

Otterburn Parish Council

Meeting of the Parish Council held on 7 November, 2023

Held at Otterburn Memorial Hall

MINUTES

Present – George Peto (Chair), Ruth Appleby, Steve Bloomer, Joanne Nichols & Denise Corkin

In Attendance—Martin Chilvers (Clerk). John Hartshorne, Steve Crawley, Caroline Watson, Isabel Beattie,

1. **Apologies for absence –** There were apologies from Andrew Shone
2. **Declarations of interest –** None were declared
3. **Minutes of the last meeting –** The minutes of the last 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:** None were raised.

6. Matters arising

a) item 6a: Ray Windfarm update: The Clerk's Report was received and agreed. The Clerk provided details of the open event at the Gun Inn, Ridsdale held in October. Anyone wishing to learn more about possible grants should initially refer to the website <https://raywindfund.co.uk/>.

b) item 6b: Road safety in the Parish: The Clerk provided an update he had received from Neil Snowdon (NCC) advising that there would be a site visit scheduled to take place on 14 November and the Road Safety Audit would be issuing a report shortly afterwards.

c) item 6d: Electric power supply in the Millennium Green: The Clerk provided details of the estimate he had received from Richard Wilson for the electrics involved with installing power to the Millennium Green. There was agreement from all to proceed with the work and the Clerk was asked to complete acceptance form and return it to Northern Powergrid.

d) item 6d: Northern Powergrid energy resilience grant funding: The Clerk confirmed that the second grant application he had submitted to NPg for £2,925 had been agreed. He also provided details of the meeting he and Cllr Bloomer had attended with the Memorial Hall committee in respect of the creation of the Emergency Plan. There was agreement from all to the proposals to be included within the plan.

e) item 6g: Footpath towards Otterburn school: Cllr Corkin highlighted the excellent job the NCC team were doing on widening the footpath to its original width. The Clerk advised he was still in contact with NCC regarding the other areas requiring attention in Otterburn including the clearing of various kerbside gullies and weeding as well as clearing of leaves and cutting long grass.

f) item 6h: Redevelopment of the Otterburn public toilets: The Clerk provided an update on what redevelopment work would be included. NCC has confirmed the work would include new signage for the toilets at key locations including the lay-by at the bottom of Bankfoot. It was confirmed NCC were considering providing a second key so the toilets could remain open for longer hours. It was proposed that perhaps Le Petit Château could be approached to ask if a member of staff could lock the toilets late evening.

g) item 6i: Proposed maintenance work at the Play Area: The Clerk advised he was waiting for a quote for new metal fencing around the Play Area but warned it was expected to be expensive. It was agreed to make a decision on how to proceed when the quote was received. The Clerk reported that he had received an email from Karbon Homes advising that they would not be able to assist with improving the entrance to the Play Area but would give permission for the Parish Council to make improvements. Mr Hartshorne provided details of an option for the entrance as well as repair to a second gate post and it was agreed he would provide a quote for the work.

h) item 6j: Otterburn Welcome pack: Following discussion on the content and format of the pack Cllr Bloomer agreed to review the document following changes agreed were made by Cllr Corkin.

i) item 6k: Maintenance of flower boxes: Cllr Corkin provided an update including flower boxes seen at Rothbury.

7. Finance

a) Finance update and precept 2024: The Clerk advised the current bank balance was £17,439.76. He provided details of the possible forecast and following discussion there was agreement to give consideration and decide the 2024/25 precept at the next meeting.

b) Clerk's salary and expenses for October, 2023: The payments of £301.92 & expenses of £9.48 were agreed.

c) Payment of invoice to C. Mowatt for grass / hedge cutting: The invoice for £147.60 inc. VAT was agreed.

d) Payment of invoice to Royal British Legion for two Remembrance wreaths: The payment of £36.00 was agreed.

e) Donation request from Otterburn Memorial Hall: There was agreement to make a donation of £100.00 towards the cost of £284 for the delivery of the generator to the hall.

The Clerk advised of two further payment requests received and it was agreed to pay £39.95 (including VAT) to Spanglefish for the Parish Council website and £15.50 annual subscription for Clerk's & Councils.

8. Planning

a) 23/03699/FUL: Extension, remodelling & lifting of ridge height to existing dwelling: The Paddocks, Soppit Farm, Otterburn, NE191AF: The details were considered between meetings and there was agreement to support application.

9. New Business

a) Community Transport in Redesdale (appointments at the Doctors): The Clerk provided details of an elderly resident who had to pay a £80 taxi fare to attend a Doctors appointment in Bellingham. There was discussion as to what the Parish Council could do to assist local residents in a similar position without means to travel to appointments. Cllr Appleby provided comments from Cllr Shone who was unable to attend the meeting. The Clerk advised the topic was covered at the recent Ray Windfund open event in early October and due to be discussed at the next CIC meeting at the end of November. A number of those attending offered to volunteer to be drivers should a car scheme be created locally.

b) Review of the T&PCC Conference by Cllr Corkin: Cllr Corkin provided details of the topics covered at the T&PCC she attended in October including Fix My Street, recycling NCC, carbon neutral plans and a presentation from NALC.

c) Donation of two bike rack for the village: The Clerk reported that Mr Farrell had advised he could provide two 'toast rack' bike stands. There was agreement these would be useful and potentially install them at the area outside the public toilets wall (with NCC permission) and in Millennium Green. The Clerk would investigate what could be used to anchor the bike racks.

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

a) Mr Hartshorne advised that he had been given snow blower from a resident who moved out of the village and this could be used for the community as appropriate.

b) Mrs Beattie asked how a radar key could be obtained for use at disable toilets.

c) It was agreed the Clerk should purchase a set of batteries for the Christmas lights in the Millennium Green.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting of the Parish Council to be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 5 December, 2023 at Otterburn Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.