

OVINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs. M. Davenport
Clerk

Jubilee Cottage
Ovington
Northumberland
NE42 6DH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st July 2016 at 7.15 p.m. in the Reading Room, Ovingham

Present: Councillors Jordon, Heslop, Gray, Campbell and Shield, County Cllr Kelly, 1 member of the public and Hexham Courant reporter.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Chalmers and Bryan (holiday).
2. Declarations of interest were received from Cllr Heslop (item 6v) and Cllr Shield (item 15c).
3. The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed.
4. Matters arising:-
 - i) **Bridge Closure:** Cllr Jordon updated the Cllrs advising that painting was now in progress with a team of 6 men in place. It is still anticipated that the bridge will re-open in September. The Environment Agency have given permission for infill of the scour hole and this has also started. NCC have agreed in principle to purchase the land from Allendale Estates on the Bywell Road. The Estate has requested that work be delayed until harvesting has completed – by the end of August. Once the road has re-opened, NCC will have to complete works to protect the riverbank at the site of the landslip. This is done under Environment Agency consent and will likely take place from June 2017.
 - ii) **Traffic issues:** There was nothing further to report. Cllr Jordon was still awaiting a response from Martin King, NCC. It has been over 8 weeks but she will contact him again and ask for a site visit.
 - iii) **Co-option to Council:** No applications or expressions of interest had yet been received.
 - iv) **Lane to the rear of Castle View:** Planings were on order to complete the work to the rear of Castle View. Hopefully this would be carried out soon.
 - v) **Consider request for donation to “Park Runs”:** Since the last meeting, the clerk had circulated further information including details of monies received or pledged to date. It was hoped that the “Park Runs” would be up and running in August and was not dependent of the bridge re-opening. The Cllrs felt that this was a facility which could be well used by Ovingham residents and after being reminded that £500 was allocated in the budget in respect of grant donations, they agreed to donate £450.
 - vi) **Core Strategy – revised draft:** Comments were invited on the

latest draft which Cllrs Jordon and Gray had looked at. Cllr Gray confirmed previous comments submitted by the Parish Council were included in the draft. County Cllr Kelly advised that NCC had encountered difficulties in appropriating a number of small housing patches in the county and as a result Hexham and Prudhoe, amongst other towns, had to be adjusted. This was one of the reasons a revised draft has been issued.

5. **County Councillors Report:** County Cllr Kelly reported that there was still concerns over the state of schooling in Ponteland. This was as a result of Middle School wanting to become an academy whilst First schools would become primary (up to age 11) and High School, a secondary. He felt it was a ludicrous situation and made no educational sense especially as originally the three tier schooling was all on the same site. Cllr Kelly also referred to local media coverage that day regarding the purchase of shopping centre in Cramlington, for £78 million. This was not well received in view of a perceived recession as a result of Brexit. Cllr Campbell asked about the traffic lights on the road to Wylam and how long they were likely to remain in place. Cllr Kelly advised the team had been working elsewhere due to emergencies but it was hoped the work would be completed soon. Cllr Gray also asked for clarification with regards to the Parish Council receiving information/feedback in the case of a pre-planning application. Cllr Kelly said as the point of pre-application was to give advice only to an applicant, it would not be on the public domain but comments submitted would be taken into account.

Cllr Kelly left the meeting at 8.00pm

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

M. Davenport (Salary & expenses June)	£307.82
Ovingham Reading Room (room hire, June)	£17.00
SE Electric (quarterly charge)	£52.86
D Jordon (plants & seeds)	£41.98

The Clerk also advised she had received notification that charges for the hiring of the Reading Room was changing with effect from September. However, it appeared that the sum currently paid by the Parish Council would remain the same.

7. **Planning applications:**

16/02013/LBC Mount Huly Farm – Listed Building Consent to install patress plates to the eastern wall gable back to the roof structure. The Cllrs had no objections to this application.

8. **Local Transport Plan 2017:** The Parish Council were asked to submit their three top priorities to NCC so they can be considered for including in the LTP programme 2017/2018. Last year, these were; improve road surface on Windsor Crescent, move 30mph traffic sign (at eastern entrance to the village) further east, incorporate a footpath between Ovingham and Ovington. Cllr Gray reminded the Cllrs that Highways had informed the Parish Council that the sign would not be moved as it did not fit traffic criteria. Cllr Jordon suggested improvements be made as regards the footpaths in the village especially those by The Terrace and 40-74 Windsor Crescent and in Wheatfield Close/rear of Dene Close footpaths bordering

the green and shrub area. The latter have been badly damaged by tree roots and are considered a potential danger to pedestrians.

