



MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2024 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.00PM.

1. COUNCILLORS PRESENT

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

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

OCA – Mrs C. Marshall

Other Attendees – Parish Clerk - Lisa Blondrage, Residents - Mr B. Howlett, Mr D Mole and another resident. Allotment tenant – Mr L. Maddison and his helper

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Cllr D. Wood

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 29TH AUGUST 2024

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

Mr Mole raised his concerns again regarding the paths around Athol / Turnberry bus stop, it floods after heavy rain and is dangerous in the winter as it freezes. LB said she had reported Mr Moles concerns from the last meeting with supporting photos to DCC and will report again. Mr Mole said nothing had been done by DCC. LB said all the PC can do is report residents' concerns to DCC. The PC added that residents can report concerns via Do It Online, the more reports DCC receive the more it will highlight the need for repair. Mr Mole added that the paths are still in a diabolical condition since the gas works have taken place. After the last meeting LB emailed the Gas Company and they said they would jet wash it. CC Pringle said he mentioned at the last meeting that he was informed by the Gas Company that the works needed to be checked and signed off. He added, the paths may need to be dug up in that area again.

Mr Mole said there is still grass growing in between the paving stones near the Brooms Bungalows. He said it is still a trip hazard. LB reported to DCC with supporting photo provided by Mr Mole and LB to report again. CC A Batey said it could be Karbon Homes land. Mr Mole said he was frustrated by the state of the village paths. CC A Batey said in her 11 years as an elected member, she has never seen it so bad and was concerned about the proposed savings DCC need to make, it could get worse. CC A Batey said that in the future, CC's may have to use their Neighbourhood Budgets to pay for path repairs rather than funding projects. Mr Mole said the residents on Athol had tidied up their streets and it looks so much better. The PC thanked the residents for taking pride in their street. Cllr G Batey said he will arrange a walk around in the Karbon Homes area with a Karbon Homes representative to raise resident's concerns.

Mr Mole said the wall at Cooks Corner has still not been repaired. LB said she reported it to DCC and Karbon Homes on the 14th August. LB to contact Karbon Homes and invite them to a PC meeting to discuss resident's concerns.

Another resident said they were concerned about the ongoing issue of speeding vehicles through the village. CC A Batey briefly explained the traffic calming plans and said the CC's are still waiting for the consultation to be carried out.

Mr Howlett said residents were pleased with the OPC Newsletter content.

Mr Howlett said residents were disturbed as a vehicle was stolen from Cannock. Mr Howlett asked for residents to be vigilant, to lock cars and remove valuables from cars. Car owners are advised to take extra precautions if they have a keyless entry car (thieves can use a device to boost the signal).

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

CC A Batey presented the CC report.

CC A Batey said Simon Hogg is the new Neighbourhood Inspector based at Chester Le Street.

The CC's asked for free parking after 2pm to be reinstated. DCC reconsidered it and decided not to reinstate it.

CC A Batey said there is insufficient funds for a new Chester Le Street Leisure Centre on a new site. DCC are looking at the refurbishment of the current CLS LC and proposed £5million funding. CC A Batey added that the Riverside Development is on hold.

CC A Batey said she is awaiting the AAP consultation outcome. DCC are proposing to take Pelton Division (Ouston PC, Pelton PC & Urpeth PC) out of Chester Le Street put them in with Stanley.

CC A Batey said she is concerned about local residents, as the Winter Fuel payments have been removed for some. CC A Batey said she will invite Age UK to visit the Community Centres to provide advice sessions of how to claim benefits. She added that the OCA Coffee Morning is still taking place every Tuesday, all are welcome to use the warm space.

CC A Batey to follow up the query from last meeting regarding horse riding. She will contact the Neighbourhood Warden.

For further information, please contact the County Cllrs.

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

7.1 Information from the OCA Board

Mrs Marshall said the Asset Transfer is progressing. The OCA have received the final heads of terms and they have appointed a solicitor.

The proposed events are:

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

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. LB asked if OCA were arranging the PAT testing of the box and if OCA were providing the lights. Mrs Marshall replied yes to both.

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.

The OCA agreed to display King Charles III portrait and the Ouston Parish map.

Mrs Marshall added that the OCA are grateful for the PC purchasing the Bleed Kit which will be stored in the defib cabinet. Everyone agreed it is a valuable asset for the area.

8. TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME UPDATE

Cllr Wood sent his apologies for the meeting. An update will be provided at a later date.

