

Otterton Parish Council

Date & Time	5 th February 2024		Location	Otterton Village Hall			
Councillors Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
MS Melanie Martin	MM	Parish Councillor		Members of the public	4		
Mr Jerry Fry	JF	Parish Councillor		Jess Bailey	JB		
Mr Richard Witherby	RW	Parish Councillor					
Steve Culverhouse	SC	Parish Councillor					
Ian Simpson	IS	Parish Councillor					
Peter Wells	PW	Co-opted Councillor					

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence	Absent without Apology	Initials	
Charlotte Fitzgerald	CF	Maternity leave			
Ms Belinda Shoemaker	RP	Holiday			
Roger Pellow	RP	Work Commitments			
Briony Sharp	BS	Personal reasons			

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to
F Mills	FM	Clerk	Councillors, website, notice board

Ref	Main meeting agenda item, comment & decision	Action Owner & deadline
1	Welcome & Apologies received & accepted as above.	
2	Declarations of Interests: None	
3	<p>Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 23 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting. Matters arising not featured on the agenda:</p> <p>Speed Watch update: Sent by RP I can at last report that the speed watch is close to becoming operational. The Police will be doing our first training session on the 20th of February at my place with the team.</p> <p>Once this is done and we receive the equipment we can start the Otterton Speed Watch. It's taken some organising but we're nearly there. RP was thanked.</p> <p>Nothing to report on War memorial.</p> <p>Topple Testing: FM reported that Vince Orchard Stone Mason has supplied dates for Topple Testing and that she & Peter Wells would accompany him to Otterton Cemetery for his report. Fees would be calculated per grave and it was agreed that an inspection should occur 5 yearly and more often if there is a concern.</p>	
4	<p>The chair confirmed the arrangement for public discussion:</p> <p>All members of the public are welcome and comments on items on the agenda will be heard. If you would like to add an item to the agenda, please contact the clerk at least 7 days before the meeting. Public questions by email/letter or in person:</p> <p>Ongoing: A resident requested an update on the planning application for the MOT centre proposal on the land on Ottery Street. It was reported that following objections from residents and the OPC an appeal has been launched and we await further news.</p>	

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12	<p>HR: reported that feedback is requested regarding the proposal for a Banking Hub in Budleigh Salterton. Letter attached. Residents invited to give views to HR</p>	
	<p>Cllr Jess Bailey: February 2024</p> <p>1. At the meeting of Devon County Council on 7th December 2023 I raised a concern with cabinet member Cllr Stuart Hughes about streetlights in Otterton. Below is Cllr Hughes response. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR BAILEY: Re: Streetlight in Otterton</p> <p>Residents of Otterton have been waiting for over two months for a streetlight on Fore Street to be fixed and at the time of writing it remains out of operation. Lighting is particularly important due to the proximity of the road to the leat which is several feet lower than the level of the road. When I complained about the delays, I was advised that the contractor is experiencing recruitment issues and so no updates on timescales for works are being given. This is clearly unacceptable – please can the portfolio holder advise when the streetlight will be fixed.</p> <p>REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES Officers have discussed this matter with our contractor. We are aware of three street lighting outages in Otterton, these were all programmed for repair on Monday (04/12/23). As always with street lighting issues, I would urge you to continue to report any faults via the ‘Report a Problem’ web pages.</p> <p>2. As a member of the DCC health and adult care scrutiny committee we reviewed the budgets for adult services 2024-25 in our meeting on 24th January 2024. Although there is an increase in budget for adult services, in fact due to the impact of increased demand, inflation and the effect of the national living wage, overall savings will have to be found in adult services in the region of £29 million. It is unclear exactly how these savings will be achieved.</p> <p>3. One of the key risks that the adult services budget report identified was how changes to the immigration rules due to be introduced in April 2024 pose a <i>“significant risk to the sufficiency of all sectors of the care market particularly the home care sector. This is also a specific challenge to the recruitment of nurses affecting the nursing home sector”</i>. I find it quite shocking that the government changed immigration rules without any regard to the impact that this will have.</p> <p>4. You may have read about a devolution deal involving Devon County Council, Torbay Council and the Districts Councils which will create a “Combined County Authority”. I am really struggling to see what benefit this will actually bring, as I think it is likely to create more bureaucracy with very little tangible benefit for our residents. Cllr Jess Bailey</p>	
13	<p>Financial matters: It was unanimously agreed that all payments listed on agenda 4.2.24 would be paid.</p> <p>Request for Precept increase of 10% to support the work of the Parish Council in 2024 was made in good time.</p>	Clerk to action
14	<p>Further actions: Support for Community bus sought at £115.00 the clerk has confirmed that residents of the Old Vic use this facility. It was agreed that this matter will be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>ROSPA Inspection due in March @ £111.00 Installation of swings before this would be cost efficient.</p>	

