



**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH JULY 2024 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.00PM.**

1. COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Chair Mr A Wake, Mrs. A. Bell, Mr G. Batey, Mrs. M. Duncan and Mr. D. Wood

County Councillors – Mrs. A. Batey & Mr P. Pringle

Other Attendees – Parish Clerk - Lisa Blondrage, Mr B Howlett, Mr Lister & another resident

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

OCA

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

DW declared an interest in Item 9 Poppy Project (Neighbourhood budget funding) and Item 12 AAP Boundary Consultation (he has already expressed his views as a County Councillor to DCC).

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 23RD MAY 2024

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

Mr Howlett said he reported a partially detached street sign to DCC. He received a reply stating that the work would be carried out in the next 3 months. He added that the sign is potentially dangerous and could cause injury or damage to property. He said there are no safety signs or tape and it had not been removed. Cllr Wood said it must be left in place for emergency vehicles and there is only one person in DCC who deals with street signs.

Mr Howlett asked when the Parish Newsletter is out. LB said she was currently drafting the Annual Newsletter to go out in September. She added that she is just waiting for information from OCA. Mr Howlett said he felt one newsletter per year is not enough as it is a way of OPC communicating with the residents. LB added that the PC who was responsible for the newsletter has resigned last Spring, and she had taken over producing the newsletter on top over her other tasks as we only have 5 PCs. LB said it is a lengthy process, sourcing the information, drafting the newsletter, getting it approved, printed, sorting into streets and distributing. She added that OPC have a website, noticeboards with minutes of meetings and monthly meetings that residents are welcome to attend. Cllr Wake said once the PC is full quota, the number of newsletters by OPC would be reviewed.

Mr Howlett said he is aware it is still bird nesting season, but he is concerned about the number of overgrown hedges and bushes encroaching over paths. CC Pringle said he had reported the hedge at Ouston House twice, this has now been cut back, as he explained it is used by school children walking to school and a wheelchair user. A resident added that the bushes / trees along the Athol / Angus cut are overgrown, narrowing the path and causing visibility issues at night (overhanging trees make the area dark). The resident said that the paths are narrowing due to grass encroaching over the path areas, particularly on the field on the Ouston / Urpeth boundary. CC Batey said she is liaising with Graham Couzens from DCC regarding ongoing issues.

Mr Howlett said the gullies on the main road are still a problem and appear not to have been cleaned. Cllr Bell said the streets have been cleaned. CC Batey said it is an ongoing issue due to “run off “and they will have been cleaned but it has built up again. They may need to be cleaned more frequently.

A resident raised their concerns regarding the field near Brooms Park being used as a driving range by adults and children. They added it was dangerous for children and dog walkers. The resident added that the BMX track continues to be an Anti-Social Behaviour hot spot for teenagers drinking heavily to the point where they are putting themselves in a vulnerable state. They are worried about the young peoples safety due to teenager's being heavily intoxicated. The resident has reported it to the police. LB handed the resident a DCC Neighbourhood Warden flyer which listed types of ASB and how to report it to the Warden. Cllr G Batey suggested inviting Youth Workers from the Pelton Youth Project to engage with young people who gather at the BMX track. Cllr G Batey and Cllr Wood to speak to Pelton Youth Project.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

CC A Batey expressed her concerns regarding the AAP Consultation. CC A Batey said DCC are reducing the number of AAPs from 14 to 12, renaming them as Local Networks and changing boundaries. DCC are proposing to take Pelton Division (Ouston PC, Pelton PC & Urpeth PC) out of Chester Le Street put them in with Stanley.

The County Councillors raised the following concerns at the meeting – the majority of Pelton division properties have a CLS postal address, they rely on CLS based services, they're on the CLS bus route and are served by the CLS Police Team. CC A Batey added that she is concerned about our PCs competing with Stanley Town Council for funding. CC A Batey encouraged all residents to respond to the consultation with their views. The CCs encourage PCs to respond. The closing date is 20th September 2024.

CC A Batey said the CCs are out of Purdah straight into Recess. There are no formal DCC meetings, but the CC's will still respond to residents. For further information, please contact the County Cllrs.

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

7.1 Information from the OCA Board

CC A Batey said the Asset Transfer is progressing. OCA need to appoint a solicitor. CC A Batey said she will speak to Assets regarding the Willow trees. The estimated repair to drainage cost is £5k, the CC's will contribute.

7.2 Olympic Event Donation Request

The OCA is hosting an Olympics event for children on Friday 26th July, and a Magician and Balloon event on 20th August. The OCA have asked the PC for a donation of £153.99 towards the costs of the two events. The PC agreed to round it up to £160.00.

OCA confirmed their Christmas event will be held on Saturday 30th November 2-4pm. The OPC tree lighting will coincide with this, and the tree will be lit at 4pm.

8. ALLOTMENTS

8.1 Site Inspections

Cllr G Batey said the Inspections took place on 15th June and went well. He added that he attended the OAA meeting, and it was more positive. There was no feedback regarding the consultation at the meeting.

