

**Minutes of the Meeting of Othery Parish Council  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023 7:30 pm in Othery Village Hall**

- 1 **Apologies:**
- 2 **Present:** Cllrs A Tizzard; E Jennings; R Selway; V Jones; A Betty; A Wright; P Atherton; Unitary Cllr M Martin was present for the meeting. The meeting were disappointed that Cllr H Munt had only been to one meeting since elected and felt that he should at least make contact as they are more than happy with the input from Cllr M Martin and his regular attendance.
- 3 **Declarations of Interest:** These will always be declared at the agenda item when appropriate.
- 4 **Certifying the minutes of the meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023:** Agreed with name changes to the minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> July as true records of the meetings.
- 5 **Public question time and Neighbourhood Watch/Crime report and an update from Cllr Matthew Martin or Harry Munt:** Updates emailed: Cllr Martin said that there had been no specific announcements from the County and that all elected Cllrs are expected to be working with Parish's in their elected area. He was still trying to get the main road through the village resurfaced and was asking why other major road works were progressing but essential work on this well used road was not being considered. The closure of the M5 on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> August and the subsequent grid lock through the village was discussed and the following was agreed to be emailed directly to Cllr Martin for him to forward to the County officers for some form of action. At tonight's Parish Council meeting concerns were raised about the traffic through the village and specifically on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023 when the volume of traffic increased to such a volume that it took members of the community 5 minutes to cross the road. The M5 was closed going north because of a serious traffic accident at 10:30 and not reopened until 16:00. During that time traffic built up on the motorway and was coming off at junction 25 onto the A38 and a large volume then turning onto the A361 at Walford Cross right through the village of Othery before joining the A39 at the Pipers Inn. This carried on well after the time that junction 24 was reopened because of the build-up of traffic on the motorway. Othery would like to know if the Chief Constable is going to be called to a scrutiny committee to explain why with modern technology the motorway had to be closed for so long. A drone with a camera could have been deployed to take detailed photos of the accident site all of which could then be measured from the photographs and the motorway cleared for traffic. This is done in other countries, and it is believed in other areas of this country. This did not only affect Othery but every road through Somerset when the motorway was closed causing total gridlock and massive inconvenience.
- 6 **Matters Arising:** **Highways Issues:** The road and pavement has been swept and the trip hazard outside the school rectified and the footway resurfaced. After some discussion between the PCC and Somerset Council the grant for the PCC to cut the grass in the closed cemetery has been processed. The footpath through the closed cemetery is slippery and needs attention before some has a fall injuring themselves. **The Clerk will email clean surroundings with a copy to Mr Winslade.** The clerk still has not had a reply to his email about the adoption of the footway but as the documents obtained by the

Parish Council show that they own it they should just acknowledge that fact and maintain the footway. Cllr Wright who was not at the meeting when the 20mph issue was debated felt that the Parish Council should reconsider the issue to show the members of the community that they are trying to improve the safety through the village. There was concern that the £15,000.00 cost of implementing any such scheme was far too high and Cllr Martin said that he had asked that question and was waiting for an answer. Cllr Betty felt that even if implemented it would not make much difference and said that he would vote against any such proposal. **Cllr Wright proposed and Cllr Tizzard seconded that the Clerk submits and application. This was passed by a majority with one against.**

**Community Speed Watch:** All now set up and the roadside training undertaken. Cllr Atherton has the cable to download the data from the SID but needs the keys. Cllr Jennings now believes that she knows where they are and will pass them to Cllr Atherton. Cllr V Jones will assist when she has time out of the holiday season. The idea of putting up more SIDs was discussed and it was agreed that as **Cllr Atherton is talking to the company who provided the existing SID that he gets a quote.**

**Cemetery boundary:** Cllr Tizzard said that the new boundary is to be in place within the next ten days.

**Battle of Sedgemoor Board:** The quote given to the clerk was for the wrong size so the Clerk is now waiting to receive the revised quote.

**Comments on the SRA Report if appropriate:** No comments required.

**Somerset Bus Champion?** To be advertised through social media to see if a bus user would like to take on that task.

**Latest planning application:** Extra planning meeting 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

7 **Playing Field:** Brambles are growing out of the hedge across the footway in North Lane. **Cllr Betty will look at the problem.** Cllr Selway asked if there had ever been a risk assessment done for the playing field and as there is not one, **Cllr Selway will create a risk assessment.**

8 **Cemetery:** The War grave Society will clean the war graves in the cemetery.

8 **Planning notice:**

9 **Financial Matters:** Accounts for 2022/23 accepted by PFK Littlejohns  
**Expenditure:**  
Salary £ 268.24  
SlashdotDash £ 25.20  
G Wagen James £ 430.50  
Marie Curie £ 25.00  
Playing Field Inspection £ 85.00  
**Income:**  
Fine Memorials £ 45.00

All agree and the acceptance of the accounts noted.

10 **Correspondence:**

11 **Correspondence for Circulation:** Already circulated by email:

12 **Urgent Matters at the discretion of the Chairman:** The charity for the month is the Alzheimer s Trust. The hedge at Greenways has been cut as it was across the footway, but the tree needs to be cut back. **Cllr Tizzard will deal with that issue.** Cllr Wight asked for £200 to train members of the community to use the DeFib. **This was agreed.**

**Date and time of the next meeting: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 7:30 Parish Council Meeting.**