

**Otterburn Parish Council**  
**Parish Clerk's Report**  
**5 October, 2011 – 28 October, 2011**

**Item 2: Visit from Commander MacGregor-Smith from Otterburn Camp:** The purpose of the visit is for an update on the future plans and exercises at the Camp.

**Item 3: Visit from PC Helen Spencer:** PC Spencer will be visiting to provide details of policing in the local community. I have sent a copy of the agenda and highlighted the matters on the agenda under 'New Business'.

**Item 5a: Otterburn Festival – Future events:** Speaking to Mr Turnbull recently he advises me he has arranged an 'Open Meeting' at the Memorial Hall on 4 November at 7.00pm. The meeting is looking for volunteers, ideas and input from people interested in assisting with the organisation and / or at the event on 14 / 15 July 2012.

**Item 5b: Conveyance of two gifts of land to the Parish Council – Update:** I have been attempting to contact Mr Carroll at Cuthbertsons Solicitors for a further update on the footpath conveyance as well as to chase for the deeds of 'The Green' parcel of land.

**Item 5c: Otterburn Hall footpaths - Update:** John McErlane of NCC advises he has now received a response from Angel Group regarding the footpaths. They are advising him that if the Parish Council were willing to cede the central path then they believe their clients would agree to public access to all other paths without the need to proceeding through the legalities. You will be asked to consider the appropriate response.

**Item 5d: Funding for Children's play area:** I have received clarification of the two current developments that will when occupied provide additional funding to the Children's play area. These are the Barn next to the vicarage and Tadlow House (2 x three bedroom detached houses) in Rochester.

**Item 5e: Employment of maintenance person for 'odd' jobs within the Parish:** An article advertising the position was in the Hexham Courant on 21 October. Additionally I have posted notices across the village. Closing date is 20 November and presently it is believed two people have expressed an interest. I have received confirmation from the Parish Councils insurers that suitable insurance is in place to cover the employment of a maintenance person.

**Item 5f: Millennium Green – maintenance:** Replacement sections to the damaged picnic tables have been received from Jackson's.

**Item 5g: Responsibility for local services from April 2012:** A number of questions and comments were put to NCC in response to the report received regarding services provided from April 2012. Under the main headings below I have received the following confirmation and you will be asked to consider what, if any, further action should be taken:-

- Public Conveniences – These are considered as strategic services and as such will remain the responsibility of NCC.
- Litter bins – Dog bins are to be phased out over the next few years as wrapped dog waste can now be placed in general litter bins. There will be no further annual charge for the dog bin that the Parish Council have located near the Sports Centre. I have received confirmation that the litter bin in the bus stop and at the Children's Play area will continue to be emptied by NCC at no cost to the Parish Council. The Parish Council will need to fund for any future bins as well as replacement of existing bins.
- Grass cutting – I have received confirmation from two sources within NCC that the grass at the Children's play area in Brierley Gardens will continue to be cut by NCC at no charge the Parish Council 12 times a year. There will be a charge of £48.24 + VAT should further cuts be required. The rest of the grass in Brierley Gardens is cut on behalf of the ISOS housing company. Meantime the grass on the road verges will continue to be cut by the Highways Agency at no cost to the Parish Council.

**Item 5h: 'The Green', Willow Green – future use:** I am awaiting receipt of the deeds from Cuthbertsons Solicitors before making enquires of potentially having the Green given a Village Green status. Meantime I have established a point of contact at NCC who will be able to provide assistance on the matter.

**Item 5i: Plans to keep footpath clear of snow in the winter:** So far I have received one quote for clearing snow and that was from Alan Dodd. He would charge £30 per hour to clear the snow himself and dump it away from the road. Should I receive any further quotes before the meeting I will provide an update.

**Item 5j: Otterburn Trail – footpath through field by Sports Centre:** I have received a response to the matter of the cattle in the field near the Sports Centre. Tony Derbyshire at NCC advises that little can be done providing the cattle are not known to be dangerous. Beef breed bulls may graze with cattle but not alone. He provides general guidance including keeping dogs on a lead however they should be released from the lead if cattle react to the dog to ensure you do not endanger yourself. You will be asked to consider what, if any, further action should be taken.

**Item 6b: Annual Audit to 31 March, 2011:** I am pleased to report that the audit has been completed by the external auditor without query. You will be asked to approve and accept the annual return.

**Item 6c: Reimbursement of payment for 'no Dogs' sign for children's play area:** You will be asked to approve the reimbursement of £13.93 for the payment by the Parish Clerk for a 'No Dogs' sign.

**Item 6d: Payment of invoice for replacement swing seats at Children's play area:** You will be asked to approve the payment of an invoice for £90.60 for two replacement seats for the Children's play area.

**Item 6e: Reimbursement of Chairs expenses:** You will be asked to approve the reimbursement of expenses of £9.99 for the Chair in respect of retiring Cllr Holden leaving present.

**Item 6f: Payment of an invoice to Chris Mowatt:** You will be asked to approve the payment of an invoice for £25.00 in respect of one grass cut at 'The Green', Willow Green.

**Item 6g: Payment of invoice to Jacksons for four pieces of wood:** I am still waiting for the invoice to come through however should I receive it before the meeting you will be asked to approve the payment for the wood that will replace the damaged parts of the picnic tables in the Millennium Green.

**Item 6h: Payment of invoice for Robson & Cowan:** An invoice for £32.15 has been paid in respect of repairs to the strimmer for the Millennium Green. Early payment ensured a small deduction of the invoice amount.

**Item 8a: Speeding traffic incident through the village:** The Chair will provide details of an incident on 23 October when a lorry was noted travelling through the village very fast. Speeding traffic through the village is an ongoing problem in the village. I have been in contact with Michael Connelly (LMAPS) who helped previously and has promised to do what he can to assist again. You will be asked to consider what additional action should be taken.

**Item 8b: Pedestrian and traffic safety through the village:** I have received an email from Stefan Bell, Assistant Engineer – Traffic Safety, NCC advising a PV2 survey will be undertaken in the village in the next couple of weeks. This will hopefully be the start towards a crossing and the survey is carried out over a 2.5 hour period in the morning and afternoon, during school term. The survey involves recording the traffic flow and pedestrian crossing flow over a 50m length either side of the proposed crossing point.

**Item 8c: Damage to public conveniences in the village:** I have received an email from Michael Connelly regarding the state of the toilets in the village. He reports that there has been damage to the toilets and in particular female toilets with some fire damage. He asks that the matter is highlighted to the local community so people can be vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police. You will be asked to consider what action should be taken.

**Martin Chilvers**

**28 October, 2011**