

OVINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs. M. Davenport  
Clerk

Jubilee Cottage  
Ovington  
Northumberland  
NE42 6DH

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 at 7.15 p.m. in the Reading Room, Ovingham

Present: Councillors Jordon, Heslop, Chalmers, Moore (in part) and Gray, County Cllr Kelly (in part), and 5 residents.

1. Apologies for absence was received from Cllr Campbell.
2. The Cllrs accepted the resignation of Lesley Holden.
3. Three residents had expressed an interest in co-option, but due to the new resignation, a further notice had to be displayed and NCC informed. It was agreed to defer co-option until the time scale had expired for this new notice (14 working days from date of notice). However, it was also agreed that provisional arrangements would be made to meet the three applicants - this was to be arranged for 18<sup>th</sup> February and dependent on any response from the new vacancy notice.
4. No declaration of interest was received.
5. The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 having previously been circulated, were taken as read, approved and signed.
6. County Cllr Kelly spoke about the unprecedented flooding which had occurred since the last meeting and the knock on effects. Ovingham Bridge would remain closed for some months – the footbridge is to re-open to pedestrians and cyclists this week. Until water levels receded, divers could not assess any damage. Cllr Kelly also believed that the river road to Bywell, which had suffered land slip, would also remain closed for some time and expressed fears that it may never re-open due to the cost of repairs and value for money. It was not a well-used road, and NCC had other priorities. The Local Core Plan Strategy final draft had been delayed about 6 months.

Cllr Jordon asked County Cllr Kelly about possibilities for funding from the small members scheme for 3 different areas:-

- i) On Horsley Road, grassed areas were in a terrible state due to parking and recent poor weather. Cllr Jordon thought increasing the width of the drives would help alleviate this and it would still retain grassed areas. Also, a car has been parked on Highway land for some time with a “for Sale” displayed. Cllr Jordon queried whether this was legal – the Clerk to inform Highways Department.
- ii) A resident had concerns about the lack of a footpath from the top of Horsley Road to the bungalows on what was a badly lit road.

When the Village Inspection is carried out, Cllr Jordon to ask NCC for quotes for the above two options.

- iii) Another resident had contacted Cllr Jordon about the difficulties when alighting buses at the stop by the Reading Room – the dropped kerb and railing prevented buses aligning with the level of the pavement.

County Cllr Kelly said it was a matter of priorities for these suggestions – funding could be available in part. He pointed out the dropped kerb by the Reading Room had been funded at the request of the Parish Council and perhaps the railing should be removed. Cllrs to discuss this further and if necessary, to contact the bus company.

7. Matters arising:-

- i) **Barrier at shop:** No further progress to report. The barrier would be installed as soon as possible. There was no work force available at the moment to carry it out.
- ii) **Lane to rear of Castle View:** Again, nothing further to report. A date for laying this was still awaited from NCC.
- iii) **Traffic issues:** As the bridge remained closed for the foreseeable future, traffic issues would not be looked at in detail.
- iv) **Bridge Closure:** County Cllr Kelly had previously updated the meeting on the bridge closure – there was nothing further to report. The website and notice boards will be updated regularly as work progresses.
- v) **Village projects:** These had been discussed at a meeting earlier in January and the position was as follows:-
  - 1) **Village signs** – on hold
  - 2) **Story Board** – quotes received. Cllr Moore informed the meeting the wall was the responsibility of the owner of No. 1 The Hill, and they had no objection to the proposed fixture of a story board. Written confirmation of this was requested by the Cllrs.
  - 3) **Wild Flowers** – to be planted by the kerb on Castle View/Piper Road and also on the verge of the North entrance to the village (planter to be removed first).
  - 4) **Telephone Box** – to be repainted. Probably need about 2.5 litres
  - 5) **Wall on West Road** – Cllr Gray to propose to landowner that the PC would fund 50% of the cost of a fence to fill in the gap. It was acknowledged that removing the tree would be too costly an exercise. Purchasing the field in question was not an option
  - 6) **Bus Shelters** – It was hoped that one could be built at the east end of the village similar to those at Ovington. Cllr Campbell would obtain dimensions and three contractors would be approached. Clerk to check the possibility of using the stone from the shelter at Ovington Road ends, Ovington, if this was demolished.
  - 7) **Handyperson** – Still hoped to employ but could only offer living wage (£7.20 per hour). Clerk had concerns about employing someone due to legal requirements as far as Tax and PAYE etc. was concerned. She had spoken to Peter Hind who would be interested in

submitting quotes for specific jobs – he would not consider being offered the living wage however. A meeting would be arranged with Peter to go through possible tasks.

**8) Rear of Castle View** – The Clerk had been in touch with Steve Walsh who would liaise with residents about bringing the lane up to an acceptable standard. He had nothing to report but would contact them again.

**9) Action Plan** – develop revised plan in conjunction with Village Trust and Green Ovingham. Cllr Jordon suggested this be put on hold as there were a lot of issues on the agenda at the moment.

- vi) **Dog Waste bin by field opposite the School:** The entrance to the field had been damaged in the floods. The Clerk would contact the landowner as it was believed he was responsible for maintenance. Until then, a bin could not be sited. Clerk to order 2 bins – one for the bus stop, and one opposite the school.
- vii) **Village Inspection:** Due to the further issues raised as a result of the weather, it was agreed this should be arranged with Martin King for the end of February.
- viii) **Tenancy Agreements:** Cllr Jordon had spoken to Tony Newton, Chair of the Allotments Association, and proposed changes had been agreed as set out in the last meeting. An amendment would be made making reference to the maintenance of fruit trees.

(Cllr Moore left the meeting at 8.15pm)

8.	Accounts to pay/be paid	
	M. Davenport (Salary & expenses Nov/Dec)	£584.95
	Adrian Jackson (Grass cutting for 2015 season)	£1225.00
	P Holden (Antifreeze)	£12.00
	NALC (New Councillor Training)	£10.00
	Old School, Ovingham (donation)	£1000.00
	H Chalmers (Gel bags)	£599.06
	Raymond Little (Mole control)	£100.00
	S Electric (quarterly charge)	£344.08
	N Water (quarterly charge)	£26.79
	D Jordon (bridge re-opening expenses)	£41.19
	W E Jordon (photocopying flood meeting notice)	£5.20
	Firepoint Services (Annual inspection)	£24.18
	P Holden (Diesel & Graffiti removal spray)	£33.29
	CFSNE (fence at playing field)	£216.00
	Reading Room (Rent January x 2 and replacement Cheque from November meeting)	£68.00

9. **Planning applications:**

**15/03804/FUL: 40 Dene Garth** – to replace flat roof with pitched tiled roof – **GRANTED**

**16/00076/FUL: 35 Dene Garth** – extension and alteration including garage conversion, revised parking arrangements and landscaping works – **No objection**

**15/00808/FUL: Houses to North of Piper Road (amended application) –**

revised plans submitted which Cllr Gray had looked at. These included revisions taking into account surface water.

10. **Future audit arrangements/transparency fund:** The Parish Council needs to decide by the end of March 2016 if it is to join new audit arrangements which are being planned nationally, or whether to make their own arrangements. More information is expected, from NALC, but it was agreed that new national arrangements would probably be the way forward. The matter will be decided at the March meeting.  
(County Cllr Kelly left the meeting at 8.25pm)
11. **Freedom of Information Act/Data Protection:** Cllr Jordon had raised this at a recent Forum meeting. Stocksfield Parish Council had all policies on their website and the subject will be discussed fully at the next Forum meeting. Cllr Jordon was wary of having too many and Cllr Gray pointed out they had to be relevant.
12. **Village Environment (including flooding issues):** Street lights in Piper Road/Wheatfield had been reported but the problem was ongoing. Cllr Campbell was monitoring. Skips delivered to Burnside area, free of charge, had been very welcome as were those used by the Allotments. Cllr Jordon would remind John Alderson, tree surgeon, about trees/branches which needed attention in the village. Cllr Jordon had reported pot holes and poor road surfaces by the schools and the Church area. Cllr Chalmers noted there seemed to be a regular large puddle in the area of 1 Piper Road by dropped kerb.  
**Flooding:** Cllr Gray reported on the events since the last meeting – in all there had been four floods. Residents had been notified and meetings organised (with Environment Agency and NCC) in December. Another meeting was planned with EA/PC/SWAP for 26<sup>th</sup> January. Since the December meeting, Cllrs Jordon and Gray had met with FCERM to discuss flooding issues in the area of Bleach Green and Burnside. Further problems had occurred when tree(s) came down Whittle Burn and this was an area EA, FCERM and NCC would hopefully investigate further. Cllr Gray felt that although three groups were involved with flooding issues – EA, NCC and NWater, at times they did not appear co-ordinated.  
The Reading Room had offered their facilities to users of the Old School/Scout Hut whilst that was out of action. At the moment, users would pay the same hire fees as they would at the Old School/Scout Hut. The Parish Council had donated £1000 to the Old School/Scout Hut. Gel bags had been ordered and were available for residents to purchase at a reduced rate.  
Cllr Jordon reported that Aaron McNeill (FCERM) had looked at a tree blocking the Whittle Burn and Adrian Jackson had confirmed it would be a big job to remove. Cllr Jordon pointed out, if it was not removed it would remain a danger if there was a repeat of the recent flooding. Cllrs Gray and Jordon would contact the owner.  
Cllr Jordon also confirmed that NCC would deliver sand bags only on confirmation that there was a danger.
13. **Grass cutting for 2016 season:** Adrian Jackson had been responsible for the grass cutting for the last two years and the standard was an improvement on that of NCC. Although he had been unable to cut parts of the green due to bridge works, he had compensated by undertaking other

grass cutting jobs in the village. The Clerk would invite Mr. Jackson to submit his contract again for 2016.

14. **Committee reports:** There had been no recent Burial Board meeting. Cllr Jordon reported that flooding issues had been a large part of the discussions at the recent Forum meeting and she had also forwarded details of “learning together modules” available via NCC. Cllr Gray had nothing further to add regarding the Reading Room – Cllr Jordon noted that another Councillor would need to be added to that Committee and offered to fill this temporarily until the Annual Meeting of the PC when it would be reviewed.
15. **Correspondence:** No other correspondence had been received which needed attention.
16. **Distribution** was still being circulated.
17. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 7.15pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm