

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 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 7.15 p.m. in the Reading Room, Ovingham

Present: Councillors Jordon, Gray, Campbell, Chalmers, Shield, Jackson and MacDonald and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bryan and County Cllr Kelly.
2. Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs Jackson (item 10) Campbell (item 17 with regards Allotments).
3. The minutes of the last meetings, having previously been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed.
4. County Councillors Report: County Cllr Kelly had previously circulated his report but the Clerk had just received a more updated version. A meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March confirmed that there were “exceptional circumstances” for deletion of Green Belt land on Ponteland Leisure Centre/High School land along with the development of Dissington Garden Village. Signals from Dept. of Communities & local Government about the creation a Garden Village have been very encouraging and the project will generate £90 million of public benefits to the Ponteland area including a relief road. County Cllr Kelly also confirmed that official consent had been received for the use of the remainder of his Small Schemes funding for footpath improvements throughout Ovingham. He hoped, however, that the withdrawal of Government grants to NCC does not mean that this discretionary funding for local Councillors comes to an end.
5. Matters arising: -
  - i) **Lane to rear of Castle View:** Unfortunately, Cllr Jordon had nothing further to report from Highways.
  - ii) **Traffic issues:** Data had now been received regarding the recent speeding surveys carried out in Ovingham. The Parish Council had been informed that further investigation was not recommended however, Cllr MacDonald queried the positioning of them especially the one which had been put on Castle View and believed a slightly different location would have achieved differing results and highlighted more speeding. Cllr Gray said it needed to be compared with the previous survey carried out whilst the Bridge was closed. Cllr MacDonald also queried why the 30mph sign to the east of the village, could not be moved further back so it was in line with the first house on Piper Road. Cllr Jordon replied this had been looked at on numerous occasions with Highways and advice was that it did not meet the necessary criteria to move it. The Parish Council could only accept their advice. Cllr MacDonald believed

- there was a safety issue with speeding coming into Ovingham. Cllr Gray suggested that the issue be considered at the April meeting which gave time for the two reports to be compared.
- iii) **Village projects:** Cllr Jordon had looked at the proposed “red pond” area for a wild flowers project with other Cllrs and Peter Hind. It needed substantial clearing and preparation work first. Cllr Jordon suggested that Green Ovingham be asked to help and Cllr Chalmers will report back.
- iv) **Transparency arrangements including a new website:** The Clerk had received notification that this will be up and running soon. She and Cllr Jackson will be the administrators and the Clerk suggested that initially agendas and minutes be uploaded on to the website and that details of Councillors be deferred until after the forthcoming elections. This was agreed.
- v) **Closed Churchyard:** Cllrs Jordon and Gray had met with Barbara Pescod and Neil Ramsey (PCC) regarding the possibility of turning the closed churchyard into a car park area. Whilst they had been quite positive about it, it was recognised that there was a long chain of events to negotiate before it could be achieved. Cllr Jordon advised a resident, guessing what was being discussed, had implied that he was not totally against the idea. Cllr Jordon suggested that they approach Jim Wardle to see if he will look at the churchyard and see if there is any potential in it before taking the matter further. This was agreed.
- vi) **Policies:** Cllrs Jordon, Gray and MacDonald had met to review the policies, standing orders and tenancy agreements. They suggested slight changes to the wording of the allotment tenancy agreement which referred to car parking and slight changes to the rented gardens, on Castle View. These were approved. Some alterations to the standing orders included sections 3.10 (quorum), Section 4 (extraordinary meetings) 6.3.2 (expenses) 6.7.2 (quotes under £500) section 11 (added sub sections) and section 14 (Complaints). Cllr Jordon asked that the Cllrs check and submit comments before the next meeting. Cllr Jordon also commented that a grievance policy was required.
- vii) **Small Schemes Funding update:** As mentioned above, the funding for improving footpaths was confirmed. A new mower had been delivered and NCC had confirmed the net price, less trade in, will soon be transferred to PC bank account. Vat of £790 will be reclaimed in due course. Cllr Shield confirmed that the mower was being stored, under tarpaulin, chained, in a back garden and was covered under the conditions of the PC’s insurers. However, the Cllrs thought it worthwhile to consider storage in a shed especially as the present circumstances may change. Cllr MacDonald remarked that the mower was PC property and storing it in a garden put the onus on the individual. It was agreed that Cllr Shield discuss it with the resident and look for possible areas to place a shed.

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

M. Davenport (Salary & expenses Jan/Feb)	£602.63
Nwater (quarterly charge)	£16.26

C Lindsay (gratuity for audit)	£50.00
Firepoint Services (annual check)	£29.28
The Northumberland Estates (annual rent for Playing Field)	£250.00
Ovingham Reading Room (Room Hire, Jan & Feb)	£36.00
Lloyd Ltd (mower)	£4740.00
D Jordon (village tubs, meeting refreshments etc.)	£34.79
C Shield (items for Krafty Kids)	£21.18
P Holden (petrol & can for mower)	£27.79
D Jordon (telephone calls)	£6.00

7. **Planning applications:**

**17/00602/TREECA Bleach Green Farm:** Fell row of Ash Trees.

Cllrs Jordon and Gray had met with the applicants. The trees in question are very neglected being mainly covered in ivy and are in a conservation area. Whilst the applicants could remove all the ivy, Cllrs Jordon and Gray suggested that alternate trees be removed rather than the full row. One tree was healthy and if the applicants removed ivy from the remaining trees (4) and then plant 5 trees to replace the removed trees, the small copse would be protected. The applicants have agreed on the compromise and will be asked to notify planning.

**17/00050/FUL Bridge End:** refurbish existing pub with new extension to the side and new pitched roof to replace flat roof. The Clerk had just received notification and papers for this application today. Planning needed a response by 4<sup>th</sup> April and as this was before the next meeting, Cllr Gray agreed to look at the application and circulate his comments.

8. **To consider defibrillator for the village:** Cllr Chalmers had circulated information regarding this but agreed that it be deferred until the April meeting as distribution of the same had been unavoidably delayed. She had also received a donation (£50) towards it from a resident whom the Clerk will thank in due course.

9. **To consider S137 requests for grant donations:** The Clerk had circulated details of requests received together with data from previous years. She reminded the Council that although £500 was allocated in the budget for such requests, and had been allocated already this financial year, the Cllrs could decide to agree to more grants as they were within the stipulated maximum spend per elector and money was available in the overall budget. After much consideration, it was agreed that £100 be donated to Great North Air Ambulance, and £50 each to Northumberland Age UK and Community Action Northumberland

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

The Clerk had received three quotes which she had circulated to the Cllrs (apart from Cllr Jackson). Cllr Gray commented that one quote, was excessive compared to the other two and it was agreed that this be discounted. After much consideration, it was proposed that the contract be awarded to Adrian Jackson who had been cutting the grass for the past 3 years and his high standard of work was familiar to the Cllrs. This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Jackson returned to the meeting.

11. **To review annual rents for Allotments, Grazing Land and Village**

**Gardens:** These were currently set at £100, £100 and £15 for each garden of which there were 3. Garden rents had been increased 3 years ago but that of the Allotments and Grazing land had remained at £100 for some years. As it was acknowledged that the Allotment Association had suffered over the last two years through loss of income generally raised at the Goose Fairs which hadn't been held due to bridge work, it was agreed that there be no increase in any of the annual rents.

12. **Annual Village Inspection:** Cllr Jordon reminded the Cllrs that this involved each Cllr being allocated an area of the village to monitor with regards to required work, such as weeds, potholes etc., and results fed back into the Village Action Plan. She asked that this be done for the April meeting and she would provide an updated version of the Plan for that meeting. She allocated each Cllr with an area, including herself, and it was agreed that this be carried out.
13. **Forthcoming Parish Council elections:** The Clerk reminded the Cllrs that applications needed to be submitted, in person by 4<sup>th</sup> April. She offered to take them all and asked that these be received by herself before the 20<sup>th</sup> March. The date of the actual elections was 4<sup>th</sup> May.
14. **Insurance for "Ovi Fun day":** Following advice from Cllr Bryan, that OviFun were now a properly constituted group, the Clerk had been in touch with the Councils insurers, Came & Co, who had advised that, under these circumstances, a separate insurance should be taken out for the Ovi Fun day as it had no connection to the Parish Council. Cllr Shield confirmed this was being attended to and there had also been discussion about OviFun and OPPFUG combining into one organisation (as committee members had significant overlap) and thus taking out a single insurance policy. Cllr Gray queried the necessity for OPPFUG to have separate insurance cover as they acted on behalf of the Parish Council and therefore should be covered under Parish Council insurance. He also asked who was on the Committee, other than Cllrs Shield and Bryan and Phil Holden and Cllr Jordon backed this up by remarking that she felt for some time it was not clear who dealt with what and that as Chair, she should be given feedback on a regular basis. Cllr MacDonald, having been involved in the past, asked if OPPFUG was still the organisation which oversaw the running of the playing fields to which Cllr Shield replied it was. Cllr MacDonald felt that as Phil Holden was no longer a Parish Councillor, OPPFUG needed to be re-established with Cllrs Bryan and Shield to the forefront. Cllr Shield advised it was being looked at. Cllr Jordon accepting that the discussion had become sidetracked, had hoped that the constitution of OPPFUG was to have been discussed tonight but Cllr Bryan had not been in a position to forward a copy of this yet. She asked that if it was not possible for the constitution to be available for the April meeting, at least a plan and/or vision for the future be presented to the Parish Council. This was agreed.
15. **Update on Piper Road development site meeting (15<sup>th</sup> March) and street name proposals:** Cllrs Jordon, Gray and Campbell had attended the meeting yesterday (together with resident Paul Leonard) but they felt it had not been productive. One of the main queries which still looked as if it remained unresolved, was route of construction traffic. Both Cllr Jordon and Gray did not want Tyne Gardens/Windsor Crescent to be used but the contractors could not confirm that it would not. Cllr Jordon had queried

