

**Minutes of the Meeting of Othery Parish Council
Monday 22nd January 2024 7:30 pm in Othery Village Hall**

- 1 **Apologies:** None.
- 2 **Present:** Cllrs Tizzard: Jennings: Jones: Selway: Atherton: Betty: Wright: Unitary Cllr Matt Martin:
- 3 **Declarations of Interest:** These will always be declared at the agenda item when appropriate.
- 4 **Certifying the minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2023:** Agreed as a true record of the meeting.
- 5 **Public question time and Neighbourhood Watch/Crime report and an update from Cllr Matthew Martin or Harry Munt:** Updates emailed: Yet again Othery have had no contact with Unitary Cllr Harry Munt but Othery acknowledge that having Cllr Matt Martin has been a great help with many matters. All feel that Cllr Munt should, in the two years that he has been in post, have visited the village and got to know the Parish Council so that if Cllr Matt Martin was unavailable and Othery had a problem he could take over and support the village. The Parish Council were divided in either giving him one more chance or passing a motion of no confidence. The former motion was passed so the clerk will email Cllr Munt setting out the feelings of the Parish Council.

Cllr Martin outlined where Somerset was in this financial crisis reminding everyone that 60% of their budget goes on adult and children's social care. Somerset are waiting for a reply from Westminster after they had applied to be permitted to raise their precept by 10%. With that in place and cutting all but statutory services Somerset would avoid the section 114 being placed on Somerset.

- 6 **Matters Arising:** **Review the proposals from Somerset on bridging their funding gap and set a precept for Othery:** Cllrs Tizzard; Betty: and Selway and Atherton: joined the LCN on Microsoft Teams and did not learn a great deal more than we had been sent previously. The idea of a Highways Steward employed by an LCN was suggested by Somerset to undertake some of the work they currently do but there was no information as to what Othery get for an outlay of between £2000 and £25000. No-one could quantify that. Othery already look after their own cemetery and playing field which, some other councils now have to take on. The meeting unanimously voted for a 4.76% increase in the precept as we already have the recommended balance in our accounts, and this will keep us up with inflation.

Highways Issues: Potholes filled but they are already breaking up. The missing finger post still has not been replaced which Cllr Martin said that he would support us on if he had the details.

20mph project: Cllr Tizzard will make contact again with Somerset to find out the time scale for this project but one part of the project being the road markings showing 20mph will not be painted until the road has been resurfaced.

- 7 **Playing Field:** New seats: Cllr Selway has a price of £510 for a standard seat and £623 for a disabled. The parish council supported having both with fixing brackets supplied at an extra cost. Cllr Betty discussed with James Pring involving the cutting of the grass. He recommended that the benches are at least 6ft from the fence. Cllr Selway will

email the detail to the clerk and he will place the order once she has checked to see if the fixing could be used on the existing seats and of so she would include that on the order. This will come out of the CIL funds. The clerk will chase up our application to buy the playing field.

- 8 **Cemetery:** Cemetery wall damage: Cllr Betty is still chasing Tim Burbidge who on turn is chasing Towns. James Pring is aware of the hedge planting that is being undertaken and knows that he will not be cutting that area for some years to come. The clerk through the Woodland Trust has put in another application for hedging for the entire length of the fence and will wait to see if it is successful.

9 **Planning notice:**

10 **Financial Matters:**

Precept set in agenda item 6.

Expenditure:

Salary	£ 268.24
G Wagen James	£1116.00
Village Hall	£ 20.00
Crisis for Christmas	£ 25.00
Somerset Council Waste bin	£ 74.08
Heartstart	£ 200.00

Income:

All financial matters agreed and the charities for this month and next month are The Somerset and Dorset Air ambulance and the Somerset Blood Bikes.

11 **Correspondence:**

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

- 13 **Urgent Matters at the discretion of the Chairman:** The April meeting will be changed from the 8th to the 15th and the June meeting from 10th to the 17th.

The Sedgemoor Board that the Parish Council paid for is still not in place and apparently with the chairman of the Village Hall. The clerk will ask for an update. Cllr Tizzard will also chase up the no parking signs for the outside the village hall.

Date and time of the next meeting: Monday 12th February 2024 7:30 Parish Council Meeting.