plan Working Group	Cllrs Johns, Aherne and Faithfull
Asset Management Working Group	Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Feasey
Youth Engagement Working Group	Cllrs Feasey, Johns, Grainger and Aherne
Safe Cycle and Pedestrian Access	Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Sneller

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the membership of Working Groups as above – see Appendix 1.

C/26/05/15 TO ELECT MEMBERS TO FILL COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS AND TO APPOINT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was **RESOLVED** to elect members to fill Council Appointments as per Appendix 1.

C/26/05/16 TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

It was AGREED that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be reviewed at the June Full Council meeting.

C/26/05/17 TO NOTE THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT INSURANCE POLICY

The Council's insurance policy was noted.

C/26/05/18 TO CONSIDER AND REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Chair's initials _____

The Council's annual subscriptions were reviewed.

The National Allotment Society	£84 + VAT
DALC	£1660.00 + VAT
ICCM	£110.00
Devon Communities Together	£50
SLCC - one staff member	£379 + VAT

C/26/05/19 BANK MANDATE - TO DETERMINE THE COUNCIL'S AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

It was noted that current authorised signatures are Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Aherne and Feasey will be added as authorised signatories.

C/26/05/20 TO CONFIRM KEYHOLDER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL BUILDING AND OFFICES

It was noted that keyholders are Cllr Johns, Stewart and Grainger (back door only).

C/26/05/21 TO NOTE COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2026/27 AND TO DECIDE WHETHER TO HAVE ONE MEETING A YEAR AT ESCOT, TIPTON ST JOHN AND ALFINGTON

It was noted that Council meetings will be held on the first Monday of each month, unless there is a bank holiday in case it will be held on the second Monday of the month. It was **AGREED** to that the Council will seek to hold meetings in Tipton St John and at Escot Village Hall, subject to hall availability.

C/26/05/22 MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Town Council of 13th April 2026 (minute refs 26/04/01 - 26/04/31) and to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Mayor as a correct record

The minute of 13th April 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

C/26/05/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE

To note the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 20th April 2026 (minute refs P/26/04/01 - P/26/04/10) and 29th April 2026 (minute refs P/26/05/11 - P/26/05/20)

The minutes of 20th April 2026 were noted. It was noted that the minutes of 29th April 2026 (minute refs P/26/05/11 - P/26/05/20) will be noted at the next meeting.

C/26/05/24 FINANCE COMMITTEE

C/26/05/24.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF 14TH APRIL 2026 (MINUTE REFS F/26/04/01 - F/26/04/16)

The minutes of 14th April 2026 were noted.

Chair's initials _____

C/26/05/24.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that £2,000 is awarded to the Ottery St Mary Pétanque Club complete the work on the condition that they use a professional contractor with the appropriate public liability insurance.

C/26/05/25 OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

C/26/05/25.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF 23RD APRIL 2026 (MINUTE REFS O/26/04/01 - O/26/04/18)

The minutes of 23rd April 2026 were noted.

C/26/05/25.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- following the memorial inspection where a grave is identified as requiring repair, the Council should first attempt to contact the grave owner. If this is not possible, the Council should make the memorial safe.
- the Council will not fund repairs beyond making the memorial safe.
- if Otter Garden Centre can provide hanging baskets again this year, the baskets be offered to businesses at a 50% subsidised rate.
- JHH Property Maintenance are instructed to carry out the summer planting at a cost of £1,677.20.

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/26/05/26 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

C/26/05/26.1 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF 1ST MAY 2026 (MINUTE REFS O26/05/01 - 026/05/09)

The minutes of 1st May 2026 were noted.

C/26/05/26.2 TO CONSIDER (AND APPROVE IF APPROPRIATE) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The Council approve and will adopt the following policies:
Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
Disciplinary Procedure
Equality & Diversity

Chair's initials _____

Flexible Working Policy
Grievance Procedure
Health and Safety Policy
Training and Development Policy
Maternity and Pay Policy
Emergency/Dependents Leave Policy
Paternity and Pay Policy
Carer's Leave Policy
Compassionate Leave Policy
Lone Working Policy

Cllr Faithfull abstained.

- the Council Offices will close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve and reopen on the first working day after New Year's Day and that staff contractual arrangements be updated accordingly.
- that the recommendation regarding the Clerks role is approved.

C/26/05/27 TO CONSIDER SHOP FRONT FUND APPLICATIONS AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

It was **RESOLVED** to approve an application of £600.00 from Exe Mortgages Ltd. It was **AGREED** that the applicant will be reminded that need to follow the appropriate planning guidance including that relating to being situated in a conservation area including the installation of LED signs..

C/26/05/28 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/26/05/29 TO NOTE THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND MAKE DECISIONS AS APPROPRIATE

There is no update.

C/26/05/30 CONFIRMATION OF DECISIONS MADE UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The following decisions were noted:

- Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Feasey gave delegated authority to approve payment of the insurance premium for the year for £18,578.95.
- Cllrs Johns, Stewart, Grainger and Feasey gave delegated authority to purchase and set up three staff laptops at a cost of £3,438.00 plus VAT.
- Cllrs Johns, Stewart, Grainger and Feasey gave delegated authority to authorise Shop Front Grants as discussed at the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee meeting on 14th April 2026 to enable applicants to instruct their contractors. The grants

Chair's initials _____

authorised were: The Ottery Hound £600; C Lewis Physiotherapy £300; Jo Wilson Dance £287.50; Grace Hair Up to £250; Edward Scissor Hounds £330.

C/26/05/31 FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

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

C/26/05/32 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor sent a written report.

C/26/05/33 TO CONSIDER REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk advised that Laura Dickinson has started as Assistant Town Clerk. It was **AGREED** that all Councillors will provide a reason for their apologies if they are unable to attend a meeting.

C/26/05/34 TO NOTE ANY SPECIFIC CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

It was noted that the first meeting of the Ottery Business Network has taken place.

Cllr Johns has been asked by parishioners whether there is an update regarding Jasmine Cottage. The Clerk will chase EDDC for an update.

It was noted that an abandoned caravan at Head Weir has been burnt out. The Clerk will ask EDDC to remove the remains as the site is adjacent to a highway and public rights of way.

C/26/05/35 TO NOTE ANY REPORTS PREVIOUSLY E-MAILED BY COUNCILLORS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED

There were none.

C/26/05/36 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS ON COUNCILLORS BUSINESS

Cllr Faithfull asked the Clerk to speak to the Library regarding maintenance outside of the building.

Cllr Peka asked whether there is anything that the Council can do to encourage occupancy of empty shops. This is being looked at by the Community Infrastructure Committee.

It was **AGREED** that the next Planning Committee agenda should include an item to discuss outstanding enforcement concerns within the conservation area.

Cllr Bennett asked where bad smells should be reported. It was noted that this is to EDDC.

C/26/05/37 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 1ST JUNE 2026

Chair's initials _____

Meeting concluded at 20.52.

Chair's initials _____