

Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council.

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 6th June 2005

Present: Councillors Sayce, Barwick-Bell, Chainey, Davison, Drew, Hedley, Levitt, Martin, Wade, Warhurst-Walker. Mrs M Williams, Clerk.

Also present: County Councillor Ray Thompson, District Councillor Mrs A Dale, 2 representatives from Northumbria Police, Prudhoe, 5 members of the public, Helen Compson, Hexham Courant

Apologies: Councillors Hall & Bouch, District Councillors Mike Collins

05/18 Declarations of Interest -

None

05/19 Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting held on 9th May 2005 were agreed as a true record.

05/20 Matters Arising

Kate's Plain - it was reported that the fence was still not in place but that it was hoped that it would be completed by the end of June.

05/21 Public Participation

The Chair, Mrs Sayce welcomed Sgt Jan Harrison, Community Beat Sergeant and PC V Byrne, Community Beat Manager from Prudhoe Police Station to the meeting.

Sgt Harrison opened her remarks by saying that the police now placed a lot of emphasis on the community and that it was hoped to increase the number of Community Beat Managers and Community Support Officers based in Prudhoe during the next 12 months. She advised that the Community Support Officers do not have the powers of police officers. She made the following points:

- The area covered by the station at Prudhoe is very spread out geographically.
- The Community Support Officers travel on foot.
- Tynedale as a whole does not have a big crime problem, but it is acknowledged that youth disturbance is a problem.
- The police have been looking at the youth disorder question for some time and have been running an operation in Stocksfield for some months. The police have never found such large numbers of young people as has been alleged there have been.
- A few individuals give the whole group a bad name.
- In one month only 8 calls had been received from Stocksfield, three of these in one evening.
- The East Centre are regularly sending outreach workers to Stocksfield. It was pointed out that the youth workers themselves were quite young and might not be easily identified as being present.
- The police do not want to alienate or hassle the young people.
- One or two individuals are to be signed up to Anti Social Behaviour Agreements.
- The process with ASBAs/ASBOs with young people is that on the first occasion the parents get a letter from the police, on the second occasion the parents get a letter and a visit and on the third occasion the ASBA process is started. Both young people and their parents must sign up to an ASBA and the agreement must be realistic.
- Young people move from place to place.
- The police can do nothing if the young people are just congregating.

- Perception is worse than reality. There is a fine line between high spirits and bad behaviour and dangerous conduct.
- One of the main tasks of the youth workers is to “teach” young people what is and is not acceptable.
- The police check Kate’s Plain every Friday and Saturday night and log the fact that it has been checked. These checks include the Station area.
- There is not a big drugs problem in the area.

Sgt Harrison commented that the police had not been asked to comment on the press report prior to publication. Ms Compson advised that the Courant had attempted to get a comment from the police. She also commented that the report in the Courant had been accurate reflection of the meeting on 9th May. It was felt that the headline had been unfortunate.

A comment was made that on occasion groups of 40-60 young people were at Branch End and the question was asked about the responsibility of the parents.

It was stated that in Stocksfield there were plenty of facilities for young people although it was acknowledged that teenagers like to “hang around”. It was agreed that large groups of young people can be intimidating. One resident commented that the numbers of young people had reduced but that two girls had trespassed on his property.

There is a need to try to educate the young people to see things from a different perspective. It was suggested that members of the parish council might attend school assemblies and drop in centre at the High School to discuss the problems and put forward the residents’ point of view, and that young people might attend parish council meetings from time to time.

It was asked how the next generation of children can be prevented from causing trouble.

It was felt that there were two main problems:

- Large groups of young people meandering around the village.
- Young people playing “chicken” with the traffic on the main road.

It should also be stressed that the access to Kate’s Plain is not through the field and Tynedale are to be asked to ask the grass cutters not to cut a pathway through the field.

Residents felt that it was not so much young people using Kate’s Plain that was a problem, the greater cause for concern was the problems which arose when the groups were going to and from the play area.

It was reported that another area of congregation was the Community Woodland Car Park. It was stressed that young people should be encouraged to act responsibly in the woods.

Sgt Harrison advised that British Transport Police would also be happy to advise about rail safety.

Mrs Sayce thanked Sgt Harrison and PC Byrne for attending the meeting.

Other matters raised under Public Participation

Footpaths - Concern was raised about the condition of the permissive paths through Broomley Woods. Councillor Chainey is to look at the agreement with Allendale Estates and in the meantime it was agreed to write to the Estate to request that they make the paths passable.

It was pointed out that the path along the burn at the back of the tennis club is getting very dangerous. Mrs Dale offered to chase Milecastle Housing about this and to liaise with Mr Chainey over the matter.

It was reported that the steps between Meadowfield Road and Guessburn need strimming.

