

Otterburn Parish Council

Meeting of the Parish Council held on 7 February, 2023

Held at Otterburn Memorial Hall

MINUTES

Present – George Peto (Chair), Ruth Appleby, Mark Goddard and Joanne Nichols

In Attendance—Martin Chilvers (Clerk), J. Hartshorne

1. **Apologies for absence** – There were apologies from Gemma Cook & Andrew Shone
2. **Declarations of interest** – None were declared
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** – The minutes of the meeting, having been circulated, were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.
4. **Public Question Time** – a) Cllr Riddle was unable to attend.
5. **Opportunity for members of the public to raise matters**: Nothing was raised.

6. Matters arising

- a) item 7a: Ray Windfarm update: The Clerk's Report was received and agreed. The Clerk advised that three additional Directors had been appointed to the CIC board and reminded all of the various grant funds available.
- b) item 7b: Road safety in the Parish: The Clerk reported that he had not received an update on progress of the proposed work in the village. Reference was made to the latest speed indicator device data and how the 85%ile record was showing 42.5mph at the bottom of Bankfoot. The Clerk advised the data is shared with Guy Opperman MP, Cllr John Riddle, the Police as well as Northumberland County Council.
- c) item 7c: Revitalising Redesdale update: The Clerk reported that Lydia Speakman was still managing the last few ongoing aspects of the Revitalising Project. The Clerk had spoken to her regarding the need for the Otterburn trail to be repaired and maintained in sections that Bruce Wilkinson had not been able to complete. It was hoped that with some remaining budget this work could still happen and Lydia was waiting for responses from NNPA and NCC.
- d) item 7d: Local Otterburn directory map: The Clerk reported that the artist was waiting a response from the specialist to the query raised about the possible stand for the map.
- e) item 7e: Electric power supply, bug hotel and wild flower meadow in the Millennium Green: The Clerk's Report was received and agreed. The Clerk advised he had submitted a request for the final draw down of the grant with Revitalising Redesdale for £60 to cover the cost of the bird boxes and wild-flower seed.
- f) item 7h: Northern Powergrid energy resilience grant funding: The Clerk confirmed that Northern Powergrid had agreed the request for the funding however the cheque had not as yet arrived so work could not start on the Memorial Hall.
- g) item 10c: Parish roadside gullies and drains: The Clerk confirmed that Glen Harrison (NCC) would arrange for equipment to visit Otterburn ASAP. The Clerk also confirmed that the broken sign near the Willow Green junction had been reported and should be replaced soon.
- h) item 10e: Jointly owned lawn mower with St John's Church: The Chair reported that the quote for the repairs to the mower by Robson & Cowan were very expensive. He advised that a £200.00 trade in value had been quoted and all agreed to accept this assuming the St John's PCC also agreed. It was also agreed that the Parish Council would donate its half of this value to the church towards a new mower.

7. Finance

- a) Finance update: The Clerk advised the current bank balance was £12,152.33. He additionally reported that a VAT reclaim had been made for the value of £2,159.75.
- b) Clerk's salary and expenses for December, 2022 and January, 2023: The payments of £425.47 & expenses £8.00 were agreed.
- c) Reimbursement to the Clerk for purchase of bird boxes for Millennium Green: The payment of £40.47 was agreed that had been claimed in a grant request to Revitalising Redesdale.
- d) Payment to C. Mowatt for scarifying section of land in Millennium Green: The payment of £143.50 + VAT was agreed.
- e) Payment of invoice for the purchase of two 'Unknown Tommy Statues': The payment of £350.00 was agreed.

8. Planning

- a) 23/00112/LBC: Listed building consent for re-building of chimney stack blown over during storms in late 2021 or early 2022, partial re-building of bulging parapet wall below line of fallen chimney stack to ensure long-term stability of the rebuilt stack, making good of associated impact damage to the slate roof(s) adjoining the fallen stack: Otterburn Castle Country House Hotel, Otterburn, NE191NS – The application was agreed by all Councillors.

9. New Business

- a) Preparing for possible emergency power cuts: There was discussion and agreement that the details should be posted on the Parish Council website.
- b) Possible funding for EV charging points: The Clerk shared details received that the Memorial Hall had been designated as a location for installation of two 11Kw EV charging points. The Clerk advised the Memorial Hall committee welcomed the proposal however did not wish to have it located at the front of the hall. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek for installation at the rear of the hall as proposed by the Memorial Hall committee and appropriate signage placed along the road for passing drivers. Alternative locations were discussed in case this was not acceptable by NCC.
- c) Drainage & potholes on B6320 and other local areas: The Clerk reported that he had received confirmation from NCC that the drainage work on the B6320 where it has previously badly flooded had been completed. It was highlighted all residents could report pot holes as well as damaged / non working street lights at the websites <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/SelfService/Report.aspx> or <https://nccmap.northumberland.gov.uk/potholes/Pothole.html?type=Potholes&xmin=274773&ymin=532283&xmax=528774&ymax=663120> or <https://nccmap.northumberland.gov.uk/streetlights/StreetLights.html?type=StreetLighting&xmin=274773&ymin=532283&xmax=528774&ymax=663120>
- d) School flashing light: The Clerk confirmed the damage light had been reported to NCC for repair.
- e) Spring litter pick date: March 4 or 18 were discussed and the Councillors advised that they would return to the Clerk confirming the best date.
- f) Street parking during Le Petit Château open days: The Councillors discussed the chaos during the recent open day when vehicles were parked on the pavement across the village many preventing pedestrians access along the footpaths. There was agreement to invite Duncan Fisher and James Martin to a Parish Council meeting to discuss how to manage future open days without disruption for residents.
- g) Footpath towards Otterburn school: The Clerk confirmed he had reported to NCC NEAT Team the narrowing of the footpaths due to overgrowth of grass on the route from Snaiths depot to the school.
- h) Percy Cross maintenance work: Maintenance tasks for the Percy Cross were identified by the Councillors and it was agreed the Clerk would speak to a resident who had expressed agreement to volunteer his time to work on the area.
- i) King Charles III coronation local events: The Chair advised he believed he still had bunting left from the jubilee celebrations the previous year he could use. The Clerk advised that the Memorial Hall committee had not as yet decided what they would be arranging.
- j) 885 bus service to Hexham: The Clerk reported that the operator of the Tuesday service had stopped. However Adapt had taken over the service on behalf of NCC. The service would operate at the same time of day but would now run on Monday's from 6 February.
- k) Date & location of April Parish Council meeting: As the Memorial Hall was being used on 4 April it was agreed by the Councillors to hold the April meeting on Tuesday 11th starting 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall.

10. Any other business / Matters for discussion at the next meeting of the Parish Council

- a) Cllr Goddard advised he had sold the Butterchurn and was moving away from Otterburn and subsequently would have to resign from the Parish Council. He confirmed that he would still be available to undertake the work at the Millennium Green assuming the grant funding was agreed. Thanks were expressed from all for all the work he had done for the village whilst on the Parish Council.
- b) The Clerk reported that there had been complaints about the quality of work, disruption and amount of litter within Brierley Gardens where the Karbon homes insulation and solar panel work was being carried out. The problems had been reported to Guy Opperman MP and anyone impacted could either contact him directly or the Parish Clerk.
- c) Mr Hartshorne highlighted the amount of dog mess along the Otterburn trail and in particular the section alongside the Le Petit Château. It was agreed to purchase signs highlighting where litter bins were located so dog owners could appropriately dispose of the rubbish.
- d) It was highlighted that there had been no progress in making the Otterburn Hall safe or any development work as was planned by the owner in September 2022. The Clerk was asked to contact the Enforcement Officer to take appropriate action to make the area safe.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting of the Parish Council to be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7 March, 2023 at Otterburn Memorial Hall.
Meeting closed at 8.45pm.