



**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2024 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.00PM.**

1. COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Chair A Wake, Mrs. A. Bell, Mr G. Batey, Mrs M. Duncan and Mr D. Wood
County Councillors – Mrs A. Batey and Mr P. Pringle
Ouston Community Association – Mrs. C. Marshall
Other Attendees – Parish Clerk - Lisa Blondrage, Residents - Mrs C. Dodd and Mr A. Lister

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

None

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 28TH NOVEMBER 2024

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

A resident raised their concerns regarding the footpath near the bus stop opposite the Red Lion. CC Batey said she would report it again.

A resident emailed to raise their concerns again regarding the footpaths near the Brooms. The paths still have grass growing in between the paving stones causing a trip hazard. Cllr G Batey said he would contact Karbon Homes again.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

CC Wood said it was the last Full Council meeting of the year. A motion was made to develop an empty buildings strategy. The motion was won, and an empty building strategy will be developed.

CC Batey said money from the CC's Neighbourhood Budget was set aside for a Phase Two Traffic Calming Scheme. However, due to Highways staffing shortages this cannot be completed.

Money for changing facilities at OFC can't go ahead at the moment due to planning costs. The money will now be spent on boundary nets.

CC Batey said some of the Neighbourhood Budget money will be spent on the refurbishment of the Brooms Park. The boundary of the park will be reshaped, additional play equipment added and the ground resurfaced. The grassed triangle outside will be tarmacked so children can place their bikes there. LB said the PC set £1000 aside each year and have been holding money in reserve to refurbish the park in the future. LB said the OPC had £3000 set aside for the Brooms Park refurbishment. CC Batey said the money will help with the refurbishment. CC Batey said the NHB will also fund a path from the Brooms Park over to the BMX track as the field gets muddy and boggy in the Winter.

CC Batey said she has been chosen as one of the Labour Candidates along with CC Wood and CC Pringle for next years County Councillor election.

CC Batey said there still ongoing issues concerning parking around Ouston School. Parking Enforcement have visited and issued warnings. They have said they have scheduled more visits. Cllr Bell said the school have sent out a message via their school app.

For further information, please contact the County Cllrs.

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

7.1 Information from the OCA Board

Claire Marshall said the Asset Transfer is signed off and handed back to DCC to be countersigned.

The OCA would like to hold an event to celebrate the Asset Transfer. They would like to invite the residents who bought a brick to build the centre in the 1970s. Please contact the community centre if you were one of the kind residents who bought a brick or pass on the message if you know anyone who bought a brick.

Claire said the Cookers need replacing and the cost for two is £3000. The PC said they would cover the cost.

Claire said OCA are planning their 2025 Events in advance and the CC's have given them a £1000 donation to secure bookings. CC Batey said they have also funded a GFNE sit down keep fit class.

8. ALLOTMENTS

Cllr G Batey said he had walked round site with the OAA Chair and there are 10 plots in a state of decline / disrepair. He said there is a risk that they could end up like plot 30. Cllr G Batey added that the PC needed to monitor the number of shed and buildings on plots and the state of the structures. Cllr G Batey said hedges need to be cut back before nesting season. Cllr G Batey added that as a Parish we cannot afford to clear plots in the future. Going forward there will be more inspections next year and a better structure.

8.1 Plot 35

The PC granted permission for the helper of 35 (a helper of 25 years and the son of the tenant) to take over as the tenant as they were next on the waiting list.

8.2 Plot 42b

The PC granted permission for plot 42b to site a small 6x4 shed.

8.3 NSALG Renewal

The PC agreed to renew the membership.

LB said an allotment tenant, contacted her to ask why inspections had taken place without notice. She said no inspections had taken place, but Cllr Glenn Batey and the OAA Chair had a walk-around site to check for storm damage to the external fence and check the progress of plot 30s clearance. He said he had arrived at his plot to find them in his allotment. He said he should have been given two weeks notice for an inspection. LB said they were there checking the external fencing, as the top fence has been damaged in the past due to strong winds, which resulted in additional posts being installed to correct the leaning fence. He said it could have been checked from the outside, but LB informed him that there are thick brambles on the outside and you can't see the fence. He said it was illegal for anyone to be in his plot and LB explained as the landowner the Cllrs could enter open plots to speak to tenants if they were present. He went on to say that they were looking in someone's shed. LB asked whose plot it was, but he said he could not remember their name and didn't know the plot number. LB said she would speak to Cllr G Batey as the tenant wanted an explanation. LB rang Cllr G Batey and he explained that he and the OAA Chair were checking the progress of the clearance of plot 30 and had a walk round site checking the external fence for storm damage. He said they went up to the tenant's plot, as the gate was wide open, and they entered the plot to see if the tenant was there. On entering they could not see the tenant and they were just about to leave when the tenant returned.

LB spoke to the tenant and they said they would like it raised at the PC meeting.

The PC discussed it at the meeting and Cllr G Batey said that on approaching the tenants plot, they saw the gate wide open and usually when the tenant is on site, their car is parked outside the plot. They entered the plot due to the gate being wide open and the car not being present, to find the tenant not on site. As they were about to leave, the tenant returned. LB to speak to tenant again to reassure them that Cllr G Batey was just checking if everything was ok due to the gate being wide open and the car was not present. Cllr G Batey said it was in the Local Authorities legislation that they have the right to enter plots. Cllr G Batey explained that the shed they were looking in was on plot 54 which is vacant.

9. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION RESULTS

The PC thanked Cllr Duncan for viewing the Christmas lights and taking photos. The PC reviewed and discussed the photos and agreed that a house on Turnberry was the winner and the runner up was a house on Milbanke Close. LB to write to residents and invite them to January's meeting.

10. CLERK'S REPORT

Covered under other agenda items.

11. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

11.1 Monthly Accounts & December Invoices

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

11.2 Service Level Agreements

LB said the only Anti Social Behaviour reports in our Parish were at the BMX track and we have not received any in recent months. LB said the Neighbourhood Warden could not do anything regarding parking round the school. The PC agreed that they did not need a NHW SLA at the moment, and it will be reviewed in the future if needed. The PC also have funding held in reserve for more Pelton Youth Project sessions at the BMX track.

11.3 OCA Donation

Cllr Wood suggested increasing the OCA donation to £6000. Cllr Wake said it will be discussed at January's meeting.

11.4 Budget and Precept Proposals for 2025-26

The PC briefly discussed the proposals for next financial year, and they will be discussed in greater detail at the next meeting.

12. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The December meeting agenda will include:

- Budget / Precept item proposals.
- SLA's
- OCA Donation
- Karbon Update

The next Parish Council monthly meeting will be held on 16th January at 7.00pm Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.18pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

Chq No		Paid to	Description
102251		L Blondrage	December pay 4 weeks
102252		L Blondrage	Home working allowance
102253		D Johnston	December pay 4 weeks
102254		HMRC	PAYE December 4 weeks
102255		NSALG	Membership 2025
102256		Wave Water	Allotment water charge 11.09-10.12