DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2023 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.00PM.

1. COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Chair Mrs. D Rowe, Mr. A Wake, Mrs. A Bell, Mrs. M Duncan
County Councillors – Mr. D. Wood and Mr. P Pringle
Other Attendees – Lisa Blondrage - Parish Clerk, Simon Routledge OCA Board Member and Resident - Mr. B. Howlett

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Cllr Tate and CC Batey

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 19TH JANUARY 2023

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

None

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

CC Wood presented the CC report. CC Wood said that the DCC budget was set with a combined increase of 4.99% (2.99% Precept and Adult Social Care Precept 2%).

CC Wood said that the CCs are currently working with Ouston Community Centre to provide funding towards their 50th Anniversary Event and looking at other funding opportunities such as, assisting with their roof repairs. CC Wood thanked OCA for opening up the centre for residents impacted by the recent power cuts on Urpeth Grange. CCs are also looking to support Coronation events in the ward, particularly where they can help secure match funding.

The CCs are using £13,000 of their Neighbourhood Budget Funding to replace the damaged bucket swing at the Brooms Park. Cllr Bell said the equipment at the Brooms Park is in poor condition. CC Wood said he will visit the park to look at the equipment. LB said we are building up money in reserves to refurbish or replace equipment in the future depending on the availability on 106 funding.

CC Wood said that a design has been chosen for the BMX Track following a consultation with both Primary schools. The project is mostly funded from the Neighbourhood Budgets with contributions from Ouston and Urpeth Parish Councils and will hopefully be completed in time for the summer holidays, weather permitting.

CC Wood stated that the following DCC consultations are live:
Customer Access Points – consultation on changes to opening days / times including Chester Le Street and Stanley – ends 6th March 2023.

Public Space Protection Order – consultation on extending the PSPO and adding a number of additional play areas to the list of areas where dogs will be banned including the Brooms MUGA – ends 13th March 2023.

North East Devolution Deal – as part of the proposals for an LA7 Devolution Deal, all local authorities are undertaking a consultation – ends 23rd March 2023.

DCC Consultations can be found on by visiting **www.durham.gov.uk/consultation**

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr Routledge represented OCA at our meeting.

Mr Routledge said the board has discussed OPCs request for an internal mail box and said he would speak to LB regarding a solution. Mr Routledge asked the PC about the filing cabinet in the kitchen. LB said the filing cabinet was only partially used and she would condense it down and possibly dispose of it if the PC agreed.

Mr Routledge said the OCA were planning events for 2023.
Tuesday 11th April – Children's Easter event
Saturday 15th April – OCA 50th Birthday party – concert and afternoon tea.
Sunday 7th May – King Charles III Coronation events – family celebration.
For more information, please contact the Community Centre on 0191 410 5183 or info@oustoncc.co.uk.

Mr Routledge asked if OPC would consider making a donation towards the costs of the events. The PC said it would be included on March's Agenda to be discussed.

8. NEWSLETTER SPRING SUMMER 2023

Cllr Rowe said the OPC Summer Newsletter would be delivered to residents in June, therefore all information needs to be sent to her by mid-May. CC Wood offered to deliver the Newsletter to the Oval.

9. ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Bell said she is meeting new tenants for the vacant plots with Cllr Tate on Saturday. The plot is a former full allotment that has been split in to two halves. Cllr Bell suggested the PC pay for internal fencing to divide the plot. LB said it states in the Tenancy Agreement that the PC are responsible for the external fence and tenants are responsible for internal fencing.

Cllr Bell said the first inspection of the year will be soon. Cllr Bell to inform LB of the date so she can inform tenants.

LB stated that she had received complaints from residents on Institute Terrace regarding allotment tenants parking in the street. The PC said Allotment tenants are reminded to use the Memorial Garden car park.

LB said she will be at the OAA plot collecting rents on Saturday 11th, 18th, 25th March and 1st April between 10 and 11am.

The PC reported to LB that there is a shed leaning on a neighbouring allotment fence and a bag of asbestos on the same allotment plot. LB spoke to the tenant who said they are unable to do anything with the shed at the moment due to fractured ribs. LB to meet the tenant on site mid-March to discuss. LB also spoke to the tenant about the asbestos. LB reminded the PC that they are aware of the asbestos under the large shed on the plot. The PC were advised by the Asbestos removal company that the asbestos is not harmful unless disturbed. The tenant confirmed that the warning sign was still above the asbestos and LB told the tenant to replace the board to cover it.

LB checked the Avian Flu Guidance and it remains the same. Livestock must still be housed / covered.

10. EVENTS 2023

Proposed Events and Dates

OCA Kings Charles III Coronation Event – 7th May
Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 12th November
Christmas Tree Lighting Event – Saturday 2nd December
Garden Competition – later in the year
Christmas Lights Competition – mid- December

11. CLERK'S REPORT

The PC asked LB to speak to Karbon Homes about planting a tree on their land near Cooks Corner. LB checked the piece of land and it already has a planted tree on it. Cllr Wake asked LB to check the area at the bottom of Ouston Bank and speak to Highways.

LB has ordered the noticeboard and the PC agreed it will be located at the right side of the existing board as the left side will restrict the view of the flowerbed.

Cllr Bell and LB met with a DCC Representative to discuss the Jubilee Bench base. The base was not level when installed and there is currently a wooden wedge under the leg which will deteriorate over time. Cllr Bell agreed that there will be a metal wedge placed under the bench leg and it will be painted a similar colour to the bench.

LB said she had forwarded the AGM Agenda for the CDALC Chester Le Street Sub-Committee if any of the PCs would like to attend. It will take place on Saturday 4th March.

LB informed the PC that Steve Ragg from CDALC is retiring on the 31st March. The PC said that Steve had given the PC support and guidance for many years. LB said the PCs can send an electronic message to Audrey Christie, his replacement to be included in his card.

Cllr Wake asked LB to arrange for the electric box near the Community Centre to be PAT tested.

The PCs asked for CC Wood to check two trees (one on Ross and one on Aberfoyle) as there is always a lot of debris on the ground after strong winds.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

12.1 Monthly Accounts & February Invoices

The expenditure for February was reviewed by the PC's.

Cllr Wake said the plans for an OPC savings account are on hold at the moment.

13. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The February Monthly meeting agenda will include:

- Jubilee Rosebed
- Donation request for OCA Events
- 2023 Events including King Charles III Coronation

The Monthly meeting will be held on 23rd March 2023 at 7.00pm. Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.28pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

Cheque No	Paid to	Description
102099	L Blondrage	February pay 4 weeks
102100	L Blondrage	February HWA
102101	D Johnston	February pay 4 weeks
102102	HMRC	February pay 4 weeks
102103	The Church Noticebd Co	Noticeboard