Highways - County Councillor Thompson advised:

- Apperley Road should be resurfaced in September
- Meadowfield Road should be resurfaced in October

- Discussions will start in the next week regarding the provision of double yellow lines at Birches Nook Road and Painshawfield Road.
- The A695 through Riding Mill should be resurfaced in June.
- The repair to the A695 west of Stocksfield is currently being investigated and a permanent repair will be effected. Problems of this nature impinge on the regular maintenance budget of the County Council.

BOATS - County Councillor Thompson advised that the process was now underway and re-iterated that it was hoped that common sense will be applied to this issue.

Wylam Garage at Branch End - concern was expressed that now that the garage had shut, travellers might park up on the site. Concerns were also raised that because the fence had blown down and not been repaired, gas canisters were exposed and had on at least one occasion been thrown on the road. It was agreed to contact the owner of the site as it needs to be made safe and tidy.

05/22 Matters Arising

Dogs at the Sportsfield - the Sportsfield Management Group and the Footpaths Group are to discuss the possibility of providing a point where dogs might be tied up for a short time whilst their owners collect children from school.

05/23 Correspondence

A letter had been received regarding the Regional Forestry Strategy and this is to be discussed at the July meeting.

A letter had been received from Tynedale giving notice of an Appeal against a planning decision on the construction of two-storey extension at West Cottage Apperley Farm. It was agreed that the original decision of the Planning & Highways Group should stand and that no further action would be taken on this.

A response had been received from the County Council following a request to erect "children playing" signs at Birkdene. It was felt that the response was not satisfactory and that a further letter should be written to the County pointing out that the Parish Council had traffic calming measures in mind for two areas in the parish following the 97/98 Appraisal and asking what the current position is.

A notice had been received about the meeting of the Joint Parish Councils' Forum, Mrs Sayce to attend.

Other correspondence received was listed on the agenda and was noted.

05/24 Brief Reports from Advisory Groups and Council Representatives

a) General Purposes Group

A letter had been received from the Football Club requesting a grant of £350 for junior Football Goal Posts and this was agreed.

b) Footpaths & Environment Group

Nothing to report.

Councillor Chainey advised that because of its condition an alternative path to footpath 13 had been "created" and that the County might close the original route. Mr Chainey is to monitor the situation.

c) Play Facilities Group

The report had been circulated.

Kate's Plain - it was suggested that the picnic benches might be moved away from the play equipment. However, it was pointed out that these were placed near the play equipment to encourage young families to the area. It was suggested that the Kate's Plain Committee might be prepared to pay for more seats if the play area is used properly. It was reported that the Committee felt that they would prefer to spend the money raised on equipment rather than tables and litter bins. Mrs Davison and Mrs Dale are to discuss this further.

The hard work of the Kate's Plain Committee was acknowledged. It was pointed out that originally all the "experts" had agreed that siting of the play area at this location was not a problem. After consultation with Tynedale on the type of bin to be provided it was agreed that a litter bins should be sited near the teen shelter. The possibility of re-cycling bins at the play area is to be investigated.

It was reported that the original new notice at Kate's Plain had gone missing and it was agreed to replace it.

Branch End Play Area

It was felt that the report was self-explanatory. It was suggested that the police be consulted over the design for the new equipment at Branch End. Mrs Davison was thanked for her report and the Regeneration Committee was thanked for its efforts.

d) Sports Facilities Group

Nothing to report - it is hoped that Chris Catnach is progressing the funding for the refurbishment of the Multisports Area.

e) Planning & Highways

The Planning Report had been circulated.

Dere Street Farm - following a discussion it was agreed to endorse the Planning Group's recommendation on this application namely:

Object to application

Whilst supporting the project we have grave reservations over the car park siting and access to the project. We understand neighbours have grave concerns over this development.

Concern was expressed about a vehicle that has been parked on the pavement outside Ford Rise regularly for the past six months. This vehicle is parked in such a way as to make the pavement hazardous to negotiate, particularly for pedestrians with small children and buggies and people in electric scooters.

f) Communication

A draft of Issue 16 of NE43 News had been circulated and minor amendments were suggested.

g) Council Representatives

The Eastern Parishes Forum had met on 17th May and the Minutes had been circulated. The future of this Forum and representation to it was currently being debated. Mr Chainey said he would like to continue attending these meetings but would be happy to share the representation with another councillor.

05/25 Finance

The Accounts for May were approved.

05/26 Other business

Mrs Sayce asked councillors to consider the possibility of producing another Parish Plan. She said that the last Appraisal had been carried out nine years ago and that there would be Government funds available to carry out another.

It was agreed that any such project would be hard work but Mrs Sayce felt that if every councillor asked one other resident to become a member of the working group it might not be too arduous.

She suggested that the school might be involved. It was acknowledged that because two large projects were currently being undertaken careful thought would have to be given to undertaking production of a new Parish Plan.

05/27 Date of Next Meeting

4th July - August - no meeting

The meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.