

## **Otterhampton Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting**

Held on 11 December 2025 at Otterhampton Village Hall, commencing at 7pm

#### **Present**

- Cllr L Parsons (Chair)
- Cllr C Sanders (Vice Chair)
- Cllrs M Haycraft, C Bradbury, S Parker, D Dodge
- Mrs S Juniper (Clerk/RFO)
- Cllr M Caswell (Somerset Council) plus 6 members of the public

#### **172/25. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Gardener.

#### **173/25. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **174/25. Public Participation (including Ward Councilor Reports)**

Councilor Caswell reported that he now has a direct link to fly-parking EDF officer whom he can contact and requests that any information is past directly to him so that he can get the matter dealt with. The problem is now greatly improved in Wembdon. He asked to be kept up to speed with the flooding situation in Brookside Road and was pleased to see that there seems to have been a recent improvement in the situation, with no significant flooding so far this season. Cllr Caswell was also able to confirm that Somerset Council will no longer be looking at bringing in car parking charges on a Sunday across the County due to public opinion. In addition, there is a meeting next week regarding the new one-way system in Bridgwater and expressed a concern about the amount of money being spent on removing flags from the lamp posts in Bridgwater.

It was noted by a member of public that the original Parish Council website will be closed shortly and as the new one is being used, it will start to show higher in the Search Engine.

Members were advised by a parishioner that she has recently been attending workshops about the barriers young people find when living in a rural community. After a discussion with several youngsters, it was agreed that the main obstacle to college, social life and employment was the lack of public transport. She would like the members to consider setting up a Steering Group to try to look at resolving this issue and how it has been tackled in other areas. To be added to the next available Agenda.

#### **175/25. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **176/25. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Cllr Dodge thanked OPRA for providing their Christmas Tree.

#### **177/25. Planning**

- a. Planning Application received after the Agenda was published, so will be included on the next Agenda, extension requested.

#### **178/25. Finance**

1. The Bank Reconciliation and Budget Statement for September were circulated prior to the meeting and were APPROVED. The balance as of the end of November 2025 was **£74,546.71**
2. The following payments as per the schedule circulated were APPROVED (inclusive of VAT)

- |                           |                      |          |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Parish Online (GeoXphere) | Mapping Software     | £45.00   |
| Open Spaces Society       | Subscription         | £45.00   |
| Starboard Services        | Scribe Accounts      | £477.60  |
| Survey of Village Shop    | Db Paul Surveyors    | £1200.00 |
| Staff Costs               |                      | £965.76  |
| Staff Costs               | HMRC                 | £268.61  |
| Solopress                 | Otter Tales printing | £233.44  |
| Repair to bollard         | James Whitcombe      | £100.00  |
| Repair to bollard         | MA Haggett           | £175.00  |
3. Income received.
    - a. Interest received £39.58
  4. Cllr Dodge asked about the Parish Online subscription and if we were using it. He was advised that it is helpful when looking up various bits of historic information about the village. Cllr Haycroft said that he would appreciate access to the information if possible.
  5. It was AGREED to spend CIL levy Annual Return money on refurbishing the village bus shelter

### 179/25. Parish Clerk Brief

Members were briefed regarding matters currently being dealt with. See attached at Annex A

- a. It was unanimously AGREED that Somerset Council Planning Office should be notified of the current situation and potential breach of planning conditions regarding the Anchor Inn.

Cllr Caswell left the meeting 2000

- b. Action was AGREED to contact the boat club to find out who has been carrying out works on the embankment of the pill as this is PC land. Advise that the area is to be cleared of all debris and get the names of those who have boats moored on the embankment.
- c. Mr Bob Birkenhead has AGREED to become the Councils Representative on the SSG Committee.

### 180/25. Proposed Local Boundary Changes

Consideration was given to an email circulated dated the 26/11/25 from Dowsborough LCN regarding the Local Government Boundary Commission for England reopening its consultation on proposed new division boundaries for Somerset Council. Residents and local organisations have been invited to share their view with a consultation running from 25th November until the 14th of January 2026. Cllr Parker suggested that consideration should be given to asking for the southern boundary in Estuary Park be moved further towards Cannington and it is important to consider the long term rather just short term. Proposal to be submitted for the next meeting.

