

# Osmington Parish Council

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 6pm in the village hall.

**Present:** Mrs S Miller (Chair of the Parish Council – in the Chair), Mrs H Ballard, Mr N Ireland, Mr M Johnson, Mr J Little and Mr J Medrecki.

**Also in attendance:** Representatives from local groups/organisations, members of the public and PCSO Alison Donnison (Dorset Police).

### 1. Welcome

The Chair of the Parish Council, Mrs S Miller, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Mr B Kuflik (Councillor).

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

The Chair presented her report for the year 2024/25 (attached as the Appendix to these minutes).

### 4. Reports from Local Groups/Organisations

**St. Osmund's Church** – Thanks were given to The New Friends of St. Osmund's for their support in paying for an industrial dehumidifier at the cost of around £850.00.

Thanks were also given to The Osmington Society for their kind donation of £500.00 towards the upkeep of the church.

The diocese had given general agreement to replace the boiler which had enabled the church to move forward with quotes. Although donations had been increased by some groups, additional funds would be needed to pay for the new boiler.

Thanks were given to the visiting organist and the talented flower ladies who brighten the church.

The church would welcome new volunteers to join an existing group to look after the church and churchyard. The churchyard had been left during May to allow wild flowers and insects to increase in line with Dorset Wildlife Trust advice.

A trial would take place to have an hour of gardening one evening each week. Help would be welcomed and could be arranged by contacting one of the church wardens. Also, on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June a clean-up/clear up day would take place. Volunteers were encouraged to turn up with tools to enjoy a morning of fellowship, coffee and cake.

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July there would be afternoon tea in the village hall with music, Sunday prayers and hymns. This event would take place from 6pm and a visiting preacher would be in attendance.

**Dorset Police** – Ali Donnison provided an update as the PCSO for the Rural East Area. Crime in Osmington was low although there had been some reports of speeding, accidents and thefts in 2024.

Other reports that had been received included an abandoned vehicle, suspicious male and the use of fireworks near livestock. It was important to report any instance of crime no matter how small it may seem.

Shop lifting had increased significantly especially in the towns.

During the 100 days of Summer initiative, visits would be made to anti-social hotspot areas. Again, it was important to report any instance of anti-social behaviour however small it may seem.

Once a month a Community Contact Day was held and the dates were advertised for interested parties.

Scams were ever present preying on the vulnerable. It was noted that scams could happen to anyone and vigilance was important. Dorset Police offered Cyber Crime Prevention sessions and would be happy to hold one for the parish council or other groups that were interested.

**Speed Watch** – Sally Little provided a detailed update and it was noted that there were now 21 volunteers which allowed four teams to operate successfully and with flexibility.

In October 2024, Sally attended the annual conference where every Speed Watch team in Dorset was represented. Presentations were made and experiences shared.

The caption on the front of the conference handout stated “Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless but because they are priceless” and “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”.

The Police Road Safety Week of Action also took place in October 2024 and all speed watch teams were asked to undertake watches, supported by the Police. The Osmington teams supported this initiative and had four teams out during the week. During the week the teams were visited by The Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner, the Head of Road Safety and the Police Road Traffic Unit. This gave a clear message to all drivers that the police fully support the speed watch teams.

Another Road Safety Week of Action took place in April 2025, fully supported by the Osmington teams. The coastal road from Weymouth to West Bay was prioritised as this always experiences a high level of speeding traffic, especially motorbikes. The BBC and Dorset Echo attended and both provided extensive media reports. The MP for West Dorset was also in attendance.

Sally also attended the Dorset Community Speed Watch update meeting in April which was chaired by the Superintendent of the Strategic Alliance Operations Support. It was attended by various members of the Police and 11 selected members of Speed Watch teams across Dorset.

The Osmington Speed Watch teams take a break from December to the end of February each year due to the weather and commenced watches again in March.

One of the main nuisances in Osmington and other Dorset villages is the speeding and loud motorbikes. A watch would take place at the weekend with the Police Trucam vehicle which specifically targeted motorbikes. An update regarding this watch would be reported through the Osmington Oracle.

Finally, Sally wished to thank all the volunteers making a difference and educating drivers to keep villagers as safe as possible.

