DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2023 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.10PM.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Cllr Rowe proposed Cllr Wake as Chair. Cllr Wake accepted and the PC unanimously agreed. Cllr Wake proposed Cllr Bell as Vice Chair. Cllr Bell accepted and the PC unanimously agreed. Cllr Rowe thanked the PCs, clerk and CCs for their support over the last year.

The PC said they needed to concentrate on recruiting two new PCs to fill the vacancies. Cllr Tate said he planned to stand down in December.

2. **COUNCILLORS PRESENT**

Chair Mr A Wake, Mrs. A Bell, Mrs. D Rowe, Mr. J Tate, Mrs. M Duncan
County Councillors –Mr. D. Wood
Other Attendees – Lisa Blondrage - Parish Clerk

3. **APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

OCA, CC. A Batey, and CC. P Pringle

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 27TH APRIL 2023**

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

6. **REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS**

No residents or allotment tenants present.

7. **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

CC Wood presented the Councillors report.

CC Wood said he had been contacted by concerned residents regarding the proposed housing on Ross / Turnberry.

CC Wood said the planning application on Byron Close had been withdrawn. The resident has lowered the fence to a height which is accepted by permitted development and it is no longer a planning issue.

CC Wood mentioned the Public Space Protection Order consultation which protects Ross Park and The Brooms Park. He added that no more than 6 dogs can be walked at once.

CC Wood said DCC had inspected the trees that the PC asked him to report. The tree inspection said the trees appeared to be in good health but there was some dead branches in the canopy. The trees have been identified as Ash trees and therefore be inspected later in the year for Ash Die Back.

CC Wood said the Local Government Boundary Review Consultation draft proposals have been released. It is proposed that Pelton Ward will nearly remain the same with the addition of Pelton Fell. LB to respond on behalf of the PC to state OPC are happy with the proposals.

The CCs had reported the poor condition of Turnberry bus stop. At the time CC Wood said the bus stop was to be replaced which has not happened. CC Wood has followed it up and submitted a new request for the shelter to be replaced / refurbished.

For more information on the CC report please contact the County Councillors.

8. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

OCA sent their apologies. LB said unfortunately, there had been no invite sent to OPC to attend their meeting and therefore Cllr Duncan had not attended.

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

Cllr Duncan and Cllr Rowe attended the Neighbourhood Planning meeting on behalf of OPC. We received an email from PPC's Clerk stating that the Neighbourhood Planning Area application has been approved. The next meeting is on Monday 19th June at 6pm.

Land adjacent Ross and Turnberry

CC Batey had sent a message to the Clerk stating that planning had checked with their team now and they have not had any approaches on this site. Planning confirmed it is in the Green Belt hence would not be considered favourably under the policies in the County Durham Plan and indeed national planning guidance. Planning added that they would imagine the developers are looking at a longer-term strategy where they will seek to get it out of the Green Belt and allocated at such a time in the future when DCC come to review the CDP in 2035. Clearly there will be a wide scale consultation on this as and when. Cllr Batey said while she accepts this will still not provide reassurances to everyone at this stage, she hopes it confirms that this is as much of a surprise to the County Cllrs, DCC and Parish Cllrs. She also confirmed any plans or proposals that come forward for any future housing development would be challenged by our County Councillors, as they cannot allow this to happen for multiple reasons. She added that she is not prepared to discuss these reasons and arguments on a public post that can be seen by all, including developers but the CC's are happy to answer emails.

10. ALLOTMENTS

Pest control

We were informed by the pest controller on the last visit, that he has never gained access to plot 57. It is essential that access is gained to plots to prevent the spread of Avian Flu – The Animal and Plant Agency (part of DEFRA) have stated that it essential to control rodents and pests. Rats and mice carry diseases on their feet. Effective pest control will prevent diseases. LB to send a letter to the tenant.

Derelict Building Plot 36

The tenant has dismantled the derelict building on plot 36. The tenant has asked, can they burn the wood in small amounts, if the wind is in the right direction? Cllr Wake said the wood can be burnt in small amounts if the wind is blowing in the right direction. The PCs agreed.

Registering All Birds with DEFRA

Currently, if you keep less than 50 birds it is not compulsory to register your flock with DEFRA. It is optional. DEFRA are holding an online consultation to ask whether it should be compulsory for all bird keepers to register their birds with DEFRA. At the last meeting Cllr Wake suggested that the PC discuss whether it should be in our tenancy agreement, that ALL Livestock is registered with DEFRA. The PC unanimously agreed that due to the ongoing threat of Avian Flu all birds on site must be registered with DEFRA. LB to display a notice detailing the proposals and ask for feedback.

Fly Tipping Area Near the Top Gate.

Cllr Wake asked for LB to get a price to clear it.

11. 2023-2024 MEETING DATES

22nd June
20th July
24th August
28th September
26th October
23rd November
14th December
18th January
22nd February
28th March & 25th April

12. 2023 – 2024 PARISH EVENTS & SUB COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Allotments – Cllr Bell and Cllr Tate
Christmas lights Judging – Cllr Rowe and Cllr Duncan
Best Garden Judging– Cllr Rowe and Cllr Duncan
Neighbourhood Plan Committee – Cllr Rowe and Cllr Duncan

Remembrance Sunday – 12th November
Christmas Tree Lighting with OCA – Saturday 2nd December
Precept meeting – Thursday 18th January

13. CLERK'S REPORT

SLA Breakdown for Grounds Maintenance.

LB emailed DCC and is still waiting for a breakdown of what is included in the Service Level Agreement for Grounds Maintenance including the Jubilee Rosebed.

14. POLICIES & PROCEDURES _ REVIEW AND APPROVE

The Policies and Procedures were reviewed and approved by the PCs.

Risk Register

Potential risks identified – Allotment fence repairs and additional posts to be installed if the wind damages it. There is more asbestos on site on plot 36 which is covered at the moment but will need removing in the future. Possible pipe and tap repairs on site. Money will be built up and held in reserve from allotment income.

15. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

Monthly Accounts & May Invoices

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

16. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The June monthly meeting agenda will include:

- Newsletter – Autumn & Winter
- Allotments – scrap area
- DEFRA Livestock

The monthly meeting will be held on 22nd June at 7.00pm. Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.13pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

cheque nbr		Paid to	Description
102117		L Blondrage	May pay 4 weeks
102118		L Blondrage	May HWA
102119		D Johnston	May pay 4 weeks
102120		HMRC	May PAYE 4 weeks
102121		Gordon Fletcher	Internal Audit charge
102122		DCC	Website Maintenance 23/24
102123		CDALC	Managing Assets training