

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> April 2016 at 7.15 p.m. in the Reading Room, Ovingham

Present: Councillors Jordon, Heslop, Gray, Chalmers, Campbell, Bryan and Shield, County Councillor Kelly (part) and 1 resident.

1. No apologies for absence was received.
  2. Resignation of Lou Moore was accepted. The Clerk confirmed no requests for an election had been received. Adverts would be raised in the Oracle and website.
  3. Cllr Campbell declared an interest in item 6vii as a member of the Allotment Association.
  4. The minutes of the last meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March having previously been circulated, were taken as read, approved and signed.
  5. County Cllr Kelly had circulated his report in advance of the meeting. He also handed out an article regarding “New County Hall – Fact not Fiction” which detailed information regarding the proposed new building at Ashington and which had just been approved unanimously by the Strategic Planning Committee. It had also been endorsed by the external auditors and savings over 25 years were estimated in the region of £15 million. The current building at Morpeth required extensive refurbishment and this was not cost effective. Cllr Jordon also queried changes to the policy on open plan estates. Cllr Kelly explained that this was to ensure future policies were consistent and it would mean that applications to fence off frontage grassed areas would be refused and applications for hard surfacing of these areas for car parking would only be consented if they met county wide standards. He confirmed planning enforcement officers would be responsible for this. Cllr Kelly also circulated a briefing note regarding damage to the county network following severe weather events (in December and January). Priority had been given to pot holes which had been up to date before the events in December and it was proposed that NCC had to significantly increase resources over a 16 week period including cutting verge grips, clearing debris from gully grates. Cllr Campbell mentioned the problems in his estate relating to grass cutting and pot holes. Cllr Jordon confirmed some pot holes had been reported and it was noted some had been filled such as those at the back of the church. Cllr Kelly also advised there would now be 2 planning committees to share the workload as strategic planning especially was overloaded whilst Planning and Rights of Way significantly less so.
- Cllr Kelly left the meeting at 7.55
6. Matters arising:-

- i) **Barrier at shop:** The two bollards had been installed although Cllr Campbell noted that there should be a yellow “warning” band near the top of each. Cllr Jordon to inform Highways.
- ii) **Lane to rear of Castle View:** No date yet set but was “in progress”.
- iii) **Traffic issues:** Official notice had been displayed and placed in the local press for the proposed double yellow lines on the corner of Tyne Gardens and Castle View. Assuming no objections were received, work should be carried out shortly.
- iv) **Bridge Closure:** Cllr Jordon had just circulated the latest update from the bridge engineer which included a report for the media. A big scour hole had been discovered on the southern side of the bank and advice was sought from the Environment Agency. It was hoped the bridge would re-open by late summer. Cllr Jordon had raised some questions with the engineer including whether detailed investigations before the original closure would have highlighted issues. She was advised no – it would have required the bridge to close before the work and soundings had been carried out in 2005. The engineer also confirmed that NCC had retained money under the previous contractors’ contract which would be used to pay for certain extra jobs. Cllr Jordon also confirmed there was nothing further to report on the re-opening of the Bywell Road – discussions were still ongoing between the landowner and NCC.
- v) **Village projects:**
  - 1) **Wildflowers:** Cllr Chalmers, having not been at the March meeting, queried why some areas proposed by Green Ovingham were not being considered for wild flowers. She mentioned that it had been suggested that the one on Horsley Road (by the planter) was not suitable. Cllr Jordon explained that Debbie Reed (Green Ovingham) had originally asked for consideration to several areas in the village but having been at the March meeting accepted that three areas be trialed initially. The Parish Council would reimburse Green Ovingham for the seeds. Cllr Chalmers would like more areas to be utilized as it was environmentally friendly and attracted birds, insects etc. but accepted that the project could be expanded in future.
  - 2) **Parking on Horsley Road:** Nothing further to report
  - 3) **Path to the chalets on Horsley Road:** Again nothing further to report.
  - 4) **Handyperson:** Cllr Jordon had circulated a proposal to be drawn up with Peter Hind. This entailed two “descriptions of work” although some of the proposed jobs could be changed. Each were expected to be carried out 4 times a year and it was agreed Peter would monitor the areas and report to the Clerk. It was noted that the overall cost would be in the region of £1000.
  - 5) **Workshop:** Cllr Chalmers hoped to set up a workshop involving the likes of The Village Trust and Green Ovingham to look at ideas for the village including

existing projects. Cllr Gray advised that the Village Trust was currently in a period of hibernation but he would be happy to participate. Cllr Jordon agreed with the idea in principle but felt there were too many ongoing projects – something in the region of 20 – and would rather the Parish Council concentrate on existing ones rather than adding to it. Cllr Bryan stated some ideas can take a long time to materialize but Cllr Chalmers replied the idea of a workshop was to look at the long term, not for immediate action. The Resident at the meeting suggested it might be worth looking at a Community Group, as was the case in Ovington, which could do much of the back ground work. It was agreed, that the matter be looked at again in September.

- vi) **Dog Waste bin by field opposite the School:** These were on order and the Clerk hoped to have them shortly.
- vii) **Grazing Land:** Notice of the vacancy had been posted to Facebook and one expression of interest had been received. The Clerk had also submitted an article for the forthcoming Oracle newsletter. Since the last meeting, the Allotment Association had now implied they could be interested in the land but Cllr Jordon reminded the Cllrs it had been agreed at the March meeting that it should be kept as grazing land and it had already been advertised as such. It would be discussed further at the next meeting if the above interest, or any other, does not materialise.