### 181/25 Flooding/Emergency Plan

Matters discussed under Clerks Brief

### 182/25 Highways

Matters discussed under Clerks Brief

### 183/25 Enhancements

- a. Cllr Parker expressed his concerns regarding the Hornbeams off Wharf Road on the small area within Estuary Park and contacting Highways to request that it is topped. It was suggested that it would be prudent to speak to the home owner regarding this.
- b. Action regarding the Pill approved earlier in the meeting
- c. Spending of CIL money on refurbishment of the bus shelter approved earlier in the meeting.

### 184/25 Reports of Representatives

See attached reports in Annex B

- a. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) B Birkenhead – Nothing to report
- b. Steart Ward (D Dodge) -
- c. OPRA (T Gardener) - Deferred to Jan meeting
- d. Social Media (D Dodge) -
- e. SALC – Community Health & Wellbeing
- f. Village Shop Steering Group (G Parrett) – Deferred to Jan meeting
- g. OVH (L Parsons)
- h. Dowsborough LCN (C Sanders) - Deferred to Jan meeting
- i. Transport Forum (D Dodge) -

**185/25 Correspondence/Communication requiring consideration**

- a. Correspondence between owners of The Anchor Inn and PC
- b. Communications from Stacy Walker (Hinkley C) regarding the abandoned boats in the wharf.
- c. Somerset Coastal Space questionnaire – Cllr Parker completed the Survey.

**186/25 Forthcoming Meetings/Events/Training**

- a. Community Forum 15.01.26
- b. Hinkley Main site Forum 12.02.26
- c. Transport Forum 12.03.26
- d. OVH Trustees Meeting – Date to be advised.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – 8.01.26 At 7.00pm**

Meeting closed at 2032

## Reports by Representatives

### Otterhampton Village Hall Cllr Parsons

Meeting held on 19th November.

The disabled ramp is being repaired. The builder has done it under warranty so no cost to the village hall, also the automatic door needs some more work done on it as there is a problem with it opening regularly.

A murder mystery night has been organised for 28th December at £10 per head including a supper.

£65 was raised for the hall from the bingo night.

Harbour view bar have requested that a satellite dish be installed as the sports have been so popular.

Harbour view bar will be open all over the Christmas period, look out for times on notice boards. Also, the bar will be closing on 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th January for essential work to be carried out.

#### AGM

It wasn't well attended, unfortunately. P Thornell remains Chair, with Treasurer remains unchanged for the next 6 months, after which date a new Treasurer will be required. Cllr Parsons is now the Secretary for the foreseeable future. All of the Trustees were re-elected.

The next meeting is in January 2026 with the aim of next year to increase the use of the hall in order to bring in funding as they are currently breaking even.

### OPRA Cllr Gardener

The seniors Christmas dinner was held last Saturday and 57 people attended. It was a very enjoyable evening for both diners and helpers and is always a great way to start the Christmas festivities.

A 3 course meal is served with wine and play your cards right was the theme of the quiz.

No one went hungry or thirsty as the following was consumed;  
28 bottles of wine (14 red, 8 white and 6 prosecco)  
10kg Turkey  
15kg Potatoes  
20kg Vegetables

The Christmas tree lights were switched on by Tom Jacobs, abely assisted by two young people.

**SALC Health and Wellbeing: Growing Together Project.**  
**Cllr Parker**

A useful visit by Fodo Higginson from the Somerset Association of Local Councils clarified a number of issues concerning the administration of the Health and Wellbeing funding of the Growing Together Project. It was highlighted that Otterhampton Parish Council is one of the smallest parishes to receive funding.

SALC is keen to support the project's aims of contributing to the social health of the parish by promoting social connections through creative activities. Otterhampton Parish Council will be nominated to present at the 2026 National Association of Local Councils Conference.

The extension of the spending window from the initial deadline of April 2026 to September 2026 enables a judicious and considered approach to spending the first round of funding. To ensure the success of the project it is paramount that Parish Council works in collaboratively with Garden Club, the Art Group and other village groups involved in the Growing Together Project.

Christmas Wreath Making

Christmas Wreath making attracted a significant number of people who do not normally attend Garden Club events, including families and younger children. Those attending collaborated together and interacted to create a decorative wreath. The feedback indicated that people enjoyed themselves, made new acquaintances, maintained existing friendships and had fun.

As Garden Club events attract an increasing diverse audience, a Safeguarding Policy is being developed.

**Social Media**  
**Cllr Dodge**

Clerk and Cllr Gardener will be given access to update the Parish website.

**Transport Forum**  
**Cllr Dodge**

Cllr Dodge confirmed that EDF are developing a new website for reports to be submitted 'live' to SPS regarding fly-parking within the village. It will enable the Parking Enforcement Team to respond in a timely manner.