

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

Present: Councillors Jordon, Gray, Campbell, Chalmers, Bryan and Shield, County Councillor Kelly and 4 members of the public.

The meeting opened with 3 residents referring to the recent letter sent by the Parish Council to residents on Horsley Road about the proposals to deter parking on the grass and generally improve the problem of parking. The residents had previously forwarded their concerns and they felt that any proposal would not prevent parking on the grass, that it was not just residents who did so, and ultimately would be a waste of money, although this would not be funded by the Parish Council. Concerns were also raised about working around the existing utilities and the current speeding now that the bridge had re-opened. They also questioned why an enforcement officer could not be contacted to monitor the parking. The chair responded:-

a) Unless cars were causing an obstruction, no offence was being committed and they could not be forced to move their vehicles.

b) Utility Services – NCC would work round these. She had checked with NWL and any water pipes on Horsley Road were the responsibility of NWL.

She advised that overall a positive response had been received from those residents contacted, she thanked the three residents at the meeting and confirmed all points raised would be considered and discussed later on the agenda.

1. No apologies for absence were received.
2. Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs Gray and Bryan (item 9i) and Cllr Chalmers & Shield item 7i (Horsley Road). However, a dispensation for Cllrs Chalmers and Shield had been granted which would enable them to take part in the discussion.
3. The minutes of the last meeting, having previously been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed.
4. Due to the resignation of Ian Heslop, the position of Vice Chair needed to be filled. Cllr Chalmers proposed Cllr Gray and this was seconded by Cllr Jordon.
5. An application had been received from Joanna Jackson for consideration for co-option. The Clerk explained that Joanna had been a Cllr until the last election, in 2013, when she had chosen not to seek re-election due to the conflict of interest as she was a paid clerk of the Burial Committee. However, she had now informed the Clerk that she was standing down as clerk to the Burial Committee. This was acknowledged by the Cllrs but questions were raised as to her likely pecuniary interest declaration as her husband, Adrian, carried out a number of paid jobs in the village for the Parish Council. Cllr Jordon reminded the meeting that when Joanna was

previously a Cllr, she had always declared an interest in such circumstances and left the room when a contract was discussed. However, the Cllrs were concerned that other jobs undertaken by her husband throughout the year did not come under a contract and felt this should be considered in the future. County Cllr Kelly advised that the Parish Council should ensure it was clear to the public that any interest has been declared - the opportunity was given at each meeting. Cllr Shield asked if there was any time limit between a Cllr standing down and applying again – County Cllr Kelly confirmed there was no limit. Cllr Jordon asked if the Cllrs were happy to co-opt Joanna taking into account the current procedure for declaring an interest and that the Clerk would see if a contract could be drawn up for the various small jobs her husband undertakes. This was unanimously agreed and the Clerk would inform Joanna. The Clerk also advised that she had just received an email from a resident who was enquiring about becoming a Councillor. As she had only received a name, she would ask the resident to forward more information.

6. County Councillors Report: County Cllr Kelly reported that there had been a huge improvement in the level of services now provided by the Planning Department at County Council. In 2015, the four committees were performing so poorly that they had been placed in the bottom quarter of the country and prompted an essential review of the department. As a result of the changes undertaken, the service during the last 6/7 weeks had now been placed in the top quarter. Further modifications were proposed for the Local Core Strategy which mainly included changes to green belt (Dissington area) and employment site allocations (Morpeth A1 Bypass area).

7. Matters arising:-

- i) **Parking on Horsley Road:** Cllr Shield was concerned that although letters had gone to all the residents, a few had not responded. She felt that tenants as well as home owners had a say in the matter. She was happy to liaise with them especially as she understood a new proposal had been received which needed to be relayed to the residents.

Cllr Shield left the meeting at 20.25.

Cllr Jordon advised that comments received from residents following the letter had been mainly supportive although some had highlighted concerns. At a site meeting with County Cllr Kelly, and Martin King, NCC last week, she and Cllr Campbell had raised the questions put forward by residents. Martin King responded by saying he would not advise the widening of the drives option as this would not deter parking on the grassed areas; NCC would liaise with the utility services; permit parking was too expensive and residents would have to pay; Civilian Enforcement Officer could only take action if a vehicle was causing an obstruction. However, Martin King suggested an alternative plan of a narrower strip which would mean vehicles parking half on and half off the road which would still allow Lorries to drive past. The existing drives would be improved and bollards could be placed at the top of the drive to 9 & 10 Horsley Road as exiting by vehicle was a safety issue. Although a plan of this new proposal had been requested, it still had not been

received. County Cllr Kelly responded to the speeding issue raised by residents reminding the meeting that in the past, there had been public consultations on the issue. Cllr Gray preferred seeing the results of the second speeding survey that the Parish Council had requested which included Horsley Road before he could come to a decision as it potentially could mean Ovingham would be considered for a 20mph speed restriction.