9. **To consider bus shelter(s) for the village:** Since the last meeting, two representatives had met the Cllrs on site and provided detailed quotes which had been circulated. Both sites were suitable and quotes included installation although Piper Road would need a hard standing which could be arranged locally. Basically, both designs were similar but varied in price. Options included a pitched roof or rounded one and although a pitched one was better aesthetically, it was acknowledged a rounded one made it more difficult for climbing. Any colour could be used but the Cllrs felt it should match the green of the seat at Piper Road. Other options included Perspex against toughened glass – again similar in pricing but with different benefits. Cllr Jordon reminded the meeting that it was agreed in June, that one shelter would be ordered initially to see how well it was used. However, since then, a resident had contacted Cllr Jordon and offered to fund a shelter in memory of her late husband but she did need to liaise with her family. Cllr Jordon was aware of comments received reminding the Cllrs that relatively few commuters got on at the Castle View stop. However, Cllr Gray felt if a shelter was erected, it would make it easier for residents. The Cllrs agreed that the benefits outweighed the negatives and the quote received from Shelter Solutions especially, was very competitive (£4752 plus VAT for two). The Clerk would inform Highways, NCC, that it was proposed to erect the two shelters and forward details to the resident concerned.
The Reading Room Committee have also agreed to the proposal of a bench seat by the bus stop at the Reading Room, and Cllr Jordon has checked with Highways, NCC. The Parish Council will fund it.
10. **To consider Annual Inspection report for Playing Field:** Since this had been received, Cllr Shield confirmed that unfortunately, the OPPFUG committee had not been able to look at it in detail. Cllr Jordon stressed that although the inspection had not highlighted any major problems (everything was of a low or very low risk) they should be followed up as soon as possible. Both Cllrs Gray and Heslop felt as long as the Parish Council were seen to be attending to the issues within a reasonable amount of time they were fulfilling their duty as a responsible Parish Council but also acknowledged the sooner the better. Cllr Shield was unsure of both her and Cllr Bryans role within the OPPFUG committee having both just become involved and if it was up to either of them to arrange or sort out issues as they arise. She confirmed Phil Holden was very much still involved but there was currently very little extra support other than that offered by Debbie Reed. Cllr Jordon felt Cllrs Bryan and Shield should be leading this Committee as the Parish Council were responsible for the Playing Field. It was agreed that Cllr Shield would arrange a meeting in August, to discuss the way forward with relation to playing field repairs and forming a Playing Field Committee.
11. **To consider extra grass cuts for 2017-2018 season undertaken by NCC:** Cllr Jordon advised that NCC would need to be informed by the end of July if the Parish Council decided to ask for extra grass cuts next year. This would cost £670.09, plus VAT, and would give an extra 3 cuts in a season – 1 in March and 2 at the end. Currently, NCC should carry out 10-12 a

year. The poor state of the grass cuts was one of the major complaints received by the Parish Council on a regular basis and the Cllrs felt that the residents would welcome it and it was therefore agreed to ask NCC for the extra cuts next year.

12. **To arrange a meeting for revised Village plans to include other village organisations:** This had originally been suggested by Cllr Chalmers who unfortunately was not at the meeting. It was agreed that the Village Trust & Green Ovingham would be invited to attend a future meeting with 2 representatives from each group, together with 2 Parish Councillors and 2 residents. Cllr Chalmers would be asked to oversee the meeting which initially should be a small group. The Clerk would suggest future dates.
13. **Village Environment:** Cllr Jordon had received numerous complaints, which had been reported to both ISOS and NCC, about the weeds in the village especially those in front of and to the rear of residents homes. ISOS had also been asked to attend to the overgrowth in Castle View lane on the north side as they owned that section of land. Cllr Jordon noted that the south side was actually in a worse state but as it was an un-adopted lane, it was difficult to enforce. It may be worth mentioning in the next edition of The Oracle and hope people would take note. The hedges on the path behind 31-35 Wheatfield were particularly overgrown – again complaints had been received. Cllr Jordon reported the hedge bordering Castle View and Wheatfield Close was very overgrown and needed immediate attention. This had been previously raised with NCC but nothing had yet been done. It could be tackled as a one off by the Parish Council – Cllr Jordon would obtain a quote from Adrian Jackson or Peter Hind. Overgrown hedges at the back of 31-35 Wheatfield Close were the responsibility of residents but it was agreed although it was a difficult subject to broach. Cllr Campbell volunteered to liaise and a decision would be made.
Cllr Jordon advised NWL were soon to undertake essential maintenance work in Wheatfield Close which they had explained to all residents. Unfortunately, there was more work than initially realised. They would also have a stand at the OVI Fun day which would help publicise their work.
Unfortunately, there had been a spate of vandalism in the village which Cllr Jordon had reported to the Police. This included dismantling part of a fence on Pack Horse Green, which appeared to be used as firewood.
Flowers/plants had also been damaged as well as football posts and netting from the Middle School playing fields which again also seemed to have been used for the bbq fire.
The Hexham Courant reporter left at 9.30pm
14. **Committee reports:** The Reading Room had recently held their AGM – unfortunately, Cllr Gray reported there was a very low turnout. Cllr Shield updated the Cllrs about the forthcoming Ovi Fun day (23rd July). Sporting events were also planned for August aimed primarily at 8-13 year olds. It was for a trial period but if successful, would be expanded next year. Cllr Jordon said money was allocated in the budget for Youth Services but had not been used over the last 3 years. Cllr Shield hoped that parents of children who use the playing field would also become involved in the running of the committee. A resident had hoped to set up a youth group and usage of the Pavilion would also be promoted.

15. **Correspondence:**
- a) **Letter regarding state of wall (eastern side) in alleyway to River View.** The Clerk had received and circulated a letter from a resident and Cllr Jordon had looked at the area in question. Cllr Campbell thought it had been like this for some time. As the Cllrs were not qualified to judge, the Clerk would ask NCC to inspect.
 - b) **Letter from NCC re future budgets.** The Clerk had circulated the letter which had been forwarded by NALC. Cllr Jordon had queried if the proposed reduction in services would mean Parish Councils becoming responsible for such matters as tree removal etc. It was agreed that a meeting be arranged with NCC to discuss further and seek advice on the way forward.
 - c) **Letter from OPPFUG asking for a small donation.** Cllr Jordon queried whether the Community Chest funding was for the OVI fun day or the Playing Fields, and how much it was for? After further discussion, as the suggested donation was small, the Cllrs agreed to donate £50.
16. Distribution was still being circulated.
17. **Any other business:** Cllr Jordon asked that photographs of the Cllrs be updated for notice boards. The Clerk will contact Phil Holden. She also asked that a “Welcome home” card be given to the residents who have returned to Burnside after the flooding.
18. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 15th September at 7.15pm and 20th October.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50pm