

Minutes of **OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL** meeting  
Held in Offham Village Hall on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021** at **7.30PM**

**Councillors Present:**

Cllr C Unter (Chairman)  
Cllr R Taylor (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr P Bailey  
Cllr B Jones  
Cllr A Marchant

**Also in attendance**

Borough Councillor P Montague (7.30–8.00)  
L Mackie (Clerk)  
1 member of public

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies from County Councillor S Hohler, Borough Councillor A Kemp and PCSO Sears.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**3. MINUTES**

Cllr Unter welcomed everyone to his first meeting as Chairman. He congratulated Cllr Montague on his appointment to the TMBC Cabinet. He also paid tribute to Cllr Rickett, who showed great leadership as Chairman.

The minutes arising from 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were agreed by all Councillors and were signed as approved by Cllr Unter.

**4. EXTERNAL REPORTS**

a) County Councillor Hohler

There was no report.

b) Borough Councillors

Cllr Montague discussed the issues with the refuse collections. Local Government procurement rules are very strict. Urbaser offered the best contract and TMBC were obliged to accept that, subject to due diligence measures which they passed. The contract is not working. TMBC are doing everything in their power, including fines and penalties, but these just make the situation worse for Urbaser. Ultimately, they want Urbaser to do the job properly and empty the bins, and are working with them to solve the problem. If bins are not collected on the right day, then in the vast majority of cases they are collected following day. If your bin is consistently missed then it needs to be reported to TMBC. Tunbridge Wells are experiencing the same problems with Urbaser. This is an 8 year contract with another 6 years to go. The HGV driver shortage is genuine, and drivers are going to work for the highest payer.

TMBC have met and decided as part of a package of measures they will ask for the Bulky Waste collections to be restored by the end of August. Cllr Montague reported that none of the freighter refuse is recycled - it is mixed waste so gets burnt. Cllrs felt that this fact should be more widely advertised.

There was a discussion about the boundary commission review.

Cllr Kemp has asked for the White Ladies application to be called to Committee.

c) Police

There were no reports.

**5. PLANNING**

a) New applications

- i. **TM/21/01825/FL - 2 Quarry View Cottages, Comp Lane** - Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and detached garage

There was a discussion and it was agreed there were NO OBJECTIONS.

b) Approvals

- i. **TM/21/00287/FL – Packhouse, Aldon Manor, Aldon Lane** - Relocation of planning consented conversion and change of use of Atcost Frame Barn Ref No: TM/20/00678/FL
- ii. **TM/20/01954/FL - Land Adjacent Orchard House, Pepingstraw Close** - Demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of four detached dwellings together with associated parking, access and landscaping on land at Orchard House, Pepingstraw Close, Offham
- iii. **TM/21/01201/RD - Packhouse Aldon Manor, Aldon Lane** - Details of conditions 2 (materials) and 5 (demolition and construction) submitted pursuant to planning permission TM/21/00287/FL (Amendment to previously approved scheme Ref No: TM/20/00678/FL to relocate building slightly to east)
- iv. **TM/21/00898/FL - Luna Barn, Church Road** - Demolition of existing redundant outbuildings and erection of a new 3 bed/6 person single storey dwelling, together with a 1 bed/2 person family annex, garage accommodation and associated landscape works.

c) Refusals

There were no refusals to report.

d) Any other planning matters

- i. **TM/21/01539/FL - White Ladies, Teston Road** - Demolition of the existing building and construction of 3x detached residential dwellings with associated access arrangements. The Parish Council Objected to this proposal. It was reported that people are still accessing the derelict building and it has become an infamous venue for urban explorers. It is important to demolish it before someone is seriously injured.
- ii. **TM/21/01431/FL - The Applehouse, Aldon Lane** - Replacement and change of use of redundant cold store with 1no. dwellinghouse and 1no. garage/workshop (ancillary to the Applehouse). This application has been **WITHDRAWN**

**6. MATTERS ARISING**

a) To consider and approve a co-option process

6 expressions of interest were received and 3 candidates remain in the process. Cllrs approved a Working Group to speak to candidates and make recommendations to the main Council for consideration and approval at the September meeting.

b) The Kings Arms Pub

A number of complaints have been made to the Parish Council over the last two or three months. Steve Rickett and Cllr Unter have spoken to those residents and to the pub. There are specific issues relating to noise and the marquee obstructing sight lines. The Parish Council has notified the residents of the authorities who have the power to deal with their complaints. Environmental Health and TMBC Licensing have been in touch with the pub. The Parish Council has no power to enforce action but is trying to work with everyone to come to an understanding and if necessary find a compromise.

There was a discussion. Cllrs believed that it has quietened down already.

c) Blaise Farm Quarry - Quarry and Independent Test Results

Cllrs have received the test results. The blasts which took place during the monitoring were not very loud. The results show nothing that exceeds the permitted levels.

d) Jazz in Cosgrave Field – Offham Society – date changed to 08.08.21

Cllrs noted the change in dates. Cllr Unter will check the field before the event takes place. It was reported that the cricket club are helping help out with access for people with mobility issues and are also letting the Offham Society use their toilets for the event.

e) Mens Shed

This is a way to help bring men together and provide a social link in their day. The Offham Community Network are getting funding, and the pub have agreed to being the venue for men to meet for a coffee and a chat for one morning a week and have got equipment ready. Caroline Dyer was involved at the start. Cllrs will also try and attend.

- f) Village Sign – maintenance  
The painted village sign and wood post need some maintenance. Cllr Taylor will contact a local resident about restoring the sign and Cllr Bailey will look at the post.
- g) Recreation Ground car park – tree maintenance  
The overgrown trees need cutting back and this has been passed to TMBC who own the car park.
- h) Queens Jubilee  
Cllrs will consider a beacon or planting a tree, and combining celebrations with a post lockdown party at future meetings. The jubilee weekend is 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022.
- i) To consider and approve purchase of new SID Pole for Church Road  
Kent Highways have approved a location on Church Road, and carried out an underground search and checks to make sure there are no services there. The cost of the pole is £1600 + VAT. Cllr Unter will ask Cllr Hohler if she could contribute to funding. It was suggested that the Parish Council could also purchase another SID. Cllrs approved the purchase of a Pole, subject to obtaining adequate funding.

**7. OPEN FORUM - Public Participation Session**

There were no questions.

**8. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

- a) To receive bank statements, consider and approve financial statements (to be physically signed at the next available opportunity) and to monitor budget  
These have been circulated and considered by Cllrs. The statements were approved and were signed by Cllr Unter. There were no budget issues to be reported.
- b) To consider and approve invoice payments  
The following invoices were approved for payment and the payments have been authorised since the last meeting by Cllrs Unter and Jones:

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
	<b>Payments for May 2021</b>	
JPCTCG	Membership 2021	£35.00
Clerk	May 2021 Salary, expenses, allowance	£689.91
HMRC	May 2021 PAYE + NI	£159.27
Lionel Robbins	Internal Audit 2020-2021	90.00
	<b>Payments for June 2021</b>	
Waring Lawn Care	Lawn Treatment 30.06.21	£280.00
Clerk	June 2021 Salary, expenses, allowance	£682.93
HMRC	June 2021 PAYE + NI	£159.27
Viking	Purchase Items for Meeting (Covid 19)	£30.46
Clerk	Reimbursement payment to Rentex – purchase items for Meeting (Covid 19)	£29.98
Unity Trust	Service Charge	£18.00

- c) To receive and consider Annual Internal Audit Report 2020-2021  
Cllrs have received the Internal Audit Report and considered the contents. Any matters to be dealt with will be considered at the next meeting.
- d) To note Notification of Exempt Status received from External Auditor for 2020-2021 and publication of Notice of Public Rights  
The Clerk reported that the external auditor has confirmed the Notification of Exempt Status. Public Rights Notices have been published.

- e) To consider any other financial matters  
There were no other matters.

**11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

The Meeting concluded at 9.30pm. Date of the monthly Parish Council meeting: **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021** at 7.30pm

Cllr Marchant will send a list of work completed under the Maintenance Contractor.

Agenda items – Village Sign, Speed Indicator Device, Jubilee Celebrations, Parish Councillor Responsibilities

Signed .....

Dated .....