Cllr Jordon confirmed this was arranged for the 1<sup>st</sup> week in November and would be the same 4 areas as previously – Horsley Road, by the Schools, half way along Castle View and eastern entrance to the village.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write again to residents informing them of the new proposal, with a plan, and offering a drop in session.

County Cllr Kelly and 3 residents left the meeting at 20.40pm

- ii) **Pavilion update:** Cllr Bryan advised that jobs were being attended to in the pavilion including the showers and kitchen. They were looking at a bank of volunteers to help – the AGM was to be held shortly. Cllr Jordon asked if the kitchen was now inaccessible to children – it was still being attended to.

Cllr Bryan left the meeting at 20.45.

- iii) **Traffic issues:** Cllr Jordon reported some cars were parked on double yellow lines on Horsley Road last week when the site visit was conducted. The Clerk will contact the Enforcement Officers. During the site visit, Martin King, NCC, had confirmed there was no funding for a path down from the chalets. He had also looked at the footpath by “The Terrace” and confirmed it could not be widened. Cllr Jordon also raised the possibility of converting the closed churchyard into a car park (behind the church). Parking was getting worse in the village and there were limited options available. She had briefly mentioned this to two members of the PCC, who asked that an official request be sent to the PCC. It would be the first step on a long path to receive permission but the Cllrs agreed that the Parish Council should write to the PCC.

Cllr Campbell also mentioned the lamp post on the Wylam Road which was at an angle. The Clerk would check with Wylam Parish Council to see if this had been reported.

- iv) **Bridge Closure update:** Cllrs Jordon and Gray had met with the chief engineer and Les Ferson, NCC. There was still much to carry out to return the land back to its original state. The Village green will be re-seeded shortly and again in the spring if necessary. Cllr Gray had queried the proposed time scales for some of the jobs as being too optimistic. Cllr Jordon had raised the issue of the state of Galloway Lane being caused by the number of Lorries accessing the bridge work site. Martin King, NCC, refuted this saying there was no proof it was caused by those vehicles and after a quick inspection

he felt there was no issue with the road. She had also requested a site visit of the west road in front of the schools which needed attention. Cllr Campbell advised that some people were saying that the footbridge needed to be closed. Cllr Jordon had not heard of this but would raise it with Jemma Reay. She had also mentioned complaints about the width restrictors and accessing the bridge from the south and the poor visibility for motorists. This was to be monitored by NCC.

- v) **Village projects:** An article had been put in the recent Oracle regarding suggestions for “Village projects” but the Clerk confirmed she had not heard anything from residents yet.
- vi) **Lane to the rear of Castle View:** Nothing further to report. Planings still on order.
- vii) **Bus Shelters for the village:** Two shelters were on order – a resident funding one at Piper Road. The shelter standing area at Piper Road needed to be levelled before work could start. Cllr Jordon will contact Peter Hind to see if he can do it. The Clerk would ask the resident who was funding the shelter at Piper Road, what wording she wanted on the plaque.

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

M. Davenport (Salary & expenses Sept)	£90.85
SLCC (annual subscription)	£103.00
“Krafty Kids” (donation)	£25.00
P Hind (village maintenance)	£120.00
Reading Room (room hire x 3, September)	£54.00
P Holden (First Aid Box)	£22.47
P Holden (diesel for mower)	£23.07
P Holden (tap for water heater)	£21.60
P Holden (diesel for mower)	£23.57
D Jordon (refreshments, cards for flood mtg)	£15.02
M Campbell (electrical work at Pavilion)	£450.00
A Jackson (grass cuts for season 2016)	£1225.00

The Clerk advised that she had received a “refund” from HMRC directly into her bank account (following a previous demand from HMRC for unpaid tax) and she had therefore reduced her salary claim accordingly by £208.29.

**9. Planning applications:**

**16/02589/FUL Old School House** – rear dormer to roof of house & construction of garage - amended application - **Objections**

**15/00808/FUL/ Piper Road** – erection of 22 affordable dwellings with necessary associated infrastructure works (Certificate B received) – **Granted.**

- 10. **To Consider Budget Precept 2017/2018:** The Clerk had circulated figures for information. Cllrs Jordon and Gray had recently attended a NCC meeting regarding future budgets. NCC needed to find savings of about £45 million and one way would be to pass on certain jobs to the Parish Councils such as grass cutting, weed spraying, street cleaning etc. NCC were keen to work in partnership with councils and neighbourhood services and explained this was currently being run successfully for large communities

such as Morpeth. However, Ovingham would need to look at joining forces with local Parish Councils such as Wylam, Horsley etc. as on their own, did not have the necessary financial backing. NCC also reported that government had put a 2% cap on their budget for next year. The precept for Ovingham has been £15,000 for some years now and the Cllrs may consider raising it bearing in mind the above information. However, it was agreed to make a decision at the November meeting.

11. **Village Environment:** A resident had contacted Cllr Jordon about putting two planters on the green in Windsor Crescent but she advised she already had a lot of gardens and planters to look after. A site meeting was held with ISOS to discuss further. The ISOS representative thought there would be no problem with the idea provided the resident covered the cost and maintained the planters. The representative will check with ISOS and inform the resident and Cllr Jordon. There had been a recent site meeting on Bewick Lane with residents and Home Housing which Cllr Jordon had attended. Issues raised such as trimming hedges etc. are all in hand. ISOS have also tackled the overgrowth on the north side of the land at the back of Castle View. Cllr Jordon commented on the excellent work they had done. At the last meeting, a resident had queried weed killer being used on the wild flower plot and Cllr Jordon confirmed that the handyman had not been responsible for this. She had arranged a meeting for the 21<sup>st</sup> with NCC, to look at the paths in the village. Cllr Campbell confirmed a few allotment holders were struggling with the upkeep of their plots but accepted it had been a poor year for many. The Parish Council let out two gardens to residents in the village which were on the south side of Castle View. Cllrs Jordon and Campbell had recently inspected them. One tenant had been away but was gradually catching up on the weeding and pruning; the other tenant garden had overhanging tree branches on the top area of the garden preventing plant growth. This is the responsibility of the tenant but the Parish Council agreed to do the work. Cllr Jordon will ask the handyman to carry out the branch pruning.  
Cllr Jordon had also received a complaint from a resident on Dene Close about flooding and the Piper Road development. Cllr Jordon felt that as a Parish Council, they could do no more but she had offered to meet the resident concerned to discuss the issues. This had not proved possible but she had asked the relevant agencies such as NCC and NWL, to write to residents living in the flood risk areas informing them of progress being made etc. They agreed to do so – a letter will be sent out before the end of October.
12. **Committee reports:** Cllr Gray advised that the Reading Room had an ongoing project looking at access to their facilities with regards to health and safety. Cllr Jordon attended a recent East Tynedale Forum meeting where once again, policies were discussed. She reminded the meeting that Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council had confirmed that other parishes were welcome to use theirs. Cllr Jordon also asked for a volunteer to take over from Ian Heslop as the representative for the SCA forum. A meeting was usually held twice a year – the next being early November. Cllr Campbell volunteered but did not think he could attend this meeting.
13. **Correspondence:**
  - a) **Rough Sleepers in Northumberland:** The Clerk had

forwarded this survey from NCC. There was no known rough sleepers in the parish.

- b) **War memorial – invitation to comment on consultation (Historic England):** The Clerk was asked to submit comments similar to that of the PCC whereby they welcomed the consultation although pointing out the engraving needed some attention. Cllr Jordon had contacted James Fell, NCC, about this.
  - c) **To consider a defibrillator:** A resident had mentioned this at the last meeting and the Clerk had forwarded information received from Riding Mill Parish Council who had one in their village. Cllr Chalmers was willing to be a volunteer but it was acknowledged it was a responsibility that others may not want to take on. Cllr Jordon suggested it be part of the Village Projects for further discussion/information.
  - d) **Flood prevention works – Pipers Hole – Piper Road – Northumberland Estates.** Following a response by Cllr Gray, the Clerk had received an acknowledgement from Northumberland Estates.
- 14. Distribution was still being circulated.
  - 15. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November.

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