

OVINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs. M. Davenport  
Clerk

Jubilee Cottage  
Ovington  
Northumberland  
NE42 6DH

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Minutes of a meeting of Ovingham Parish Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.15pm. in the Pavilion, Ovingham Playing Field.

Present: Councillors Jordon, Gray, Jackson, Swinburn, Cairns, Neal & Ford, County Councillor Waddell, 7 residents and the Clerk.

A representative of the Ovingham Orchard Community Group spoke on their behalf with regards the annual review of the rent agreement. (see item 14). A summary of the last 12 months had already been circulated and the representative felt the group had achieved more over the last 3 years than anticipated. It was well supported by the community including the schools and they have a number of volunteers to deal with maintenance issues although they employ a contractor to cut the grass 4 times a year. Costs are covered from fundraising and membership. The Orchard Group hoped that the rent be deferred or a peppercorn rent of £1 be levied. Cllr Jordon thanked her and confirmed the Cllrs will discuss the matter later in the meeting.

1. It was unanimously agreed that Jonathan Neal and Tony Ford be co-opted to Council.
2. The appointment of Paul Smith as Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer with effect from 1/10/2021 was unanimously approved.
3. There were no apologies for absence.
4. No declarations of interest were received.
5. The minutes of the last meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021, having previously been circulated were taken as read, agreed and signed.
6. County Councillors Report: County Cllr Waddell had met with a resident with regards ongoing issues of cycling on the footbridge. Cllr Jordon remarked this was a regular occurrence. Signage was confusing. County Cllr Waddell also confirmed a sign warning of the dangers of the river will be on the Prudhoe side. Cllr Gray felt it was important to have signage and lifesaving equipment on both sides especially as the current tended to drag children in inflatable north to the Ovingham side. Free trees offered by NCC has re-opened. Cllr Jordon had been in touch with Highways about the unsightly bollards placed in the lay by on the Wylam Road. These were to be temporary and replaced with boulders but she had been informed by Highways that it will be too costly. The Cllrs agreed fly tipping had improved and County Cllr Waddell will give consideration to alternatives to the bollards if quotes are received. Cllr Jordon will make enquiries.
7. Matters arising: -
  - a) Co-option to Council: There was still one vacancy but as interest from 2 residents had been received, arrangements will be made to meet with them and hopefully a decision made in

time for the next meeting.

- b) Village Signage: Cllrs Gray & Jordon had met to discuss information and look at possible photographs which could be included on the information board. Cllr Gray will arrange a meeting with the firm designing the board to discuss further.

8. Accounts to pay/paid:
- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| M Davenport (Sal & Expenses July/Aug)       | £596.64  |
| Ovingham Reading Room (Room hire July 2021) | £15.00   |
| M Best (paintwork @pavilion)                | £1200.00 |
| T Bell (grass cuts June/July)               | £340.00  |
| Hexham Courant (Job advert)                 | £223.20  |
| Wybone (Litter Bin)                         | £378.50  |
| S Electric (quarterly charge)               | £49.20   |
| N Gray (lightbulb & filler for pavilion)    | £7.99    |
| PKF Littlejohn (annual audit fee)           | £240.00  |
| A Jackson (Playing field maintenance)       | £350.00  |
9. Planning Applications: -
- 21/01896/Ful – 5 The Terrace** – loft conversion to house & alterations to existing detached garage to form garden store & greenhouse – **granted**
- 20/03425/Ful – Development of 9 affordable housing on land to north of Piper Road** – amended application.
- 21/01766/Ful – 19 Wheatfield Close** – ground floor extension – **Granted**
- 21/03472/Cou – Welburn Court** – application for change of use of agricultural land to residential land.
- Cllr Gray advised the Piper Road application was still with NCC – no progress being made. He will check the application for Welburn Court but doubt there would be any objection. Cllr Gray also commented that no progress was being made with activity at The Hermitage and it was extremely difficult to contact anyone in the planning enforcement department. He will also circulate his thoughts to the PC regarding the very detailed NCC planning validation checklist.
10. To note conclusion of audit 2020-2021: Comments from PKF auditors were noted. Official notice for right to inspect is displayed on the board and website.
11. Climate Emergency Declaration consultation: Circulated by NCC who wanted to know what PCs were doing to support the NCC Climate Change Action Plan. Cllr Gray referred to the paper circulated to Councillors on 5<sup>th</sup> September proposing the setting up of a Climate Change Awareness Campaign (CCAC) in Ovingham which would be driven by a separate committee supported by the Parish Council with strong community engagement. The focus would be on promoting and supporting the goals of Priority Action Area 2 – engagement and partnership of the NCC Plan. The proposal was discussed and approved. Cllr Gray noted there was a talk from NCC scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> October at the East Tynedale Forum which he will attend. Cllr Jordon will also attend.
12. Local Transport Plan 2022-2023: Proposals submitted last year had not been included and Cllr Jordon suggested 3 for this year; 1) Re-surface road from the Church to the Schools; 2) Re-surface part of Windsor Crescent by

