

## OTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025. This meeting was held in Otley Village Hall (Back Room).**

### **Present:**

Clerk: Mrs Mary Hunt (Clerk & RFO)  
Chairperson: Mr Anthony Ling (AL)  
Mr Gavin Grant: (GG)  
Mrs Emma Flint: (EF)  
Mr Miles Ellis: (ME)  
Mr Martin Hunt (MH)  
Mrs Claire Gasson (CG)

Meeting started at 7.33pm

### **AGENDA**

1.) Chairman's Welcome, Apologies and Approval of Absences. Apologies received from Mrs Abigail Lord (ABL) Mr Mike Bowers (MB) and County Councillors Elaine Bryce (EB) Councillors accepted these apologies.

2.) To receive Declarations of Interest and Consider requests for Dispensations – None

3.) Public Forum (For any matters on the Agenda) Item 7 Other Matters b Hand Bell Ringers request for funding was discussed. Mrs Jenny Ellis provided a history of the hand bells. The group has been running since the 1990's initially they had fourteen bells but over time have purchased additional ones via generous donations from members or gifts of a bell in memory of a loved one to give a total of twenty-six which comprise of two octave chromatic set enabling a wide repertoire of pieces. The group meet weekly during term time either practising or going out entertaining in various venues within the local area including special interest clubs, residential and nursing homes as well as having played at funerals of local Otley residents. Generally the group is self sufficient members pay a subscription and a fee of £25 is charged to the venues they play at. Any surplus funds donations are given to an annual chosen charity, in the past they have donated to St Elizabeth's Hospice, Air Ambulance, Guide Dogs etc. Half of the bells are over thirty years old, so at last years AGM it was decided that some of the bells needed a complete overhaul due to the fact they have been well used, felts were worn, clappers were becoming loose and wobbly and handles and caps thin and worn. The twelve worst bells were sent to Whitechapel Bell Foundry at a cost of £1,723 the club only has reserves of £600. The group have received a donation of £500 from the Church and an interest free loan which is gradually being repaid. A further six of the older bells will need refurbishment in the very near future for which some fund raising will need to take place as well as explore grant applications. The bells will continue to be well used and provide great pleasure to the members and the audience they entertain. The Otley Bell Ringers are widely known so any financial help would be much appreciated. Following a discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would fund £625 All in favour Proposed by GG and Seconded by CG. Going forward Clerk will provide Otley Bell Ringers with details of any possible grants that can be applied for.

4.) To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 are a true and correct record. There was a correction to these minutes under item 6 Matters Arising Neighbourhood Plan to remove the word Referendum but keep the word Consultation. This was done Minutes were then agreed and signed. Proposed by GG and Seconded by MH.

5.) To receive reports from Elaine Bryce County Councillor & District Councillor Dan Clery. These were circulated prior to this meeting.

### **6.) MATTERS ARISING – To receive progress on the following -**

a) Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Consultation and Inspection.- An Inspector has now been appointed, to follow on from the Regulation 16 Consultation which is due to be completed on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. He is appointed to The Neighbourhood Plan Independent Examiners Referral Service (NPIERS) GG still has some hard copies available of the Neighbourhood plan (Inspection Version) If anyone would like a copy. Clerk has been contacted by a couple of residents asking for more details about the plan, they have been directed to the PC Website along with links to East Suffolk Council. It was agreed that a copy of the plan would be put in the village store. Posters have already been put up on the notice boards to advertise of the Regulation 16 Consultation.

Dan Clery (DC) arrived at 7.55pm and give his report, devolution and reorganisation has been the main area for discussion. It continues to be felt that District Councils are an important link to Parish Council, over the year it had been of great value to Otley Parish Council to have a District Councillor to link up with over local matters such as planning. The Scrutiny committee is due to look at the value of Community Partnership. Do we feel they are of good value? Otley has not had a great deal to do with the Partnership, it tends to operate better in the larger populated areas, such as Rendlesham, Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere etc. Whereas the smaller rural villages do not appear to get as included or what Community Partnership have on their agenda is relevant to those smaller communities. There was a proposal to set up a bus service to Woodbridge via Grundisburgh which would be useful, this was something that residents raised when we had the Consultation Day at the Village Hall for the Neighbourhood Plan. It is appreciated that these things depend on the demand. There is supposed to be more money coming via central government for rural transport. DC agreed to take back the views expressed regarding a bus service to Woodbridge. DC left the meeting at 8.10pm

b) Sport and Play Fund - Following a recent meeting the Community Council is now at the stage where they should be able to put an application in, for all the items that have previously been highlighted. There are still a couple of further quotes to come through. Once the application has been submitted it should take around 20 days to make the decision. It is hoped that if possible the Car Park will be resurfaced over the Summer and the play equipment put in place around the same time, as well as the monies made available to the Bowls Club to purchase their new mower. Regarding the consultation with the village it was felt that because the Community Council is made up of all the different organisations that use the Village Hall and they feedback to the various individual groups this in itself forms a consultation. It was discussed that AL would check and discuss this approach with Sarah Shinnie from East Suffolk Council who is responsible for overseeing this grant and how it is spent.

