

## 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 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 7.15 p.m. in the Reading Room, Ovingham

Present: Councillors Jordon, Gray, Campbell, Chalmers and Jackson, County Councillor Kelly (who would arrive later) and 7 members of the public.

The meeting opened with Cllr Jordon explaining that once County Cllr Kelly arrived, the matter on the agenda relating to Parking on Horsley Road would be discussed. No other matters were raised by the residents present.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bryan and Shield.
2. Joanna Jackson was co-opted to council and she signed the form of acceptance.
3. Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs Gray (item 8), Cllr Chalmers item 4 on agenda but item 6 on minutes (Horsley Road), Cllr Campbell (item 4v – quotes for bus shelter preparation) and Cllr Jackson (item 10).
4. The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed.
5. Matters arising:-
  - i) **Traffic issues:** Cllr Jordon reported the survey for speeding was still on going. The Parish Council needed the subsequent data before making any further comment or decision.
  - ii) **Re-instatement of Bridge update:** County Council had made a start with the village greens and land under the bridge but the original agreed plan of work had not been followed. Poor weather had meant that after spreading top soil across the greens, it could not be followed up with rotivation and seeding. Cllr Jordon had received complaints from residents that some 2.5 years after the bridge closure, all re-instatement works had still not been carried out. Cllr Chalmers asked about the current situation with the Pack Horse Bridge. Cllr Jordon reported that the repointing of the bridge would not be carried out as part of the bridge works re-instatement, but she was following this up with NCC – a meeting to be arranged to discuss further.
  - iii) **Village projects:** Despite the article in the Oracle recently, the Clerk has not had any response from residents. Cllr Chalmers reported some residents had asked for signage to the Playing Field. Cllr Jordon replied this had been raised about 3 or 4 years ago but at the time, Highways Department had said there was no funding available for new signage. As people do ask about the location of the playing field, enquiries about a “brown” sign would be made.

Cllr Jordon reminded the meeting of the projects so far; story board, defibrillator and possible playing field signage. Also the possibility of a revised/updated Ovingham website to be put forward.

- iv) **Lane to the rear of Castle View:** Cllr Jordon reported that she had been informed suitable planings were not available yet – what NCC had, was contaminated. She was concerned as winter approaches especially for elderly residents who regularly access the lane.
- v) **Bus Shelters for the village:** The Clerk had been informed that these should be erected week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Jordon had obtained 3 quotes for the preparation work, for £730, and 2 for £950.00. Unfortunately, only one contractor could do the necessary work before the shelters would arrive (the other two busy until the New Year) and although his quote was a higher one, at £950.00, it was agreed that Peter Hind would undertake the work. He would also be asked to attend to the overhanging trees in the Parish Gardens (raised at the last meeting) for the sum of £80.00.

(County Councillor Kelly arrive at 7.30pm)

6. **Parking on Horsley Road:** Cllr Jordon reminded the meeting of the options which had been put forward. The idea of a lay by had originally been raised some years ago, but in September the most recent letter had been delivered to residents making reference to the 2 metre strip of tarmac. This had been followed by a site meeting and a drop in sessions in early November. At the latter, the widening of 5 of the drives, where it was deemed there were especial problems, was mooted. Estimates and details (although not full details) had been received from both County Cllr Kelly and Martin King, NCC. Cllr Jordon had requested further detailed information relating to the options but had not received a reply although she acknowledged NCC was extremely busy.
- County Cllr Kelly informed the meeting that the only option he could consider funding would be that of a 1.5 or 2 metre strip for which he had allocated £15,000 from his allowance. He had to be satisfied that any venture has a positive long term effect, as in recent examples in incorporating the parking on the village green. The use of the “plastic mats” there would not be an option for Horsley Road as it exceeded his budget. He acknowledged there was a problem with parking on the grass and thought the tarmac strip would allow vehicles to park and at the same time, still allow passage on Horsley Road. The state of the drives and footpaths had also been considered but the original £15,000 allocation could only go towards a professionally approved scheme. Most households have 2 cars and the scheme won’t solve the problem of overspill but it should encourage residents to park parallel with the roadway; it is a compromise of schemes. Opposite Nunnykirk, the exits are a safety concern so bollards could be used. Numbers 9 & 11 Horsley Road will not have parking strip outside but it will be from number 3 onwards to approximately the Old Police House. County Cllr Kelly advised that the scheme outlined will either go ahead or not. The widening of a few drives did not benefit all residents. He also stated he has a further £5,000 which could be used to enable safe passage for pedestrians up to the chalets at the top of Horsley Road which has also been raised before by residents. This would not be available if the 2 metre strip is agreed as cost would be above the £15,000.

Cllr Jordon understood that the cost for a 2 metre strip would be much the same as a narrower one as informed by Martin King. County Cllr Kelly reiterated it was not an option to widen the drives. He would try to get the 2 metre scheme within his budget. A resident asked what this strip would entail bearing in mind obstructions such as telegraph poles and utilities. County Cllr Kelly gave an example of the parking strip in Ovington which had proved successful. Foundations would need to be dug – Highways will be well aware of utilities etc. and can work around this. The meeting was warned that unless agreement is reached, he would use his allowance elsewhere in his constituency. It is a problem which has been raised on numerous occasions and needed to be sorted. A resident said the original option was to stop parking on the grass and not to come up with an option for a car park for the rest of the village. Cllr Jordon replied that this had been the original plan but after a site visit at a peak time of day, it was clear there was a bigger problem than just parking on the grass. The Parish Council has both spoken to and taken advice from County Cllr Kelly and Highways. Another resident queried vehicles which park on Horsley Road but do not belong to the local residents to which Cllr Jordon replied that nothing could be done as long as it was taxed, insured and not causing an obstruction. County Cllr Kelly also added that the Parish Council could ask for a by law to be passed prohibiting parking on the grass but this was a complex matter. He confirmed to a resident that there was not a proposal to widen the road. Currently parking on the west side of Horsley Road restricts through traffic and this will continue which can also deter speeding. The meeting was asked if bollards could also be used on the east side – Cllr Jordon replied if the go ahead is given for the 2 metre strip, it could be considered, and possibly funded by the Parish Council, if parking on the grass continued. County Cllr Kelly believed if the strip was agreed, a feasibility study could be carried out in conjunction with the current traffic survey data with regard to asking for a 20mph speed limit such as the one about to become official in Wylam.

County Cllr Kelly left the meeting at 8.10pm with 5 residents.

The issue continued with Cllr Jordon asking the other Cllrs if they were happy for Cllr Chalmers to remain, although she would take no part in the discussion or the vote to which they agreed. Cllr Jordon was unhappy that the previous proposals could not be considered; no mention had been made to earlier discussions related to the proposal having to benefit all residents and the proposal being “value for money”. She felt these had received most support from the residents. Cllr Campbell thought the 2 metre strip would make the road “one way” due to parked vehicles – visibility was already poor for residents exiting driveways. Cllr Jackson did not believe the 2 metre strip would be wide enough for some residents’ vehicles. Cllr Gray said he believed there were only 2 options; to drop the idea or to further consider taking the proposal of a 2 metre tarmac strip forward but the Parish Council would need to see a full plan detailing all the considerations as there were too many questions. He proposed the 2 metre strip of tarmac option be explored further which Cllr Campbell seconded and therefore full plans will be requested. Cllr Jordon thought the issue of

parking will only get worse and not better.

**Further matters arising:**

**vi) Co-option to Council:** Although Joanna Jackson had now been co-opted, there was still a vacancy. The Clerk had received some interest before the last meeting but had heard nothing further.

**7. Accounts to pay/be paid:**

M. Davenport (Salary & expenses Oct)	£296.08
Absorbeez (Gel bags)	£1336.80
Reading Room (room hire x 2, October)	£36.00
A Jackson (“top” playing field & strim activity tunnels)	£120.00
Turfcare Specialists (line marking powder)	£36.00
Royal British Legion (Poppy wreath)	£25.00

The cost of the poppy wreath was £17.00 but the Cllrs agreed to give an extra £8 as a donation. The order for the gel bags was for some residents and payment had already been received. No VAT had been passed on as the Parish Council would reclaim it in due course.

**8. Planning applications:**

**16/02589/FUL Old School House** – rear dormer to roof of house & construction of garage – further amended drawings showing changes to the scheme had been submitted – No further concerns regarding this latest amended application

**9. To Consider Budget Precept 2017/2018:** Figures had been circulated prior to the last meeting. The Clerk estimated that including the amount to be paid for the bus shelters, and bearing in mind a donation will also be received, there will be a further £2200 - £2500 to be invoiced before the end of the financial year. Overall, the balance in the bank account will be about £3500 less than the last financial year and will be about £14,000; the balance of the savings account will remain £15,000 but continued advice is still to ensure funds are available roughly equivalent to the annual precept, although it was accepted this could well change. The current precept of £15,000 has been the same since 2006-2007. Figures had to be submitted to NCC before the end of January. After receiving reassurances from the Clerk that no decision had to be made at this meeting, Cllr Gray proposed the matter be deferred until the January meeting. This would enable the Parish Council to receive more details of how the recently updated Playing Field Group propose to fund their activities. The Cllrs agreed to postpone the precept decision until January.

**10. Grass cutting for season 2016/2017:** Cllr Jackson left the meeting whilst this was discussed.

For the last 3 years, Adrian Jackson had carried out grass cutting in the village and his invoices had remained the same at £1225. The Cllrs asked that a revised fixed price quotation be drawn up to include some other items such as dealing with nettles on the green and grass topping on the playing field. Cllr Jordon also reminded the meeting that for the last 2 years, Adrian had carried out other jobs in the village in lieu of grass cuts as the village green had not been accessible due to bridge works. It was agreed that the Clerk draw up a request for quotations for the grass cuts, including other regular grass cutting as well of items of maintenance that Adrian carries out presently.

Cllr Jackson returned to the meeting.

11. **Transparency arrangements (inc web site options):** The Clerk and Cllr Gray had attended a recent training session organised by NALC which they had both found useful. Much more information needed to be put on the website than originally thought. This included details of any land owned – including sizes and also any rented land. The Clerk had looked at a “dummy” site proposed by NALC which she thought would meet the needs and which she would have to set up for Ovington Parish Council. She would also get necessary training. Although Ovingham currently have its own website, Cllr Gray wondered if the Cllrs should consider the NALC option as this would automatically give notice of updates of legislation as and when required. NALC will also ensure that all information put on their website would be kept in perpetuity and a further benefit is that the council would be able to refer those submitting Freedom of Information requests to the site. It was envisaged that the current website be maintained and a link incorporated directing the public to the NALC site for further information. The Clerk would contact Phil Holden who runs the current website and advise him of the proposal to use 2 websites.
12. **Village Environment:** Cllr Chalmers asked if a further area can be considered for wild flower planting. Cllr Jordon had enjoyed the patch on Castle View when in flower. Previous suggestions had included an area of the Playing Field and Horsley Road. Cllr Jordon suggested wild flowers could be sown in the area of land known as the “Red Pond” – the top of Horsley Road, on the left hand side of Horsley Road by the bend. Cllr Jordon remarked on some branches which needed attention – Burnside area. Checks needed to be made as to whose land this belonged to (John Alderson, NCC). Tree branches and hedge overhanging the village boundary wall at the old vicarage needed attention – the Clerk to contact the owner.  
Cllrs Jordon & Campbell had met with Alistair Miller, NCC, regarding the state of footpaths in the village. The repairs depended on funding but paths in the area of Horsley Road, The Terrace, Piper Road, Wheatfield Close and Windsor Crescent were top of the list and would be considered for repair work.  
Since the last meeting, ISOS had responded in the negative to the suggested tubs in Windsor Crescent. Cllr Jordon had also been informed that ISOS had no plans to improve the parking in Windsor Crescent. This had been originally raised some time ago by former Cllr Lou Moore.  
Cllr Jordon had been approached by the Allotment Association regarding tree branches overhanging garden areas. This will be discussed further in the spring. She suggested allotment holders should park on the hard core by the old vicarage in future.  
Cllr Jordon remarked on the Remembrance Day Service and how disappointed she was that there had been nothing to prevent traffic disturbing the occasion. She had mentioned it to the current chair of the Parochial Church Council who informed her that traffic control was an “ad hoc” arrangement. The PCC and Parish Council will look into it for next year. Cllr Jackson would send a link to the Clerk with regards to the necessary forms for NCC traffic control management.
13. **Committee reports:** A recent Burial Board meeting had been attended by

Cllrs Jordon and Campbell. The constitution had been circulated amongst the four Parish Councils managing the cemetery and had to be agreed. The Cllrs agreed to adopt the constitution which was signed by Cllr Jordon.. Cllr Gray advised that the Reading Room were holding a Christmas Cheer event on 11<sup>th</sup> December. They were considering the purchase of a storage shed to store large items such as the drama group stage. Cllr Campbell reported that the meeting at SCA had unfortunately been cancelled.

14. **Correspondence:**
  - a) **First decision schedule from BT re closure of telephone boxes:** The Clerk had forwarded details and it was noted that it did not include the telephone box in Ovingham.
  - b) **Autumn Tynedale Flood Initiative:** Cllr Gray was attending a meeting which was organised for 18<sup>th</sup> November and he would report back accordingly.
  - c) **Northumberland Local Core Strategy – notice of further modifications:** Cllr Gray advised the proposed modifications did not affect Ovingham and therefore no further comment from the Parish Council was necessary.
15. Distribution was still being circulated.
16. **Any other business:** Cllr Gray referred to the proposal to have a path down from the Chalets on Horsley Road and noted that obstacles were in the way (such as trees) which may disrupt any path. Cllr Jordon pointed out this would be a gravel/smalls tone path which should not raise too many problems. Cllr Jackson indicated that the path may pass over private land which needed to be explored.
17. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 7.15 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25pm