

OUSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Thursday 9th October 2025.

Parish councillors present: John Gale (Chair), Guy Holland Bosworth, Sylvia Pettitt, Jo Wright, Jess Pettitt, Edward Page Turner and Fiona Bills.

Also present: Celia Holt, Chair of the Village Hall New Build Working Group. The clerk, Joanne Kirk, joined the meeting remotely.

- 1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.**
No councillors sent their apologies.
- 2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.**
No interests were declared and no dispensation requests were received.
- 3. Public session.**
No issues were raised.
- 4. To discuss the Village Hall Management Committee's application for a National Lottery Grant for a new village hall and setting up a lease agreement/transfer of ownership to the Village Hall Management Committee.**
Following advice from Claire Barritt at Ashtons Legal LLP in Bury St Edmunds, the question of ownership of the village hall has been clarified. As Custodian Trustee Ousden Parish Council holds the legal interest in the title whereas Ousden Village Hall Management Committee holds the beneficial interest. This has also been confirmed previously by the Charity Commission. As charities have no legal identity, they often appoint a custodian to hold their title deeds. Appointing a custodian trustee is a technical/paper exercise. The land and property belong to the charity and any decisions such as whether to sell rest with the trustees.

Claire Barritt has agreed to send confirmation of the legal status of the village hall to the National Lottery along with copies of the original Deed of Conveyance and the Foundation Scheme from when the Ousden Village Hall and Playing Fields Charity was set up in 1965. If necessary, the National Lottery can put both names (Ousden Village Hall and Ousden Village Management Committee) on the grant agreement. The grant agreement will be non-negotiable and will have 'clawback' clauses if the terms and conditions are not met.

It was resolved that the following resolution would be passed:

Ousden Parish Council resolves to enter into the Lottery standard grant agreement in its capacity as custodian trustee only for the building of a new village hall (the Project) and authorises the Parish Clerk to conclude all necessary matters in consultation with the Chair to enable the trustees of the Ousden Village Hall charity (charity number 304932) to deliver the Project.

It was also resolved that:

- Ousden Parish Council acknowledges that there will be a 'clawback' clause if the terms and conditions are not met, however it will be the responsibility of Ousden Village Hall Management Committee that all conditions are complied with.
 - Ousden Parish Council would work with Ousden Village Hall Management Committee and Ashtons Legal to register the land with the Land Registry.
 - Ousden Parish Council would work with Ousden Village Hall Management Committee to arrange a valuation of the property required for the land registration.
- 5. To authorise the clerk to act on behalf of Ousden Parish Council to access any documents held at Suffolk Archives and take them out on loan if required by the National Lottery and to enable the land to be registered.**
It was resolved that the clerk would be authorised to obtain the original Deed of Conveyance and Charity Foundation Document along with the minutes covering the period from 1954 to 1985 from Suffolk Archives.
 - 6. To approve any expenditure necessary in setting up a lease/transfer agreement subject to the limits set out in Ousden Parish Council's Financial Regulations.**
It was resolved that:
 - Ousden Parish Council would cover the cost of registering the land (approximately £600) and the initial legal fees incurred to date (£580) using the money in the village project reserve (£1,000), and approve the payments.

- Budgeting for future costs (valuation survey and a legal charge on the registration of the land) would be discussed at the December meeting.

7. Any other business for noting or approval at the next meeting on 9th December 2025.

The following items are for noting:

- a) Planning application DC/25/1472/HH - Harewood House, Front Street, Ousden – a. detached two bay garage b. open front porch c. raising the roof and conversion of existing garage to living accommodation d. replace link extension and raise roof line e. single storey rear extension

The clerk was asked to contact West Suffolk Council as the plans for the detached double garage are not available on the West Suffolk Planning Portal. Councillors had looked at the plans prior to the meeting and did not have any other concerns. The clerk agreed to circulate details of the double garage once received and submit a response of 'no objections' if the view of councillors remains unchanged.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.30pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated