

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via Google Meet

### Present:

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

### Apologies:

None

The minutes of the last meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were approved and subsequently signed by Nigel Parkes Chairman.

**All present as above.**

### Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

### Matters Arising:

i) **Broadband** – FACTO working In conjunction with Durham County Council and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, have contacted Ovington, Wycliffe, Hutton Magna and other villages south of the River Tees up to the A66 to explore options in relation to delivering full fibre broadband. They have already sought declarations of interest, and have apparently received 126, from local residents and businesses and are now in the planning stages. Emails have been sent to those who have sent an expression of interest, outlining the different stages. It is expected that FACTO will report back to us by the end of March with design proposals and the work will be completed by the end of February 2022 and once completed, the network will provide residents and businesses up to 1000Mb broadband speed.

ii) **Maintenance of trees on village Green** – Despite NP contacting DCC for clarification there has been no progress. As far as we are aware DCC have not checked the trees for 5 years. **Action - Nigel Parkes to chase DCC**

iii) **Conservation Area Classification** – Proposals for Ovington Village have been submitted and this is now in the hands of Durham County Council. To date it is looking positive and is being progressed by DCC as quickly as the current situation allows. The whole process from start to finish is expected to take around 6 months, as advised by Brian Harris (DCC) to Shaun previously.

Brian confirmed to our Councillor Shaun Hanson today (17<sup>th</sup> March 2021) that the on-line consultation process has been delayed due to Covid and a backlog of work, but this will be progressed as soon as resources allow. This includes targeted mail shots, a letter to each house directing them to an on-line survey and the documents for review. This consultation process will take a minimum of 6 weeks. If the outcome is positive, there will be a detailed report produced by DCC and an adoption report submitted for approval of a designated conservation area. **Action – Shaun Hanson to monitor progress and report as necessary**

iv) **Whorlton Bridge Closure** – The proposed reopening has now been delayed until March 2023. The bridge remains closed to ALL traffic, including pedestrians and bicycle. Herras fencing & concrete blocks have been installed at both ends and a report in the Tessedale Mercury reports that the bridge cannot currently support its own weight and is at risk of catastrophic failure. This is obviously a huge set back to local residents with no prospect of temporary repairs or reopening in the short-term.

vii) **Village Green Access Road** – After initial enquiries it is estimated that the cost for the current repairs to the access road from Maypole Cottage to the road will cost approximately £300. Concern remains about the condition of the road outside Maypole Cottage on the Village Green. Deep potholes have formed and the overall condition is continuing to deteriorate. It was proposed that the Parish Council should pay for the repairs however it was agreed that some investigation is required prior to this to establish who is liable for the upkeep of this road and report back to the Parish Council prior to any repairs being undertaken at the cost of OPC. It was also agreed that an approach should be made to the owner of Maypole Cottage to have a chat about the situation. **Action – Nigel Parkes, Shaun Hanson (contact with Maypole Cottage) and Peter Levett (ownership/upkeep liability investigation)**

**Consideration of any current Planning Application**

- Update – Planning Appeal ref. APP/X1355/W/20/3256902 DM/20/00923/FPA for the construction of 3 dwellings on the Land North of Moor View Cottage was dismissed on 4th January 2021. OPC would like to extend our sincere thanks for the time, effort and expert advice provided by Shaun Hanson in the Parish Council’s submissions against this proposed development. **Action – Monitoring on-going ALL**

#### **Financial Report:**

Julie Parkes as the current Responsible Financial Officer informed the meeting that there had been zero bills paid since the last meeting.

*Receipts* – None

As of Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 the Parish Council had £356.69 in the current account and £3,442.26 in the savings account.

*Invoices to pay* – none

0 No. Invoices were agreed and authorised to pay by the Councillors.

*Future expenditure* – Display Board rental - £50,

*Future income* - £419.50 reclaimed VAT expected early 2021 (Building Society Branch visit is required to see if this has arrived – **Action Julie Parkes**)

#### **Correspondence:**

a) None

#### **Any other Business**

- a) AGAR Returns are required by the end of March 2021 **Action – Julie Parkes**
- b) Website Accessibility and GDPR – HugoFox confirmed, via email, that the OPC Website hosted by HugoFox meets the current GDPR and Accessibility requirements.

**Next Parish Council Meeting – TBC depending on the current pandemic (Covid19) situation**