**Osmington Society** – Christof Merkle, as Chairman of the Osmington Society informed the meeting that the AGM had been held in October 2024 and a new member had been recruited to the group.

He wished to thank the volunteers that had offered to help with the maintenance and refurbishment of the noticeboards in the village and the restoration of the village pump.

In January a successful Burns Nights had been held at the village hall and helped to raise around £1000.00 of which £500.00 was donated to the church. Christof thanked all those that had made the event such a success.

The group hosted the Osmington Information website and also paid for the White Horse domain.

The Osmington Society was always looking for new volunteers, ideas, talks and event suggestions and urged interested parties to get in touch.

**Phoenix Fundraisers** – The fundraisers had been quieter than normal although lots of funding had been raised in the previous year. The funds had benefited the church and would continue to do so.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> August a BBQ event would be held with live entertainment from The Church Fitters.

The New Friends of St. Osmund's had held a successful quiz night which had raised funds for the church and breast cancer awareness.

**New Friends of St. Osmund's** – So far it had been a quiet year and efforts were underway to find out what people would like.

A request had been made for the group to speak at the Women's Institute in Winchester.

A play was planned for later in 2025 and another quiz would be held.

A donation from an anonymous donor had given the group a welcome boost and it was noted how powerful it could be to work together with other groups.

**The Osmington Oracle** – Everyone was encouraged to sign up to the newsletter and flyers were available at the meeting.

## **5. Public Discussion Period**

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

**Contingency Planning for Osmington** – Mr Little informed the meeting that a draft Contingency Plan had been developed. A public meeting would be held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June with a view to populating areas of the plan and encouraging volunteers to assist in certain areas of the plan.

A resident mentioned that the community hub had a good circulation reach to residents.

Mrs Miller informed the meeting that there were on-going discussions regarding the updating of the village hall lease and further updates would be reported at future meetings of the parish council.

A resident asked if the parish council would consider updating the Queen's Jubilee plaque situated on the fence at the play area, to reflect that the Queen had passed. Mrs Miller agreed that this could be considered at the meeting in July.

2024 was an election year and we welcomed three new councillors, Cllr M Johnson, Cllr J Little and Cllr J Medrecki. All councillors contribute to the parish council and keep things running smoothly.

The role of councillors is available on the website, Residents are encouraged to access the website to gain information and look at the noticeboards throughout the village to keep updated on current matters and forthcoming meetings.

Many planning applications are submitted and are generally supported by the parish council.

After years of wrangling and many concerns raised by residents, a Traffic Regulation Order was approved and implementation of the order is taking place.

The annual Spring Clean took place and the Chair thanked those who took part. Bins are still an issue in some areas and the parish council is looking to source a larger bin for Osmington Mills.

The budget was carefully reviewed and thanks given to the Clerk and Cllr Medrecki for their input. This enabled the parish council to keep the precept low.

Cllr Medrecki is working on how to proceed with the upgrade at the play area. This is a costly exercise and much needed as the current play equipment has seen better days. Some of the equipment has been removed due to safety concerns raised in recent play area inspections. The Chair apologised to local residents as she was aware that the swings were a popular and well used piece of equipment and hopefully would be replaced sooner rather than later.

The updating of the village hall lease was on-going and further updates would be given when available.

Cllr Little had drafted a contingency plan for the village and a public meeting would be held to encourage volunteers to help with areas of the plan where they may have specific expertise.

It was noted that all parish council meetings were open to members of the public and observers. Things of interest or concern could be raised during the allotted slot for public participation. The meeting proper then takes place where discussions should be amongst councillors only.

Finally, the Chair wished to thank all councillors and the Clerk for their support over the last 12 months. It is a joint effort to serve as "a body to decide upon and provide local facilities and fulfil requirements". It has been a learning curve for many on the parish council and whilst some decisions may not be supported by all, everyone endeavours to fulfil the duties of the parish council. Councillors should not use personal or prejudicial interests when something is raised and this is one of the reasons that interests are declared officially and guidance is abided by at all times. All members of the parish council are here to serve the parishioners of Osmington.

The Chair thanked all present for their attendance at the meeting.