

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held Tuesday 17th May 2016 at Ovington Village Hall

Present:

Nigel Parkes – Chairman
Margaret Towler – Vice Chairman
Maureen Begg – Councillor
Ian Guest --- Councillor
Amanda Wilson - Clerk

Apologies:

Shaun Hanson --- Councillor

Six village residents

The minutes of the last meeting on 15th March 2016 were approved and subsequently signed by Nigel Parkes.

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

Matters Arising:

i) BT Way Leave Compensation – Following a tele/con with Emlyn Evison on 11th January 2016, it was suggested that Mrs Begg, on behalf of OPC, sent an email to BT to declare that we wish to escalate this issue and take it higher within BT Openreach, MB e-mailed and awaiting response. MB chased Leslie Sheldon of BT no conclusion yet. **Action: Mrs Begg to continue to follow up with BT.**

ii) Ovington Bridge – White Lines now re-instated and Mrs Begg to contact Historic England to seek advice on how to progress with this ref. using Google Earth/Street View etc. Mrs Begg advised the meeting that she had emailed Brian Buckley on 1/11/15 re his response to her previous email that the Durham County Council (DCC) were confident that they didn't lose any of the original stones so therefore feel that the bridge must be close to it's original length 'within reason' and that in the absence of any further evidence contrary to that considered previously did not propose to take any further action. Mrs Begg included reference to Google street view by checking the coping stones from one direction and also the kerb stones from the opposite direction, the bridge wall can clearly be evidenced as being approximately 2 meters short. She also referred to James Rowlandson (DCC Councillor) and Brian Harris (DCC Conservation Officer) who had both at separate meetings agreed on site that the bridge wall has not been repaired to the original length. Brian Buckley of Durham County Council confirms his opinion (as above) has not changed. Mrs Begg to contact James Rowlinson, local councillor, to see if he can put pressure on DCC. In the meantime DCC have agreed to re-mark the white lines in the middle of the repaired piece of road which had previously collapsed and also reinstate the reflective bollard at the end of the bridge. Ongoing- OPC trying to get Brian Buckley to meet on the bridge to discuss. **Action: Mrs Begg to progress.**

iii) Increased Broadband Service to Ovington – Tony Thompson waiting for BT Finance to sign off modelling work, phase 2 which consists of 350 pieces of work and Steve Hodgson advised a consultation document has / is being issued with more information available early April 2016. Mrs Begg advised that she had been informed by Tony Thompson via e-mail on 12/1/16 stating that he hoped to have an update by the end of January re the timescales in increasing the Broadband to Ovington. To date no detailed analysis has been provided therefore we are unaware if any funding will be provided to upgrade Ovington. Our contact at Digital Durham, Tony Thompson also advised us that he will be vacating his post on 12th February. Simon Robinson BT has advised that Whorlton is scheduled to be enabled towards the end of 2017. MB received an email from Digital Durham on 26th April 2016 to summarise the review of Broadband provision for Ovington has been suspended due to the EU Referendum until the beginning of June for completion by the end of July, it will then take an extra 10 weeks to complete the next phase which comprises of BT producing "a model" of

the future plans. They hope to provide a more detailed update for Ovington "later in the year".

Action: Mrs Begg to monitor and follow up.

iv) Public Footpaths – No progress. Concerns re the public footpath down to the river opposite Ovington Edge in respect of the barbed wire fencing alongside the path with regards to Health and Safety. Mrs Begg advised the meeting that she had chased this up again with the Mike Murden the Public Rights of Way Officer in September and his reply dated 17/9/15 was that he was going to confirm the works with the landowner and hopefully get the handrail fitted sometime in October. As this had not been completed Mrs Begg advised the meeting that she would chase this up again. Mike Murden e-mailed by Mrs Begg but no progress to date. **Action: Mrs Begg (ongoing)**

v) Transparency Code – Internet Access – Mrs Begg advised that an application for funding has been submitted although after the date, so it will be considered in a month's time. Mrs Begg also advised that funding cannot be obtained for Antivirus packages, only hardware i.e. printer, scanner, computer, router and also MS Word Licence etc. approx. to value of approx. £300. New form to be submitted. **Action: Mrs Begg.**

vi) Damage to Village Green Oak tree - Mrs Begg informed the meeting that she had been advised that the tree would try to repair itself by scaring over the damaged area however that the Council would have to risk assess the potential weakness in the tree. As DCC had agreed to take over the maintenance of the trees on the Village Green DCC would have the responsibility. It was agreed that the Parish Council would monitor and review the situation next year. Mrs Begg to contact Durham County Council to get their opinion. **Action: Mrs Begg**

vii) Parish Notice Board – Mr Parkes advised the meeting that he would install a latch on the notice board. **Action: Mr Parkes (still ongoing)**

viii) Maypole:

Update as of 17th May 2016;

- a) Old pole now converted into benches x 2 and the rest of the pole plus the old pole seats have been offered up & collected for disposal/firewood etc by the village residents.
- b) Replacement – concluding fund raising efforts, VAT and additional quotations.
- c) Quotation – NP secured a revised quotation of £4,444.00 inclusive of supply, transport, installation and repairs to "the Fox" but excluding the proposed plaque to provide a brief history of Ovington Maypole; as the overall cost inclusive of VAT exceeds £2000, 2 more quotations are necessary. **Action: Mr Parkes ongoing.**
- d) Funds secured to date total £2,945 providing a shortfall of £1,499 plus VAT despite Ian Guest appeal on Radio Teesdale and an article in both the Northern Echo and the Teesdale Mercury.
- e) John McBain has kindly offered to donate a tree from Westholme Farm but collection, treatment, delivery and erection has been considered by the Council as not a practical or economical option.
- f) However during the course of the Parish Council Meeting Pamela and Ian Guest have very kindly offered to donate the balance of £1,500 as a gift to the village to fund the remaining gap in fundraising & cover the cost of the new Maypole. This offer was accepted, with sincere thanks, by the Council.

Brief history:-

Given that the Maypole had snapped during the strong winds of November 9th at around 12 noon, discussion around a replacement Maypole was held. As a 'listed building' it was agreed the Councillors need to contact DCC re any restrictions on type of material and height of a new Maypole

before any decision could be made on the replacement. The Councillors agreed to hold a public meeting on December 15th for residents of the Parish for their views and suggestions re both the old and new maypole and also potential funding options. Discussion surrounding the repair of the weather vane was also held and it was agreed that this would also be discussed at the meeting. The Councillors were informed that when the new Maypole is erected, (aiming for prior to Mayday 2016) that Mr John Brennan and Mr Peter Levett had offered their services to help with raising and lowering of the flag.

Progress as of 15th January 2016:- David Sparks – Durham County Council – Office of Conservation and Listed Buildings (structures) – confirmed they would like to be informed of the proposed maypole (details, placement on the green etc)'

Yes OPC can claim back any VAT paid on the works of procuring and erecting a new pole.

Although most telegraph poles are around the 12 -14 lm mark, OPC has located a treated 22 lm 350 diameter down to 170 diameter circa 3.5 tonnes, pole in Finland (potentially Green Treated with an expected life of 30 years).

Initial discussions were also made ref. a possible plaque suggested to provide a history of the village Maypole and possible vehicle for advertising for any funding provider/s.

The two old “maypole” benches are to be replaced by new one’s made out of the current fallen Maypole.

The Fox weathervane – will be kindly refurbished and repaired by Ronnie Payne.

ix) Fairview Garage for sale with particulars mentioning potential of usage as a ‘depot’ subject to relevant consents: Concerns raised re more heavy traffic using roads within the 7.5 tons weight restriction if the garage was sold with this intent. The Councillors agreed to monitor the situation. **Still ongoing.**

x) General discussion about concerns raised about the sale of the field adjacent to Ovington Edge and potential of planning application to build on this land. **Action: Monitor**

Consideration of any current Planning Applications

None

Financial Report:

Mrs Begg as the Responsible Financial Officer informed the meeting that there had been two bills paid since the last meeting: £10 to Ovington Village Hall – hire of hall (Cheque 331 dated 17/03/16) and £33.20 to Amanda Wilson – stationary (Cheque 332 dated 17/03/16).

Receipts – Total - £2002.50 Precept £1968.50 dated 07/04/16 and LCTRS Grant £34 dated 07/04/16.

To date the Parish Council had £1.37 in the current account and £4,586.83 in the savings account.

Invoices were received for – Village Hall Hire £10.00, Mill Gardens Grass Cutting £204 and Zurich Insurance £251.85; All invoices were agreed and authorised to pay by the Councillors.

End of year Financial Statement

The Responsible Financial Officer Mrs Begg presented a statement of accounts in respect of the year ended 31st March 2016. This indicated that expenses throughout the year amounted to £1420.47 of which £243.80 related to insurance; £70 cost to rent the room for meetings; £1020 for grass cutting; £33.40 for flagpole rope; £33.20 for stationary and £1997 for membership of the Association of Local Councils.

Receipts during the year amounted to £1642 of which £2.93 was interest on the deposit account; £190.07 VAT refund; LCTSS Grant of £13 and Precept 2014 £1436.

The net balance in hand at 31.3.16 amounted to £2585.70.

The Responsible Financial Officer's statement was unanimously approved and accepted. It was agreed that the Council kept accurate records of all expenditure and receipts and that the accounts were available to be inspected by any member of the parish. (The Council could therefore approve the Annual Governance Statement of Assurance required for the Annual Return year ending 31st March 2016).

The Council reviewed the Risk assessment and management (financial) for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

Correspondence:

- 1) Big Lottery Fund – Awards for All application ref. 0010280968 dated 08.04.2016 – advising that the application for funding for the village replacement maypole was unsuccessful.

Any other Business:

- a) Concern was raised about the potholes on Cliffords Lane – Mrs Begg has advised Durham County Council
- b) Parish Council Newsletter to be issued during this month – **Action; Mrs Begg**
- c) Concern was raised about the speed of Thursday's "Time Trial" by a local cycling group, through the village. **Action; Nigel Parkes to contact them**

The next Parish Council Meeting was arranged for Tuesday 19th July at 7.45pm. (Hall booked at meeting with Mrs Levett).

Record of new committee elected at Ovington Parish Council Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 7.30pm:-

Chairman – Nigel Parkes (proposed by Maureen Begg and seconded by Margaret Towler)

Vice Chairman – Ian Guest (proposed by Maureen Begg and seconded by Margaret Towler)

All other council membership remains unchanged.

Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Notification by Member of a Local Authority of Pecuniary and Other Interests – issued to both Mr Parkes and Mr Guest for completion and return via e-mail with the meeting minutes.