- the playing field and 3) resurfacing of footpaths in Bewick Lane. All Cllrs were in agreement.
13. To consider proposal for Insurance: The Clerk had circulated proposal from Came & Co which was approximately £400 more than last year. She had been unsuccessful in obtaining other quotes to date. Cllr Jackson suggested that as Came & Co are brokers, it would be unlikely to obtain a cheaper quote. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote for this year with a view to contacting other insurers next summer.
  14. Ovingham Community Orchard: The Cllrs discussed 3 options available – annual rent of £100, deferring rent for remaining 2 years of contract or a peppercorn rent. The Orchard group was established in 2018 with no rent for 2 years, reviewed in 2020 and again no rent being charged but was due for review at this meeting. The Cllrs felt that it has proven to be a community asset and is not a profit maker. Cllr Cairns proposed that a peppercorn rent be levied. This was carried by 6 votes to 1.
  15. Village Environment: Updated action plans had been circulated and Cllr Jordon commented on a number of issues. Phase 2 of NWL surface water scheme in Dene Garth would not be finished this year as some minor details still needing resolving. However, an inlet structure and trash screen are to be fitted to the culvert at the rear of the chalets on Horsley Road. This will be completed before Xmas which should resolve some of the issues. Overhanging branches at the Church and on The Hill had been removed. No further update with regards the path to the chalets. Cllr Jordon will advertise for snow warden volunteers on the website, oracle and church magazine. It is a scheme run and managed by NCC and equipment will be provided. A site meeting is to be arranged with Highways Department and another speed survey will be discussed including best areas to conduct it.

The Cllrs then discussed at length the ongoing problem of dog fouling on the playing fields. Complaints have been received from residents and the football teams as fouling was occurring on the football pitch and by the play equipment. It was acknowledged most dog owners were responsible and Cllr Jordon suggested that for the present, dogs must be kept on a leash and restricted to a designated path around the boundary. Notices will be put up at both entrances to the playing field informing the public. At this stage, a total ban was not proposed but will be considered if things have not improved after monitoring for 6 months. The Cllrs agreed to this proposal. Cllr Jordon also mentioned the glass (kerb) recycling scheme which NCC have introduced as a trial in some areas. They will be extending the trial period to obtain a more accurate picture but noted it had proved popular. If the scheme goes ahead, it will not be before 2023/2024.

Karbon Homes will attend to the overgrown area of the lane behind Castle View and the strip of land by Irving Place. Some regular maintenance jobs on the playing field and elsewhere are behind schedule but should be attended to shortly.
  16. Village projects: Village signage was reported above. The Pavilion had been painted inside and outside.
  17. Committee Reports: The next meeting of the Forum is 6<sup>th</sup> October and

focuses on Climate Change. No recent meeting of OJBC. Allotment Association have had particular problems with weeds this year and membership continued to thrive.

18. Correspondence:
  - a) NALC Member survey census: Cllrs were encouraged to complete as it gave NALC a national view of Cllr diversity.
  - b) NCC free tree giveaway: Raised above.
19. Any other business: Cllr Jordon asked for a volunteer to check the defibrillator alongside the current volunteer. Cllr Ford will consider and advise - if not Cllr Swinburn will.
20. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 at 7.15pm in the Reading Room. Cllr Jordon wondered if a different night could be arranged to enable the Cllrs to use the main hall of the Reading Room. Mondays were an option and the Cllrs will consider this.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm