



**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 24TH OCTOBER 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 – Mr P. McFarling
Other Attendees – Parish Clerk - Lisa Blondrage, Resident - Mr B. Howlett

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

None

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 26TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

Mr Howlett asked when the PACT meetings were resuming and were there any dates yet? CC Batey said Pelton Police team were down on numbers at the moment, due to an officer being on desk duty and a PCSO being promoted to a Police Officer. Cllr Wood added that there was a PACT meeting scheduled at Pelton Community Centre on Wednesday 30th October 5.30-6.30.

Mr Howlett asked if anyone had seen the Neighbourhood Wardens? CC Batey said she had asked them to check a few things such as visiting the BMX track, visiting locations where drug paraphernalia has been found. They also are monitoring a property that has been a target of ASB issues. Mr Howlett asked if they can attend PC meetings. Cllr Wood said Pelton PC has a Service Level Agreement set up with DCC where Pelton Parish has designated NHW hours. Cllr Wood said, this could be considered in the OPC 2025-26 Budget / Precept.

Mr Howlett said there had been some reports of vandalism to trees in Walters Wood. They have not been reported to DCC by the residents as they feel nothing happens. CC Batey said residents need to report incidents of vandalism to DCC / the Police so they are aware and can monitor areas. It was also mentioned that there had been reports of a tent erected in the Walters Wood / Woodland trail area.

Cllr G Batey had met with resident Mr Mole, to walk round the areas of concern raised by him in previous meetings. The paths round the Brooms are overgrown with grass and the paths are a trip hazard. Cllr G Batey reported them to Karbon Homes again. Cllr G Batey said he visited the damaged wall at Cooks Corner with Mr Mole. It remains in a dangerous condition despite being reported many times to Karbon Homes, by the PC, CCs and residents. LB said she first reported it to DCC and Karbon Homes on 14th August 2024. Cllr G Batey has reported it to DCC Building Control.

LB said Mr Mole had emailed the PC to report a broken / blocked drain outside of 29 Cromarty. LB reported to DCC via Do it Online.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

CC A Batey presented the CC report.

Cllr Wood said regarding the traffic calming scheme, the costings were in place for High Handenhold, West Pelton and Beamish. Cllr Wood said he was waiting for outcome regarding the proposed 20mph zone outside of St Benet's school. He was also waiting for costings for Pelton & Ouston Parish.

CC Batey said a full council motion was submitted for the Liberal Democrat led coalition to abolish the 2 children benefit cap. The motion was amended to beating child poverty.

Cllr Wood said in a previous DCC meeting, a motion was submitted to full council regarding reconsidering free parking after 2pm. The motion was declined saying the parking charges would stay. Cllr Wood asked at full council, what consultation had taken place regarding the decision, as business said it did help. They replied that the public would use it to park and travel elsewhere, i.e. park for free in Durham and travel by train. Cllr Wood said the CCs would continue to push for it to be reinstated.

CC Batey said a group of volunteers at Pelton Community Centre have made some new Poppy curtains, one is for the top of Ouston bank.

The CCs said a Neighbourhood Warden in an unmarked van had caught an illegal offroad bike rider.

CC Batey said she had received complaints from residents regarding the new surface dressing. Due to the weather conditions, it had not dried and had been dragged everywhere by feet and tyres. An officer will come out to inspect areas.

CC A Batey is still following up the query from August's meeting regarding horse riding. She is trying to get in contact with the DCC employee who is dealing with it, but they are on holiday at the moment. Although there is no signage saying no horses, the only access to the area is by a grass verge running along side the public footpath, which is not permitted to be used by horse riders. CC Batey is concerned that the area is used by dog walkers, children on bikes and off road bikes and they could frighten horses. To be revisited next month.

CC Pringle said he had recently visited the BMX track and saw 2 people on a motorcycle / off road bike on the track, he reported it to the police. CC Batey said she hears an off-road bike between 3.30 and 4.30 through the week.

For further information, please contact the County Cllrs.

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

7.1 Information from the OCA Board

Mr McFarling said the Asset Transfer is progressing well. OCA have received match funding from the Neighbourhood Budget for remedial works on their drains.