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| 7. | Accounts to pay/be paid                     |          |
|    | M. Davenport (Salary & expenses March)      | £302.19  |
|    | A Wanless (key deposit return)              | £24.50   |
|    | Ovingham Joint Burial Board Cttee (precept) | £2565.00 |
|    | Wybone (2 litter bins)                      | £583.82  |
|    | GNAA (donation)                             | £100.00  |
|    | Tynedale Hospice (donation)                 | £100.00  |
|    | Community Action N'land (donation)          | £100.00  |
|    | N'land CAB (donation)                       | £50.00   |
|    | Core Music (donation)                       | £50.00   |
|    | TaxAid (donation)                           | £50.00   |
|    | Sports Tynedale (donation)                  | £50.00   |
|    | S Electric (pavilion charge)                | £58.63   |
|    | Ovingham Reading Room (Room Hire March)     | £17.00   |
|    | D Jordon (refreshments for flood meeting)   | £9.50    |

- 8. **Planning applications:**  
**15/04187/FUL 6 Wheatfield Close** - retrospective construction of single storey kitchen extension – **GRANTED**  
**15/00808/FUL: Houses to North of Piper Road (amended application)** – Cllr Gray was still keeping in touch with the above application – information was not forthcoming. He noted that it could be possible for the Parish Council to approach Planning and ask for funding under S106 agreements for projects. This was an option when housing applications (more than 10 dwellings) were granted. He confirmed the Parish Council had originally mentioned S106 in their original submissions on the

application.

9. **Village Oracle – request for financial support:** Cllr Chalmers had circulated a request from the village Oracle which was delivered to every household in Ovingham. It was issued 4 times a year and previous financial assistance had been received from the Parish Council together with a donation from SCA. The Oracle was warmly received by residents. However, although there were some funds received from advertisements and a small amount raised via a raffle, more assistance was required if the newsletter was to continue. It cost £113.50 each issue (£454 pa) although this may be reduced to 3 issues. Cllr Jordon proposed, and it was agreed that the Parish Council donate £200 to the Village Oracle.
10. **To consider Risk Assessment for Audit purposes:** This was reviewed on an annual basis and the Clerk had forwarded a copy of the existing assessment. However, she advised more detail was required and had also looked at an example from SLCC which had also been forwarded to the Councillors. One of the areas which needed inclusion was the risk of the loss of the Clerk. The Clerk would forward a revised assessment relevant to Ovingham Parish Council and this would be approved at the next meeting.
11. **Prudhoe Town Council – letter re new river crossing:** This had been discussed at the last meeting but due to time constraints, no decision had been made. The Cllrs voiced their concerns – Cllr Jordon pointing out the problem with congestion in particular. This had been an issue for many years and highlighted in a survey in 2004. The problem had only worsened. She felt that the Parish Council should support a new crossing although it was acknowledged that there were limited options – it needed to be between Ovingham and Wylam linking the A69 to the A695. The Cllrs would circulate their thoughts which the Clerk would draft for approval.
12. **To consider bus shelters for the village:** Go North East had informed the Clerk that they did not have funds to allocate to a bus shelter(s). They did suggest other options including any S106 grants or approaching SCA for assistance. The Clerk advised that it was in the interests of the Parish Council to ascertain a need for a shelter(s) and an agreed letter would be sent to all households asking for their opinions and number of bus journeys made. Cllr Chalmers suggested that it could be delivered with the Oracle and she would get it copied.
13. **Village Environment (including flooding issues):** Cllr Gray updated the meeting with the latest on flood information. It had also been categorically denied that the flooding in January had been as a result of the opening up of local reservoirs. There was no quick solution to the problem. Cllr Jordon confirmed the Environment Agency Field Services team had been in Ovingham today (21/4) and they confirmed they will progress with the removal of trees and debris upstream of Ovingham bridge in the next 2 weeks. NCC confirmed they were responsible for the culverts and gravel in the burn and work will also start within the next two weeks. Removal of debris and trees in whittle burn had started – the trees would be removed in stages.  
Cllr Jordon reported that the resident she had met with before the last meeting with regards to the overhanging hedge on the footpath at the back of Dene Garth had now trimmed his section and cleared all the weed growth on the path and she had thanked him.

Cllr Shield had contacted the First School asking if the pupils could design a poster warning against dog fouling. Unfortunately at the moment the school was busy with ongoing projects but the individual classes could take it up. Cllr Shield had offered to talk to the school.

14. **Committee reports:** Cllr Gray reported there would not be a gosling fair this year as it clashed with other events. The energize group had asked for storage space for large mirrors. A recent jumble sale had raised £780 for the Scout Group.

Cllr Jordon reported that discussions on Freedom of Information and other policies had not progressed at the Forum meeting. There had been a talk on enhanced services from NCC – for example the service in Ovingham for grass cuts and weed control was level 1 only. Enhanced services could result in more cuts and Cllr Jordon had asked for a quotation for extra cuts and proposed this could be considered at the September meeting when discussions commenced on budgets for the following year.

15. **Correspondence:** There were no other correspondence to consider.
16. **Distribution** was still being circulated. Cllr Jordon noted information on applying for funds to obtain computer equipment such as a scanner, in relation to Transparency Funds. The Clerk may be eligible to apply on behalf of Ovington Parish Council and Cllr Jordon suggested this be investigated further.
17. **Any other business:** The Clerk confirmed that Phil Holden had updated the website in relation to the new faces on the Parish Council. The notice boards would be included once the current position was filled.
18. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 7.15pm, which would be the Annual Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm