



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH MEETING OF
OUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH JUNE 2026 IN OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.00PM.

1. COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Chair Mr G Batey, Mrs A Bell, Mrs M Duncan, Mr T Fenwick and Mr P Pringle

County Councillors – None

Other Attendees – Lisa Blondrage - Parish Clerk, OCA - Mrs J Watson and Resident – Mr A Lister

2. APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Cllr A Wake & Cllr D Wood

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 8 – Cllrs Fenwick and Pringle are allotment holders.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 28TH MAY 2026

Previous minutes agreed and accepted by the PC.

5. REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS AND ALLOTMENT TENANTS

Cllr Duncan said that a dead Cherrytree had been removed from the main road along with some in Middleham.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

After the AGM, on Friday 29th May LB sent a list of the OPC meetings from June 2026-May 2027 to the CCs and invited them to attend. The CC's did not attend and there was no written report submitted from them.

Cllr Pringle said the CC's will not attend PC meetings as they felt PCs were discourteous to them when discussing the removal of the traffic calming scheme. Cllr Pringle said the PC were not being discourteous but were discussing their views on the removal of the traffic scheme with the CC's as part of a debate.

Cllr Batey encouraged residents to view the Durham County Plan Consultation and express their views on the portal. Cllr Batey highlighted that in the plan consultation, the field behind Bellerby Close in Urpeth Parish and the fields from the club in Perkinsville, behind the Red Lion Pub, along the back of Ross up to Station Lane have been suggested for potential development, encouraging developers to express an interest as part of a "Call for Sites." Cllr Batey said the PC will fully support residents in opposing the development of these fields as the land must be retained as Green Belt.

7. OUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE – INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD

7.1 Information from the OCA Board

Mrs Watson confirmed that the OPC / OCA Christmas tree lighting event will take place on Saturday 28th November. Mrs Watson said the OCA will arrange for their box and lights to be PAT tested.

OCA have postponed the Charity status application as it would affect the 106 funding application.

Amazon have asked if they can install lockers at the side of the community centre. The centre manager is following up the enquiry as they may need a separate access path.

Mrs Watson said the OCA are looking at blocking off the access path around the building as it is dangerous in the winter due to visibility and in the Summer when the windows are open.

Mrs Watson said CC Biggs would fund a concrete base for their bins.

Mrs Watson said there are two children's Rock Pooling events on the 31st July at 1-2pm and 2.15-3.15pm. Tickets will go on sale soon at £3 per child which includes a drink and a snack. Mrs Watson said they will use the OPC donation to help with costs.

Mrs Watson said it is Neuroactive's fundraising day on 4th July.

Mrs Watson said the last coffee morning before the summer break is on 14th July.

Mrs Watson said CC Biggs is funding the refurbishment of the Ladies toilets, but it is hold at the moment due to the rewiring.

Mrs Watson said the Air Ambulance landed in their car park recently due to an emergency.

Mrs Watson said the OCA sign is being refurbished.

Mrs Watson said the centre manager is changing her working hours on a Thursday and Friday to 9.30-1.30pm.

Mrs Watson said their Adult Christmas event will take place on Saturday 28th November which will include a Brass Band.

Mrs Watson said Barley Mow Community Centre is closing and some of the bookings may change to Ouston Community Centre. Cllr Duncan suggested the volunteers may transfer if asked.

Mrs Watson said the OCA are looking at a Grounds and Buildings Maintenance role and a Funding and Events Co Ordinator role.

7.2 106 Funding for rewiring

OCA have applied to DCC for £175,000 of 106 funding to carry out a full rewire of the community centre, install an intruder alarm system, install a new fire alarm system and install suspended ceilings in various rooms. It is essential for the works to take place, to keep the centre open. The PC unanimously agreed to support the application.

Mrs Watson said they have obtained 3 quotes, but it may need to go out to tender as it is over £50k.

8. ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Batey proposed revising the two-week inspection notice rule to one weeks' notice, the PC agreed. Tenants must inform the Clerk if they have a reason which prevents them maintaining their plot in advance and it will be kept confidential. LB to send out rule revision to tenants.

Cllr Batey will carry out an inspection on a Saturday in July. Date TBA.

Cllr Pringle said access paths outside of their plots, must be maintained by the tenant.

LB is still waiting for the written quote for the access path near plot 56.

9. ARISAIG ADOPTED HIGHWAY QUERY

The PC agreed that LB must contact Land Registry for a land search for the land in Arisaig.

10. MEMORIAL GARDEN

Cllr Batey said he is waiting for the 3 quotes for the Memorial Garden works. He will follow them up.

11. NEWSLETTER ITEMS

LB suggested Competition winners, events, E Scooters & reporting ASB, parking around School Heritage 100, Triage information.

LB to include the December PACT meeting date (17th December) and email the local Police Officer to ask if they would like to include anything. Cllr Duncan suggested asking the PO's dates and locations of Santa in a Van.

LB will contact Kieron from Heritage 100 to ask if he would like to include some information about the Ouston Walk. The donation cheque was raised at the meeting to contribute to the post installation costs.

12. CLERKS REPORT

Tubs

LB said some tubs are damaged beyond repair and asked if we replacing them? If yes, are we replacing the neglected ones? A resident has offered to weed them if they are replanted but the issue is watering them daily. The PC agreed to dispose of the damaged ones and the tubs that are neglected are not being replaced as we have our beautiful DCC maintained flower beds. Cllr Fenwick to take photos and send them to LB. LB will arrange disposal.

Majority covered in other agenda items.

13. FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE COUNCIL

13.1 Monthly Accounts & June Invoices

The expenditure for June 2026 was reviewed by the PC.

The Year End Bank Reconciliation was reviewed by the PC.

14. ITEMS TO FOLLOW UP FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The Parish Monthly Meeting will be held in July and the meeting agenda will include:

1st Quarterly Bank Reconciliation

Memorial Garden

Land Arisaig

DCC County Plan – Suggested Development Land in our Parish

The Parish Monthly Meeting will be held on 23rd July from 7.00pm. Business to discuss will be as per Agenda.

The Parish Council meeting closed at 7.57pm hours.

APPENDIX ONE: JUNE 2026

Chq No		Paid to	Description
102371		L Blondrage	June pay 4 weeks
102372		L Blondrage	June HWA
102373		D Johnston	June pay 4 weeks
102374		HMRC	June PAYE 4 weeks
102375		Wave water	Water allotment - Mar-June
102376		Zurich Municipal	Insurance 26/27
102377		Heritage 100 Walks CIC	Ouston Parish element