

# Osmington Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors held on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7pm in the village hall.

**Present:** Mr N Ireland (Chairman of Parish Council – in the Chair), Mrs H Ballard, Mrs F Groves, Mr B Kuflik, Mr C Merkle, Mrs S Miller and Mr V White (all members of Osmington Parish Council).

**Also in attendance:** Representatives from local groups/organisations and members of the public.

## 1. Welcome

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Ireland, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Vic and Eileen for arranging the cream tea, sponsored by Craig's Dairy.

## 2. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Leigh Johnson (Clerk).

## 3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman presented his report for the year 2023/24 (attached as the Appendix to these minutes).

A question was raised regarding the use of loose chippings on Church Lane which had appeared to have caused some drains to become blocked. In response, Mr Ireland confirmed that Dorset Council had put down the chippings and the drains had now been cleared.

## 4. Reports from Local Groups/Organisations

**Osmington Village Show** – The village show had been run by the Osmington Society for the last two years and would now be run by Diane Moore. The programme of classes had been changed and it was set to be a brilliant show. Diane hoped that it would be well supported by residents.

**Speed Watch** – Sally Little explained that Speed Watch was about educating people and was well supported by both the Parish Council and the Police. She was pleased to have recruited a further three volunteers and thanked everyone present for not speeding through the village. Sally also thanked all volunteers who helped to conduct the speed watch.

**New Friends of St. Osmund's** – Jeff Little promoted the next event which would be about D-Day and would be held on 7<sup>th</sup> June. Jeff asked that attendees notify him for the purpose of catering.

**Osmington Society** – Christof Merkle, as Chairman of the Osmington Society, thanked all the members of the committee for their hard work. The society had been formed in 1979 in response to plans for unsympathetic planning for the village. It now monitors planning in the village and promotes social cohesion. Since the society began, it has contributed £14,500 to the village, supporting the village hall, phone box defibrillator and the White Horse restoration. It has resurrected the village show which showcases the talents of many villagers and local groups. Christof thanked Diane, Charlotte and Jane for making it a success.

Burns Night was already planned for 2025 and thanks were given to all those who made this year's event run so well. A village meeting was hosted regarding the Sly Fox and Heritage boards are currently being developed to be placed in bus shelters, detailing the history of the village. It was hoped that the group would become involved in the debate surrounding the Dorset National Park. To date £2,800 has been raised to enhance the parish.

Eileen Bramley asked for help with the annual summer fete to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> August. Over the last 11 years, they had averaged fundraising of £4,000 and aimed to achieve £7,000 this year. They will

continue to give to selected charities and the church. Previous funding has been donated to the church (£17,000) and £10,000 to other charities.

The Living Churchyard – Susan Biddis hoped that the Living Churchyard project would be applied to St. Osmund's churchyard with help from Dorset Wildlife Trust. This would attempt to address the balance between wildlife and neatness.

## **5. Public Discussion Period**

The following items were raised during the public session and responses given: -

Noisy road surface in the village – This cannot be addressed until the road has been resurfaced.

20mph speed limit through three dangerous T-junctions along the main road – Dorset Council would not put in place a 20mph limit due to current policies.

Pedestrian crossing at Shortlake Lane – The village/parish council has been trying to get a crossing there for over 20 years, Dorset Council have said that it is not possible in that location due to road constraints.

There is no path to the shops in Preston – Design and engineering has been specified but there is no funding.

Could residents run their own village shop? – There is provision at Craig's Dairy.

Weak mobile signal – A mast had been suggested for the church tower. This would need to be taken forward by the PCC.

Pathway to church needs gravel to improve it – Again this would need to be addressed by the PCC.

Roman Road is in a terrible state and needs to be adopted by Dorset Council – Dorset Council will not adopt the road, however they have provided advice to residents and an offer of funding.

The bridleway beyond Church Lane is in very poor condition – Some improvements have been made but further work is required. Work is scheduled by Dorset Council for the higher path for later this year.

Osmington Mills Protection Group – The group is currently dormant due to the pressures of everyday life. Questions and concerns can be directed to either Jill Dunning or Derek Thomas. The group does have some funds that could be used within the community.

Coastal path maintenance – This is the responsibility of Dorset Council.

A comment was made stating that the main road through the village should be a 20mph zone. Children at PGL were often taken to Craig's Dairy for ice-cream.

## Appendix – Chairman’s Report

The Parish Council held nine meetings since May 2023 and considered ten planning applications as a consultee.

We welcomed two new councillors, Cllr Kuflik (through a by-election) and Cllr Merkle (who was co-opted) and two councillors left, Cllr Dempsey and Cllr Botham. I would like to thank both for their service.

All minutes and accounts are on the website but for information on the big-ticket expenditures of £1,000 or over they are as follows;

- Grass and hedge cutting - £5,000
- The village hall lease amendment - £1,500
- Cost of running the by-election - £2,000
- Work to trees at the playing field - £1,200
- Emptying the litter bins around the parish - £1,000
- New laptop - £1,600
- Cllr. White’s ROSPA safety course - £1,100
- New SID posts and panels etc. - £5,000

Parish Councils have a limited range of powers, most of which are not used because they aren’t currently applicable to this parish.

Examples of those include owning a cemetery, providing allotments, street lighting, parking, mortuaries, public conveniences and public baths.

Powers we do utilise include maintenance of the churchyard, provision of a public clock, provision of bins, provision and maintenance of bus shelters, maintenance of a public park, maintenance of play facilities, maintenance of footpaths and bridleways and contributing towards traffic calming measures.

We continue to run the Speed Watch in association with Dorset Police and have invested in speed surveys over the past two years which have provided the evidence necessary to achieve the upcoming speed limit changes. Very briefly, these changes include pushing the 30mph start further out at either end of the village, pushing the 40mph limit in Poxwell towards Osmington and crucially past the Ringstead turn, reducing the speed limit on the reduced distance between Osmington and Poxwell to 50mph, reducing the speed through Upton from 60mph to 30mph and finally reducing the speed limit from 60mph to 30mph all the way to the Osmington Mills.

We purchased a new SID and now have two and a new post/location outside Craig’s but I am currently limited to deploying only the new one until the aforementioned speed limit changes come into operation. Once that happens, we will be able to have the SID’s located at the new 30mph limit start positions, addressing the fact (as evidenced by the speed surveys and Speed Watch) that traffic simply just doesn’t slow down when entering the village. Pushing the 30mph speed limit down Osmington Hill and towards Poxwell will help address that.

Recurring themes over the year have been bin collections, blocked drains and impassable Rights of Way. However, all of these are the responsibility of Dorset Council, not the parish council. It is now routine for the parish council to be asked to contribute towards or subsidise works and projects.

On the subject of council tax, we have kept our overall precept for the parish the same for the past two years due to careful budgeting and effective tendering processes. We have been saving into reserves for over a decade towards projects arising from the Community Plan and we will be

spending a fair amount of that this year on the road safety changes Dorset Council have agreed to.

Happy to take any questions before we move on to organisation's reports but before I do so, I need to remind those in the hall who are either standing for the parish council election next Thursday or are supporting those candidates, to refrain from anything that could be construed as campaigning when giving said reports as we are in the pre-election period and as this event is being paid for by public money, comes under the legislation laid out in the Local Government Act 1986.