c) Village Hall Roof / Grants – The grant that the Community Council recently applied for the roof was not successful. There were 12 applications and only 5 received grants. It was felt that we should still proceed. We have circa £40,00 from the Parish Council CIL monies which will cover the cost of the new roof and the Community Council have agreed to use some of their funds to pay for the demolition work and asbestos removal which comes to £14,000. The works are booked in to start on 7<sup>th</sup> April, scaffolding will be put up the week before, the asbestos survey has been completed and paid for by the Parish Council. The works should be done within 2 weeks. The hirers of the hall have already been advised that the hall will be out of action for the two weeks. The builders will shut off the front of the hall across, and make a compound. There will be access to the playing field, bins and parking for the Doctors Surgery.

d) Dog Bin along Helmingham Road - Clerk contacted East Suffolk Council to enquire on the progress of the Dog bin that was requested for Helmingham Road, received notification that the bin was installed on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Advised that invoice should be received shortly.

e) Old Map of Village – This has now been framed and collected. Would be nice to have C Child and family to unveil at the Summer Fete. Thank you CG for organisation the framing.

f) Grit Bin on Otley Hill – At last meeting County Councillor EB offered to speak Highways regarding them reconsidering the emptying and removal of this bin because of where it is sited and access it is dangerous. Following this offer from EB Clerk sent them details of the situation but as yet has not heard anything back. It was discussed now that the weather was better whether if and when a road closure occurs if it would be possible to at least drill some holes in the bin to get rid of the water. Also mention that Mr K Bailey has stood down as a Volunteer Grit Bin person on Ipswich Road. A letter of thanks was sent to Mr Bailey for his many years service in this role. Mr and Mrs Wells have kindly agreed to take over from him. They have been made aware that for insurance purposes they need to wear hi vis when spreading the salt on the road.

g) Deer Signs – Following last meeting Clerk emailed contact with Highways regarding if it was possible to have some temporary signs. They responded “that this was not something that Suffolk is able to provide. There are a couple of parishes that have put up informal signs on private land (not the highway verge) warning of deer in some areas. If Otley Parish Council were to put such signs up they would clearly need to be off the public highway, otherwise they could well be removed by Highways Enforcement Team. Outside of this Highways have checked their reporting system and there have been no further reports of incident or request for deer signs in the areas, which could indicate they are needed?

A Councillor advised that they are aware of a very recent incidence at Otley Bottoms of deer jumping into the road, that resulted in a car being written off. Following a discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would put something up on Facebook to ask if anyone has had experience of incidences of Deer Crossing at Otley Bottom such as collision, near miss, insurance claim, costs write off etc so we have the evidence to go back to Highways and asked how best to report these incidences.

## **7. OTHER MATTERS -**

a.) To agree and update the following Policies -  
Equal Opportunities / Diversity Equality and Inclusion

General Privacy

Data Protection

Date Retention & Disposal Policy

Data Protection Impact Policy Assessment

Subject Access Request Policy

Website Accessibility

Standing Orders

Financial Regulation 2025 /26

Code of Conduct

Financial Risk Assessment

Asset Register

Public Land & Building

Public Liability Risk Assessment

Online Banking Risk Assessment

Internal Controls Statement

All these policies had previously been circulated prior to this meeting to give Councillors the opportunity to read and send any queries to the clerk. No queries received.

All these policies were agreed en bloc Proposed by ME and Seconded by GG

- b) Request for funds from Hand Bells Group – See 3 Public Forum
- c) Agree Term and Conditions for SALC (Internal Auditors) These were circulated two weeks prior to this meeting to enable Councillors to read and consider Proposed by Proposed by MH and Seconded by GG
- d) CATS (Coastal Accessible Transport Services limited / Volunteer Drivers for hospital visits) Are looking for Volunteers drivers, Posters will be put up on the Notice Boards and in the Village Store.

**8.) Finance – To Authorise BACS payments, acknowledge any receipts received and payment made since last meeting.**

- a) To agree Clerks Salary for January & February 2025 = 24 hours at agreed rate = £312.00 Proposed EF and Seconded by CG
- b) Auditor is booked to take place week beginning 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- c) Agree cost of Footpath Grass Cutting Provision of annual cutting of surface growth of ProWs x 2 cuts, as per maps and schedule provided = Total (ex VAT) £1,641.42. Robert Carlton has provided the following quote to do this works at a cost of £1,645. 60+ VAT he has added the additional bit of footpath 64 we asked him to do as long as he can get his tractor along the length of that path. There is a shortfall of around £5 which the PC will need to cover. Following discussion this was agreed Proposed by ME and Seconded by GG.
- d) Donation to East Anglian Air Ambulance of £100 It was previously agreed when the Budget was set that the Parish Council would make a donation to this charity. Proposed by MH and Seconded by EF.
- e) Donation to Disability Advice Service of £100 It was previously agreed when the Budget was set that the Parish Council would make a donation to this charity. Proposed by GG and Seconded by ME
- f) Budget Variances – Were discussed and presented at this meeting

**Since the last meeting the following payments have been made**

Clerks Salary for November & December 2024 = £286.00

C Ling & Son for Newlands Grass Cutting = £120

Payment received from EB's Locality Budget (one off payment) towards the cost of Parish Council Secure Email System = £258.00

**Other Payment made -**

Purchase of second battery for old SID = £53.93

ID Asbestos ref VH Roof for Asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition Survey to roof & associated areas, including all samples = £420 including VAT.

**To be advised of Bank Balances for the Parish Council Accounts –**

Community Account = £100. 83 & Business Account = £ 46,584.38

**9.) PLANNING MATTERS**

**DC/24/2635/FUL**

Address: 2 Little Meadows Drive Otley Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9NW

Proposal: Erect Pvcu Replica Roof Extensions to front sides and rear of property. Following a site visit by one of the Councillors, the Parish Council requested a site visit by East Suffolk Council and for consideration for the application to be referred to the Planning Committee. The Parish Council submitted an Objection to this application. **Application Withdrawn.**

**DC/24/4559/VOC**

Address: The Old Barn Wood Farm Helmingham Road Otley Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9NS

Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 of DC/23/0369/FUL- Conversion of a redundant building to 2 semi-detached dwellings, red line boundary, parking and EV charging points -Dwelling layout adjusted, porch added and other minor amendments. The Parish Council submitted a No Objection to this application. **Awaiting Decision**

**DC/24/4477/FUL**

Address: 7 Millers Way Otley Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9HF

Proposal: Single storey rear extension. The Parish Council submitted a No Objection to this application. **Application Permitted 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**DC/24/4253/FUL**

Address: Otley College Of Agriculture And Horticulture Charity Lane Otley Suffolk

Proposal: HGV training facility for Otley College for HGV's up to 18.75m. The Parish Council have Objected to this application.

**Awaiting Decision.**

**DC/25/0646/FUL**

Address: **Meadow View Cottage 1 Charity Cottages Swilland Road Otley Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9NE**

Proposal: Retrospective application -To retain existing track – To discuss at this meeting. No Objection from Councillors. Containers to be removed.

**10) HIGHWAYS MATTERS – None raised at this meeting**

**11.) RIGHTS OF WAY / FOOTPATHS -**

**Your report reference number is: 00500481**

ROAD FROM GIBRALTAR ROAD TO SWILLAND ROAD, OTLEY reported on 20/12/2024 Otley Parish Council report that a 40mph repeater sign has fallen off it's bracket and was in the ditch – Response received on 3/02/2025 Highways have visited the location and assessed against Suffolk County Council's Highway Maintenance Operational Plan (HMOP). Unfortunately, at this time

they are unable to take further action as this does not meet our intervention criteria. They will continue to monitor the location as part of our routine inspections.

**Your report reference number is:** 00500482

SWILLAND ROAD, OTLEY reported on 20/12/2024 Otley Parish Council report the this post has both it's 40mph repeater signs missing – Response received on 7/02/2025 Site visit completed and again does not meet the criteria at this time but will continue to monitor.

**Your report reference number is:** 00500483

**CHAPEL ROAD, OTLEY** reported on 20/12/2024 Otley Parish Council report the No Stopping sign has been bent over by an unknown vehicle. Also the narrow footpath that it is sighted on prevents parents passing it who have pushchairs. Can the sign be moved up against the school hedge to the benefit of everyone – Response received 1/02/2025 Site visit completed and again does not meet the criteria at this time but will continue to monitor.

**12.) SPEED WATCH & SID RESULTS** – Two session took place in February in Chapel and Helmingham Road, both low traffic levels and a lot of warnings by drivers, as a result for the first time no speeders were recorded. No SID results available at this meeting.

**13.) COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPORT** – Nothing to report. A meeting is due to take place next week.

**14.) COUNCILLORS REPORTS & ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

**Meeting Finished 9.50pm**

**Date of next meeting Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm followed by Annual General Meeting in the Main Hall.**