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	Following positive feedback of the hospitality after the December meeting FM has offered to provide seasonal refreshments after meetings on a quarterly basis: - Apr, June, Sep, Dec FM has also offered to organise a Festive meal towards the end of the year. FM was asked to approach the St Michael's PCC to see if the OPC could help with the Church Fete	Clerk to action.
15	106 Funding: In the region of £8073.00 (Sport) £1683.00 (Recreation). The clerk reminded the OPC of the funds currently being held at EDDC and how these could be used.	
16	Items for next agenda: Voluntary Bus Service, Grass Cutting contract, Renewal of Defibrillator Contract. Dates for 2024 meetings, March 4 th , April 8 th , May 13 th , June 3 rd , July 1 st , September 2 nd , October 7 th , November 4 th , December 2 nd .	Clerk to action
17	The next meeting will take place on Monday 4th March @ 7.30.	Clerk to action

The meeting closed at 20.45

Newsletter: Voluntary Bus, emergency plan, banking Hub
Parish Council to help at Fete.
Grass cutting
March 17th Spring show.
Website & email addresses.
Swifts.

Footpath and Tree Report.

Footpaths

1. Apart from River Path the various right of way are mainly in a good condition
2. There have been some fallen trees due to the gales, but fewer than I had expected – I think Ian Simpson has kindly used his chainsaw skills on a number of them, I have also cleared some of the smaller trees away.
3. Dee and I have been clearing vegetation away from footpath sign posts to make them more visible.
4. There are a few minor issues I am sorting out with CDE
5. I notice that there is a sign up on Peak Hill asking dog owners to keep their dogs under control – two pregnant ewes have been badly attacked and may not survive.
6. There are a lot more people around now that the Lower Otter Valley Project is open. There are also a lot more dogs being exercised. However, some owners do not seem to be keeping their dogs under proper control and with limited footpath width there may be problems ahead.
7. Trail bikes have made a bit of a mess along a couple of the County Roads (Green Lanes) but they have not ventured off the legal routes.
8. As we all know the River Path was closed a year ago and then reopened only to be closed again recently. Last summer DCC sought options for a long term solution with one of their contractors. This has not progressed as far as I can tell. I see no prospect of it being dealt with any time soon.
9. Anyone wanting to volunteer on the Otter Estuary Reserve Maintenance should contact the Ranger rick.lockwood@clintondevon.com

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Trees

1. The trees due to be removed at Stantyway have been dealt with by Toby Taylor.
2. The ash tree in the Jubilee Playground adjacent to Vieux Close will be trimmed in the near future.

Other

1. The Village Spring Show is on Saturday March 16th with last day for entries Thursday March 14th – posters are on the outside of the Village Hall foyer.

Iain Ure, Jan 2024.

Otterton Volunteer Footpath and Tree Warden

Letter from Jill Elson following request for information regarding local use of Voluntary Bus Service:

Frances: The Group was founded in partnership with Devon County Council, East Devon DC and all the Town and Parish Councils within our service area in 1990. We had discussions with everyone taking part and it was agreed that the best way forward for the Parish and Town Councils was to have a grant amount based on the population of each to be fair to them all. It is a service that is provided for those who are unable to use public transport due to a mobility problem or there is no bus service. Since it was formed it has changed, mostly due to the pandemic and more people living in their own homes with personal care. We now provide a single wheelchair accessible car for individual appointments which are mostly for medical ones. Our services are not based on the number of persons using it as it is for all who qualify no matter of their age but they do have to book their journey the day before as to take people in wheelchairs, seats have to be taken out. We now have 2 x 8 seater tail lift minibuses which has increased flexibility. We charge a return fare which we propose to increase from 1st Monday in April after discussions with our passengers. We do ask for grants from other trusts etc to make sure we are financially viable. Every Parish and Town Council can have a member on the Management Committee. DCC has Community Network Meetings with all the 13 Community Transport Associations in Devon quarterly.

WEB: <<http://www.exmouthringandride.org.uk>> www.exmouthringandride.org.uk

We do take several people from Otterton including residents of The Vicarage. Under GDPR we cannot give you their names.

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