Cllr G Batey said he frequently walks round the allotment site and the Rec gate is left open on a regular basis. LB was asked to source a cost for CCTV for site, but a provider said it is not possible as there is no electricity or Wi-Fi on site. LB said they suggested buying wildlife cameras with SD cards, they are motion activated and have night vision too. CC Pringle said they are used at Pelton Parish allotments. LB to contact Pelton's clerk for information.

Cllr G Batey said a tenant informed him that their cockerel had been killed on their secure plot. It appears to be a targeted attack and Cllr G Batey told them they must report it to the police. Cllr G Batey said tenants must lock the site gates at all times.

8.2 Plots 4, 17 & 30 -Proposed Halving

Cllr G Batey said it is possible to split plot 17 and plot 4 at the tenant's request. To be discussed at the working group meeting.

Plot 30 has now been let as a full allotment. The PC agreed that plot 30 will be rent free until March 2025 due to its overgrown and poor state as nothing will be cultivated until it's cleared.

8.3 Allotment Consultation - Update

The Consultation closed on 15th July. The working group are to meet on 7th August to discuss the revision of the allotment rules. LB and Cllr G Batey said the tenants had not raised any concerns or objections. LB said the only feedback they had was from the OAA which will be discussed at the meeting.

9. POPPY PROJECT – UPDATE

The PC agreed that the Poppys will start at Station Lane / Ouston Bank Roundabout, through the village, to the Perkinsville sign as originally proposed. Cllr G Batey said he will speak to Ouston Football Club and the schools about displaying them on their fence. Cllr G Batey has completed the AAP funding application and Cllr G Batey completed and returned the DCC permission form. Once we receive permission we can return the funding form.

10. FLOWER TUBS AND JUBILEE FLOWERBED

As mentioned in previous meetings, the volunteer who maintained the Jubilee Rosebed and flower tubs in the past, confirmed in an email that they will no longer plant and water them. A few residents have adopted a tub, the PC thank them for their efforts. However, the majority of tubs and the Jubilee Flowerbed are in need of TLC. Ongoing.

11. HANDRAIL BEHIND PETROL STATION

CC Pringle has contacted the landowner who has agreed to provide permission. Cllr Wood asked DCC for a quote which they provided - £1245.43. The PC agreed to go ahead. The top step needs repaired. Cllr Wood to follow up.

8.08 – CC Batey, a resident and Mr Howlett left.

12. AAP BOUNDARY CONSULTATION

As discussed earlier, Cllr Wood encouraged OPC and residents to submit a response. Cllr Wood said he would ask Pelton Divisions Parish Councils and Community Centres to respond. LB said she had already drafted a response on behalf of OPC and would send it.

13. CLERK'S REPORT

13.1 Newsletter Items

LB said our Annual Newsletter goes out in the Autumn as that is when our events, predominantly take place, such as our Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Tree lighting event.

Items for newsletter – Remembrance Sunday event date, Christmas Lighting Event date, results of 2023 Garden and Christmas Lights competition, OCA information, new website, Poppy Project, Ouston Football Club (LB to email Chair) and Parking Enforcement contact details.

Cllr Bell said the garages behind Arcadia Shops continue to be an eyesore and a danger to the public. Cllr Bell fears that children will enter them and become injured due to the garages not being secure and their derelict condition. Cllr Wood to report them to Building Control.

Cllr Bell said Waldridge Parish Council hold community events on Millenium Green. She said the latest one is an open-air cinema. Cllr Wake recalled that a mobile cinema used to hold movie nights in the community centre funded by the AAP. Cllr Bell said she would like OPC to organise an annual summer event for the community. To be discussed at the next meeting.

LB said a resident emailed her to ask if it was possible, signs can be erected to prevent rogue traders. LB replied, parts of the village are covered by the cold calling signs, but police can't enforce it. LB to forward DCC Trading Standards information and contact details to the resident.

LB received an email from another resident asking, has the council stopped cutting the grass in the centre of Carnoustie, it has not been cut for several months and is now about 3 feet long? LB reported via Do It Online. Cllr Wood said there have been some recent staff changes recently.

LB said DCC have circulated a Neighbourhood Warden poster via Social Media which she will display in the noticeboards and will hand a copy to Cooks Corner

14. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

14.1 Monthly Accounts & July Invoices

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

14.2 1st Quarterly Bank Reconciliation

The 1st Quarterly Bank Reconciliation was review by the PC.

15. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The August meeting agenda will include:

- Allotments – Cameras
- Revision of Allotment Rules
- Flower Tubs
- OPC Summer 2025 Community Event

The Parish Assembly and Annual General Meeting will be held on 29th August at 7.00pm. Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.34pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

Cheque No		Paid to	Description
102215		L Blondrage	July pay 4 weeks
102216		L Blondrage	July HWA
102217		D Johnston	July pay 4 weeks
102218		HMRC	July PAYE 4 weeks
102219		OCA	Olympic Event Donation
102220		DCC	Flowerbeds 2024-25
102221		Eric Brown	Magician & Balloons Event Donation