The events are:

A Halloween event for children on Thursday 31st October TBC. It is a disco with 50-70 places at £3.00 a ticket. OCA asked the PC for a £70 donation for treat bags for the attendees. Now sold out.

OCA's Remembrance event is 8th November 10.30-11am.

The OCA AGM is being held on 13th November at 7pm in Ouston Community Centre.

A Christmas Fayre with a Santa's Grotto to coincide with OPCs Christmas Tree Lighting Event on Saturday 30th November. OCA asked the PC for a £160 donation for selection boxes for the attendees. Mr McFarling said OCA have booked the PAT testing of the box.

A Christmas party for children on Saturday 7th December. 80 places at £2.00 per ticket. OCA asked the PC for a £70 donation for a gift for the attendees such as a book or a mug.

A Christmas Coffee morning on Tuesday 10th December.

8. ALLOTMENTS

The helper on Plot 56 would like to take over as tenant. The PC agreed yes provisionally but Cllr G Batey will visit site and confirm.

LB said Cllr G Batey with the OAA can now implement the additional security proposals.

The PC agreed that Plot 30 should be cleared and halved due to the condition. LB to get a quote.

LB said she had emailed DEFRA to ask if they could inform the PC of who had registered their birds. LB said each tenant that had registered their birds, have received a registration document from DEFRA. LB said when paying rents, the tenants could bring their documents to be checked. Cllr G Batey said he could ask to see them at inspections. Cllr G Batey to arrange an inspection date for this Autumn / Winter. Cllr G Batey said going forward, next growing season, tenants will be advised in advance of 3 proposed inspection dates with an additional 2 weeks notice inspection. Cllr G Batey said he as Allotment representative, he will be attending the OAA Christmas Party.

9. POPPY PROJECT AND REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2024

Cllr G Batey said he attended the final Poppy Project meeting. Pelton and Urpeth PC are putting up their Poppies on Saturday 26th October and Ouston PC are putting ours up on Sunday 27th October. The planned display route is from Ouston round about through the village to the Perkinsville sign on the Pelton boundary. The Poppies will also follow the road route to Ouston Primary School, St Benet's School fence and Ouston Football Club fence. The Poppy project was funded by all three PCs, Neighbourhood budget funding and a donation from Karbon Homes.

LB said the OPC Remembrance Sunday Service will take place at the Ouston Memorial Garden on Sunday 10th November at 10.55am. The posters are in our noticeboards. CC Batey confirmed a Bugler is booked.

10. PELTON YOUTH PROJECT - UPDATE

Cllr G Batey said PYP have been meeting and working with young people at the BMX Track every Friday night and it will continue up to Bonfire night. Cllr G Batey said we will get a formal report before the next meeting.

11. 2024 GARDEN COMPETITION

Cllr Duncan said she frequently walked round the village this year looking at residents gardens.

The PC looked at and discussed the photos of resident's gardens. The PC agreed that 1 Argyll was the winner due its display of beautifully coloured flowers. The PC agreed that 61 Calendar was also colourful and attractive and agreed it was the runner up.

12. CLERK'S REPORT

Covered in meeting items.

Newsletters – the PC would like to say a huge thank you to the resident volunteers including Mr Howlett, Mrs Rowe and Mr Tate for delivering our Parish newsletters with our PCs.

13. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

13.1 Monthly Accounts & October Invoices

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

13.2 2nd Quarterly Bank Reconciliation

The 2nd Quarterly Bank Reconciliation was reviewed by the PC's.

14. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The November meeting agenda will include:

- Allotments
- PYP Report
- Budget / Precept item proposals.

The next Parish Council monthly meeting will be held on 28th November at 7.00pm Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.10pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

| Cheque No | Paid to | Description |
|------------------|------------------------|--|
| 102235 | L Blondrage | Oct pay 4 weeks |
| 102236 | L Blondrage | Home working allowance |
| 102237 | D Johnston | Oct pay 4 weeks |
| 102238 | HMRC | Oct PAYE 4 weeks |
| 102239 | Bulger | Remembrance Day |
| 102240 | Royal British Legion | Annual Poppy Appeal Donation |
| 102241 | OCA | Donations - Halloween, Christmas Fayre and Party |
| 102242 | Sam Davies Property Mt | Paint 12 Benches |