

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Parish Council Meeting held Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018  
at Ovington Village Hall**

**Present:**

Nigel Parkes--- Chairman  
Patricia Hanson – Vice Chairman  
Peter Levett – Councillor  
Shaun Hanson – Councillor  
Julie Parkes - Councillor  
Amanda Wilson – Clerk

**Apologies:**

None

One village resident

The minutes of the last meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 were approved and subsequently signed by Nigel Parkes Chairman.

**Declaration of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**Matters Arising:**

**Broadband** - Update as of 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – It is hopeful that a decision will be made in June as to whether Ovington will be included within the next phase, Phase 3 which will also commence in June 2018. Alli Walker of DD strongly advised against entering into the Community Broadband scheme and paying around £50k for this. Both Digital Durham and BT have offered to come to a village meeting to explain the latest news on progress. **Action; Nigel Parkes**

Background;

Alli Walker of Durham County Council / Digital Durham (DD) emailed Nigel Parkes on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – content in summary;

a) Given numerous processes that need to occur – we hope to have a better understanding between April and June 2018, at which time we will look to provide OPC with an update.

b) Funding and existing fibre infrastructure will form part of the decision making process as to whether Ovington will be included in the upgrade plans... see above.

c) Ref BT Community Fibre Partnership (CFP):- Although not quoted in this particular email it is understood that CFP option would cost circa £50,000 to provide High Speed Broadband into the village. CFP is usually delivered within 12 months and given they (DD) don't yet know if Ovington is to be included in any plans through the Digital Durham Programme, Alli suspects CFP would be a quicker route.

d) Alternative Technologies in the meantime? Mastband and 4G, Satellite Broadband, Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme – [www.digitaldurham.org/better-broadband/](http://www.digitaldurham.org/better-broadband/)

**ii) Maypole Plaque:** A possible location has been cited within the committee who will now go and take a closer look to decide i.e. next to the existing seat opposite the Four Alls. It has been proposed that the VAT refund of £818 should be spent on a plaque inscribed with a short history of the Maypole Village. Ashley Bye has now kindly provided a history of the village Maypole. The content of this needs to now be condensed so it is suitable for inclusion on a plaque. The options for what sort of plaque, where it should be located and what it should say and/or depict needs to be explored and agreed. Suggestions to date; An A4 sized brass plate mounted on a rough-hewn piece of rock placed near the cherry tree, Ashley's research and history printed and available for sale in the village, The plaque and mount in place ready for our entry to "Britain in Bloom", Pricing also to be obtained for 2 No. Cast Iron "Maypole Village" entrance signs to replace existing. At the latest meeting it was agreed to concentrate on the plaque and not the village entrance signs. Ashley Byes history of the Maypole is to be condensed for inclusion on the plaque. **Action: ALL (wording Julie Parkes)**

**iii) Monitoring BT service into the village** – Village resident Dot Jones has offered to compile a record of any issues raised to her by village residents regarding British Telecom's service into the village, none to date. **Action – Monitor**

**iv) Village Green** – Maureen Begg confirmed via email 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 that the Village Green is now registered with the Land Registry under Ovington Parish Council. Maureen also confirmed that this would have no impact on the agreement between DCC and OPC re maintenance of the trees both on the Green and on all public land in the village. She went on to clarify that The Village Green has been registered with the County Council 's since the 70's as a Village Green in ownership of the Parish Council and the registration with the Land Registry was just to record this more formally and also digitally. OPC has requested that this tree maintenance agreement be forwarded to the Parish Council for their records. Nothing received from Maureen to date therefore it was decided to contact Durham County Council direct for confirmation of this arrangement. **Action: Nigel Parkes**

**v) Northumbria in Bloom** – Judges will attend on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 1.30pm for a 1 hour tour of the village and a 15 minute presentation in the village hall. The Councillors were reminded that the scoring for NIB will be roughly based on 50% for the "blooms" and 50% Environmental Responsibility. Supporting the presentation Barbara Levett has sourced 6 display boards on loan from the Teesdale Village Hall Consortium. A note will be circulated around the village to update residents on progress, encourage participation, update on the Broadband situation and request printed literature and photographs etc for the village hall display, to be handed in on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2-4pm. There will then be another visit by the NIB judges in July 2018.

It was also agreed to purchase 22 bags of compost and distribute as a "thank you" to the adoptive owners of the flower tubs. **Action – NP/PH**

**VI) Christmas Decorations** – Very large "Baubles" were spotted by Nigel Parkes hanging from the branches of trees in Staindrop, Nigel thought that might be nice for our Village Green for Christmas 2018. Prices to be obtained, on going. **Action – Peter Levett**

### **Consideration of any current Planning Applications**

None

### **Financial Report:**

Julie Parkes as the current Responsible Financial Officer informed the meeting that there had been one bill paid since the last meeting: £783.46 to Durham County Council (Election 2017 costs) (Cheque 369 dated 23/02/18)

Receipts – None

As of 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 the Parish Council had £370.54 in the current account and £3,746.30 in the savings account.

Invoices to pay – one £10 Ovington Village Hall.

1 No. invoice were agreed and authorised to pay by the Councillors.

**Precept 2018/19** Previously agreed unanimously to remain unchanged from the previous year at £1,968.00 as proposed by Nigel Parkes and seconded by Peter Levett, however there appears to be,

to date, an unexplained error as the Precept declared and circulated has in fact been increased by 56%. OPC RFO to investigate and report back at the next meeting. **Action; Julie Parkes**

It was brought to the Councillors attention that no more than 115% of the Precept should be held in the Parish Council account, this equates to, based on a Precept of £1,968.00, no more than £2,200. OPC currently have £4,116.84 , however much of this is “committed funding” for future disposal. Our RFO has agreed to produce a separate column within the accounts to demonstrate this. **Action; Julie Parkes**

#### **Correspondence:**

Letter from Jean Dauber regarding the concern over possible flooding into her cottage on the Village Green should proposed perimeter track improvements go ahead. A letter has been drafted and will be hand delivered from OPC to advise that this is not a Parish Council matter but the Parish Council would be happy to provide support should any issues arise. **Action; Nigel Parkes**

#### **Any other Business:**

**Grass Cutting** – Mill Gardens have secured the contract for the village grass cutting requirements for the next 2 years and have submitted a fixed price of £916.70 for 10 x 1 hour cuts per year, with additional cuts costing £91.67 plus VAT per cut. An allowance of £50 /cut has been verbally provided should the council request the grass cuttings are to be collected and disposed of off-site. Unanimously agreed to accept this offer, with the first cut scheduled for mid April and the last around October time.

**Annual Insurance** – Current agreement to be review to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose with a premium of circa £257.60 due in May. **Action – Julie Parkes**

**CDALC** – due soon, cost £20.00

**Flags** – Ian Guest to be asked if OPC can look after the flags for the Maypole going forward. **Action; Nigel Parkes**

**Northumbria in Bloom Donation** – Amanda Wilson handed over £92.22 cash as a donation for Northumbria In Bloom from monies raised from a recent Community Litter Pick around the village and along the roads to Winston Bridge and towards Hutton Magna.

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018 7.45pm (Hall booked with Mrs Levett).**