whether a sign like that at Horsley could be put in place – “No construction traffic”; response being no and this will be discussed further at the next site meeting.

The Clerk reminded the Cllrs that a decision had to be made regarding the proposed street names for the new development. Those houses directly facing Piper Road will be 65-76c Piper Road, but the Parish Council had been asked for their thoughts on the proposals – Dukes Field, Park View and Pack Horse Way – and picking 2 of the 3. It was agreed that due to the background of objections to the development from both the Parish Council and the residents, that Dukes Field was too contentious; Park View was not facing a park; Pack Horse Way was confusing as it was not by the Pack Horse Bridge. The Clerk had asked for residents’ views, using Facebook, and a list of suggestions had been circulated to the Cllrs. It was decided that two alternatives be proposed – Hawthorn Way and Holly Close – and the Clerk would notify NCC.

16. **Update of NWL/NCC drop in session re surface water:** A meeting had been organised by NWL/NCC earlier in the month and Cllrs Campbell, Gray & Jordon had attended. Cllr Campbell outlined the proposals. It had been quite well attended and residents had appreciated the opportunity to ask questions, although it later transpired not everyone had received notification from NWL. The areas which were being addressed were Piper Road, Dene Close and Dene Garth. Following this, there will be a further drop in session in the summer when it is hoped that the final plans will be in place.
17. **Committee Reports:** Cllr Jordon had circulated the report from Ovingham Burial Committee – work had started on the lodge - joinery and painting; the grounds maintenance contract had been decided. OPPFUG had been discussed above.  
Cllr Campbell left the meeting whilst there was a discussion regarding the Allotments. Cllr Jordon had been asked by the chair of the Allotments, Tony Newton, if a cherry tree could be removed. She had looked at this and confirmed it would be best to remove it. She had obtained two quotes for the work – one from Simon Brough and one from Stuart Burns, who was working on site at the time. Cllr Jordon advised the tree in question had been there for some time – it had not been planted by the Allotment Association but was within the allotments. She wondered if they could be asked to contribute half of the cost? The quotes were discussed and the Cllrs agreed that Stuart Burns be asked to fell the tree (£450) and that Cllr Jordon would ask if the Allotment Association could contribute half.  
Cllr Campbell returned to the meeting.
18. **Village Environment:** Cllr Jordon asked the Cllrs to look at sites to plant some new trees (6) in the village – these would be replacing ones which have been removed, such as at Burnside where she suggested 2 trees should be planted. She advised it may have to wait until Autumn but asked for the Cllrs thoughts for the next meeting.
19. **Correspondence:**
  - a) **Nwater – option to change provider for Pavilion usage:**  
The Clerk advised that business users now had the option to change providers for water and sewerage services but she felt that as the annual charges involved were relatively small

(under £100) it was not likely any advantage would be gained. This was agreed.

- b) **Letter from resident re disabled parking bay:** This had been received from a resident in Windsor Crescent who had asked for support from the Parish Council in getting a disabled bay allocated as her daughter was registered disabled. Cllrs Jordon and Jackson had met the resident and having looked at the site, thought it possible if the existing cobbled area was removed and adapted. Cllr Jordon commented that a different resident had fallen on the said cobbled area so removing could be beneficial to all. The Cllrs agreed to support the request and ask Highways to investigate the possibility.
20. Distribution was still being circulated.
21. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.15 pm.
22. **Any other business:** There being no further business the meeting closed at pm.