

**MINUTES OF THE OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.45 PM
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Cllrs R. Gray (Chairman); V. Moon; R. Gardner; H. Knottley; K. Hipkins; 2 Members of the public.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllrs G. Newton – conflicting appointment; S. Trench – personal reasons; H. Drake personal reasons; PCSO Zoe Turner.

Apologies and the reasons for absence were noted and accepted.

2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEM – None received.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No declarations received.

4 COUNCILLOR VACANCY/CO-OPTION: Ongoing.

5 RECEIVE POLICE REPORT: No new updates available from e-watch.co.

Despite PCSO Turner making enquires, no information is available regarding the increase in blue light incidents.

*In response to a query regarding possible intimidation/threats being made to residents, the police must be informed if residents are worried.

6 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: *Concerns were expressed regarding Bramley.

7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2018: The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Cllr Gray.

8 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT: Verbal report received via the Clerk stating that MBC has been granted approval to continue with a judicial review of KCC re S106 money spent on investigation of a Leeds/Langley relief road.

9 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Not available.

10 FINANCE.

10.1 Approve Statement of Account: Cllr Gray proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Hipkins & unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

The council approved the following payments.

TC & DM Betts	Tree Removal (Village Green)	180.00
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Contributions	123.51
HMRC	PAYE	181.20

T. Irving	Clerk's Salary (Sept)	430.81
RBL	Wreath Donation	50.00
TC & DM Betts	Replacement Cheque	180.00
MBC	Empty Litter Bins (July/Sept)	72.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary (Oct)	406.94
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Contributions	123.51

Cheques Received

MBC	Fencing Grant	5,387.50
MBC	PSS Grant	1,024.68
Parkwood Garage (Mills)	Donation (Bench etc)	1,000.00
TC & DM Betts	Cheque Cancelled (lost in post)	180.00

Balance of Current Account: £28,098.36 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd

Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,905.72

Total Funds: £33,004.08

10.2 Consider contribution request toward publication of 'Remembered, Otham and Willington in two world wars'. Concerns were expressed as this is a private venture and the council cannot justify a donation from the precept. However, support will be given by promoting the book on OPC website, Ragstone, and at the summer fete. In addition, two copies will be purchased: 1 to be held on file & 1 to be gifted to Cllr Newton as a small thank you for all the work undertaken on the War Memorial & his support for Otham.

10.3 Conclusion of 2017/18 Annual Audit. A formal certificate will not be issued as the Council is eligible to certify as exempt from external audit (and did so). The audit is now complete, with no further publication requirements.

10.4 2019/20 Budget Suggestions: Subject to available finance, consideration to be given to employing the services of a consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan (£2,500?) and new Play Equipment.

10.5 Other Matters to Report: None.

11 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

NEW APPLICATIONS:

18/505345/LBC Bishops, Avery Lane.

Listed Building Consent for minor internal alterations to the Edwardian fire place in the kitchen.

No objections

18/504996 Tudor Cottage, Stoneacre Lane.

Insertion of window opening at first floor, re-roofing and cladding of existing rear extension. Demolition of existing coal bunker and shed.

No objections.

GRANTED

18/504223 - Madam Taylors Otham Street

Whilst the council's observations were noted, as comments were sought but not received from 5 neighbouring properties, permission has been granted.

PENDING:

Appeal Re MA15 505596 & MA 16/506074 - Bramley

18/503889 – The Barn At The Oast House, Green Hill

12 HIGHWAYS: Members expressed their disappointment that the white lining of Church Road is likely to be postponed until March 2019 due to weather conditions.

13 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- Cllr Gardner – KALC on 24 Sept when the main discussion was the presentation of the Strategic Plan. There was a strong view that infrastructure needs to be concentrated on, with a set timetable for implementation.
- Cllrs Gray & Knottley – A very useful meeting with Sue Whiteside on 6 November to discuss and receive guidance for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The Clerk attended a KCC meeting that was hosted by Cllr Cooke in Downswood to discuss traffic/speeding in the parish and included discussion of Church Road.
- SLCC Branch Meeting, Loose on 24 October – Attended by the Clerk.
Main points of note:
 - New KALC website (was being set up by Hugo Fox FOC but they were let down) should be available for the AGM
 - Verbal report on Standards and Behaviour
 - During the period 2015-17 there was a 29% increase in requests for information/advice.
- KCC Highways Seminar, Oakwood House on 2 November – Attended by the Clerk.
 - One of the biggest pot hole blitz's this year with 54,000 repaired.
 - If pot holes have been marked for a long time but not filled, it may be that contractors marked them out at the beginning of the season and then had 8 months to fill them. This procedure has now changed and they should be filled within 28 days of marking out.
 - Contractors are actively being monitored to see how quickly repairs are being carried out.

New Code of Practice for Highways – available on KCC website.

14 URGENT MATTERS:

The abandoned car and the rubbish reported at September's meeting has been removed. However, an HGV is believed to be illegally parked on the highway, adjacent to The White Horse.

ACTION: CLERK

Pot holes at the bottom of Green Hill to be reported to KCC.

ACTION: CLERK

Southern Water has sorted out the leak in Green Hill but will have to return to dig up the track.

15 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

SIPA Parish Grant Scheme: The council's bid was successful and an order has been placed with MBC (fence) & Glasdon (seats). The installation will take place during November.

Following recent correspondence from MBC indicating that further funding may be available, consideration to be given to submitting another grant application in the region of £4 K. This would be used towards funding replacement play equipment. Research to be carried out to determine suitability/what will fit with a possible total budget of £8/9 K.

Deed of Easement: (Maintenance/rights of passage to repair drain/sewer under the Village Green). It was agreed that the document will be stored at the bank with the VG deeds. **ACTION: CLERK**

16 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: Cllr Gray reported that the group is heading in the right direction but there is still a lot of work to be done. Staplehurst and Loose NHPs are good examples and Otham's will be modelled on these.

The meeting was advised that the PCC will be discussing additional burial ground and a car park – not using the Glebe Land – on Wednesday.

17 VILLAGE GREEN/PLAY AREA: The area around the bollards has been trimmed and 3 bollards will be reinstated at a cost of £45 to £50.

18 REMEMBRANCE DAY REPORT: There was a good turnout with approx 70 people at the War Memorial.

Following the superb cleaning job that was carried out by The Stone Shop, it was suggested that a copy of Kate Kersey's book would make a suitable thank you gift for Cllr Newton (see 10.2). Proposed by Cllr Gardner, seconded by Cllr Gray and unanimously agreed.

19 REVIEW OF WEBSITE: It was proposed by Cllr Gray, seconded by Cllr Moon and unanimously agreed for Spectulise to set up a replacement website at an cost of approx £150. The site will be more user friendly than the existing site and easier to maintain, once set up.

20 CHRISTMAS CAROLS: Cllr Gardener and Cllrs Trench/Gray to visit Stoneacre to finalise plans. Flyers to be printed and delivered to residents during the weekend of 1st/2nd December. **ACTION: ALL**

MEAL: The Plough has been booked for Thursday 13 December at 7.30.

21 RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE: Various items circulated by email as received.

Big Conversation Working Group: Otham has been included in a new pilot bus scheme starting in June, the Maidstone Feeder Bus. Cllr Moon to represent OPC at meetings, whenever possible. **ACTION: CLLR MOON**

CPRE: Christmas Meal/AGM Invitation.

21 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING (14 January 2019. (This will be preceded by a meeting of the Finance Committee): Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you would like to be considered for the agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 pm.