9. ALLOTMENTS

9.1 **Site Security**

Mr Maddison asked if tenants can put cameras on their plot? The PC said yes but they must display a CCTV in operation sign.

9.2 **DEFRA Registration**

LB said DEFRA registration of all birds is now a legal requirement.

All birdkeepers, regardless of the size of their flock, will be required to officially register their birds under new measures announced by DEFRA.

DEFRA consulted on the changes in March last year and announced this month (September 2024) that the government, along with the devolved administrations, has agreed to make the following changes in England, Wales and Scotland:

The threshold for mandatory registration will be reduced from 50 birds to 1, which means all poultry and captive bird keepers will be legally required to register their birds.

Poultry keepers will be required to review their poultry register entry annually to ensure their details are up to date.

Key dates

The requirement for all poultry keepers to register will come into force in autumn 2024, with the requirement for an annual review to be introduced 12 months later.

In England and Wales, keepers are encouraged to register their birds ahead of the legal deadline on 1 October 2024.

LB to speak to DEFRA to ask how we know if tenants poultry are registered. Mr Maddison said tenants receive documents from DEFRA.

Mr Maddison said he would like to give up Plot 3 and become a helper on another plot, he will send LB the details. The tenant of 13a would like to take over Plot 3. Cllr G Batey will visit site and confirm if this is possible.

Cllr G Batey said he walked round site with the OAA Chair and Secretary as some plots that passed the last inspection and are now untidy. Cllr G Batey to speak with OAA to arrange an inspection date for October. Once an agreed date is set, LB will display a notice informing tenants of the inspection date. The PC said tenants MUST inform them if they cannot maintain their plot due to health issues. Cllr G Batey also attended the OAA meeting.

Plot 27 said they have carried out some maintenance on their plot and has arranged for their hedge to be cut.

Cllr G Batey said we can now go ahead with security proposals and asked LB to proceed.

The PC agreed that Plot 30 should be cleared and halved due to the condition. No one wants to take it on.

10. POPPY PROJECT – UPDATE

LB said we have received permission for DCC Street Lighting but can't display Poppies on the NPG telegraph poles due to H&S. OPC have received the £330 DCC funding. On receipt of funding, LB purchased and has received 150 RBL Large Poppies and 400 reusable cable ties. Cllr G Batey said he will attend the final Poppy Project meeting and proposed putting up the Poppies two weeks leading up and has planned the display route.

11. FLOWER TUBS AND JUBILEE FLOWERBED

The PC said at the end of the growing season or Spring, LB to get a quote for removing the garage tub and the Iris Crescent tub as they have deteriorated beyond repair. Possibly when the temporary trees are removed. Cllr Duncan said the resident who maintains a tub asked for it to be replaced due to wear and tear, the PC agreed.

12. PELTON YOUTH PROJECT

Cllr G Batey said PYP will work with young people at the BMX Track. Cllr G Batey met with Tom from PYP and had a positive discussion and they are keen to work with us. Cllr G Batey said he will pull together a Service Level Agreement with a proposed start date being 4th October and will run up to Bonfire night. Cllr G Batey informed the PC that Urpeth Parish Council have verbally agreed to match our £300 PYP contribution. He added that it will benefit older children in our Parish. Cllr G Batey to email AAP regarding funding, a small grants application form needs to be completed. He added that OPC will be invoiced at a later date.

13. OPC SUMMER EVENT 2025

Cllr Bell said she will speak to Waldrige Parish Council. CC A Batey suggested OFC for an outdoor venue. Cllr Bell and Cllr Duncan formed a working group.

14. CLERK'S REPORT

Covered in meeting items.

Mr Howlett asked if the land behind Turnberry / Ross could be developed. Cllr Duncan and CC A Batey said the County Plan is in place until 2035 and in the plan the land is Green Belt which is a high category that prevents development. There is nothing stopping the farmer selling the land but currently, it cannot be developed.

15. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

15.1 Monthly Accounts & September Invoices

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

16. Items to Follow Up for Next Meeting

The September meeting agenda will include:

- Allotments
- Garden Competition
- OCA Event donation requests.

The next Parish Council monthly meeting will be held on 24th October at 7.00pm Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 8.38pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: CHEQUES SIGNED AT MEETING

Cheque No		Paid to	Description
102229		L Blondrage	September pay 4 weeks
102230		L Blondrage	September HWA
102231		D Johnston	September pay 4 weeks
102232		HMRC	September PAYE 4 weeks
102233		Mazars	AGAR Audit Fee 23/24
102234		Wave - Anglian Water	Allotment Water