

# **Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council.**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 12th April 2010**

Present: Councillors John Davison, Pete Duncan, Steve Gleadhill, Norman Hooks, Melna Martin, Dave Porter, Katharine Russell, Julia Sayce. Mrs Margaret Williams, Clerk. Also Present: County Councillor Anne Dale, Mrs Gemma Brown Hexham Courant, Mr Harris, Mrs D Gilbert.

**Apologies:** Ian Hall, Diane Hinchcliffe, Helen Morris, Pete Barrass.

In the absence, of Ian Hall, Mrs Martin, the Vice Chairman, took the meeting. The Chairman welcomed Mr Harris and Mrs Gilbert to the meeting.

**09/97 Declarations of Interest - None.**

**09/98 Minutes - The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st March were agreed.**

**09/99 Matters Arising - there were no matters arising.**

**09/100 Public Participation -**

Development at Burnside - Mrs Gilbert raised concerns about the access to the development at Burnside. She said that she believed that at the recent Planning Meeting of the West Area Committee of the County Council the latest plans for the Burnside site had been approved. She said that it was felt that the access to the site should be widened and a mirror provided so that exit from the site could be made safer.

It was stated that County Highways 'don't do mirrors' as they are not considered to be safe.

Dave Porter re-iterated the Parish Council's concern about the access to this site. He said that it was important that the hedge line is moved back and that there is better access to the site. County Highways had said that safety of access was not an issue at this point. He said that there were too many houses on a small piece of land. He also raised concerns about the safety of pedestrians crossing the exit from the site.

It was felt that this was a safety issue and not a cosmetic one.

County Councillor Dale advised that the number of houses agreed to was within the policy guidelines. She said that the entrance had been widened and went on to say that the length of time being taken to complete the development had been queried by the planning committee. She said that she felt it was unacceptable for residents to put up with further disruption. She also said that county councillors do not receive enforcement reports from planning officers.

Mrs Gilbert said that the spoil heap on the site next to No.1 Burnside appeared to have come from another site; the planning officer had advised that this is not an offence. Mrs Gilbert said that this heap was now encroaching on the boundary fence of No. 1 and that the Environment Agency was looking at the danger of flooding on the site.

Steve Gleadhill suggested that as well as widening the access, the road should have been built up at the entrance to allow easier exit from the site. He went on to say that there were currently at least six cars using the site. One of the initial planning conditions for the site was that the road should have been raised prior to construction work on the site being started.

Mrs Dale had been advised that the builders could not be expected to put the top surface layer on the road until the development was complete. One alleged cause for the delay was that the contractors were waiting for cabling to be laid.

Norman Hooks asked if this was the final number of houses being proposed for Burnside Yard and it was suggested that it was probably not.

Mrs Martin asked if the planners should meet with residents to discuss the problems.

Mrs Dale re-iterated that if a development fits in with the guidelines laid out in the Local Plan, the Planning Committee cannot refuse planning permission.

Mr Gleadhill suggested that what is failing is the overview of the implications of plans.

Mrs Dale stressed that County Highways are aware of the situation and consult the rules and regulations prior to making a comments on planning applications.

Mrs Martin asked if it were possible to erect a concealed entrance sign.

It was agreed that a letter should be written to the planning officers asking why the road had not been raised as laid down in the initial conditions for the site.

It was also suggested that a letter be written to the County asking if the Parish Council could fund the provision of a mirror at this site.

### **09/101 Correspondence - Correspondence received since the March meeting was listed on the Agenda.**

A letter from Northumberland Sport was referred to Julia Sayce, Pete Duncan and Melna Martin for response by 28th May.

A response had been received from County to the Parish County's letter querying the level of service on dog waste bin emptying. A further letter is to be sent re-iterating that the Parish Council was not prepared to pay for a service it had not received.

### **09/102 Finance - The Accounts for March were accepted. It was noted that £330 had been received which would cover the cost of producing the Information Card. While this sum covers the cost of production it takes no account of the effort put into the project by councillors.**

The Bank Reconciliation was noted.

The Spend v Budget was noted and was referred to the Finance & General Purposes Group.

The Draft Annual return had been circulated and was also referred to the Finance & General Purposes Group.

Annual Audit - a paper had been tabled and was noted and agreed.

Additional cheques were agreed:

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| Glasdon - replacement dog bin New Ridley | £224.92 |
| Robson Print - NE43 News                 | £312.00 |
| Robson Print - Annual Report             | £95.00  |
| Abbey Press - Info Card                  | £259.00 |

### **09/103 Brief Reports from Advisory Groups and Council Representatives**

#### **a) Sports Facilities**

The SMUGAG Group had held its AGM and it was noted that the MUGA facility was doing reasonably well. It was reported that the requirement for £8000 pa to be put into the reserves had been over-estimated and that currently £4000 pa was being put into a reserve account. The fees for usage of the facility had not been put up recently and currently a lot of block bookings were being made.

Sportsfield Grass Cutting - Pete Duncan asked if there was any way that the grass cutting in the early part of the season could be done so as not to destroy pitch markings. This will be mentioned when the tenders are let for the future at the end of the year.

Snooker Club - A letter had been received from the Land Registry notifying the Parish Council of the Snooker Club's intention to register its ownership of the site. A response had been drawn up, in conjunction with the Chairman, as the deadline for comment had been prior to this meeting. It was felt that any future

planning application for this site would require a change of use. Unregistered land is the problem It was agreed that this matter could be taken no further at present.

b) Development of a Village Trust

Norman Hooks, Ian Hall and Steve Gleadhill had had a meeting with the Development Trust Association and further discussions are to be held and research carried out. Anne Lawson of Social Enterprise Northumberland had suggested that SICA, with a change of structure, might metamorphose into a development trust.

c) Parish Plan Action Group - pending

d) Council Representatives -

Eastern Parishes Forum - A discussion was held about the Eastern Parishes Forum and its role in the democratic representation of the community.

Dave Porter advised that the Forum met 4 times a year. The meeting in January had been poorly attended because of the bad weather and the clash with the County Council budget meeting. Colin Charlton from County Highways had been invited, in October, to attend the January meeting. At the March meeting of the Western Area Committee of the County Council, the Chairman, Colin Horncastle, had complained about Colin Charlton being asked to attend the January Forum meeting. The Forum has become a more formal body. It was noted that Parish Councillors are able to attend the County Council West Areas Committee meetings. It was felt that problems should be taken to the West Area Committee meetings. Concerns were expressed that the Forum appears to be duplicating the work of the Area Committee and Parish Councils. It was felt that Forums had been "thrust" upon the community by the County Council.

There is a need to look at representation on the Forum and to raise concerns about the possible duplication of effort by the Forum and the County Area Committees and of what benefit to Parishes is the Forum. There is a need to look at the Forum's Terms of Reference and Constitution. Has the Eastern Parishes Forum got "too big"?

It was noted that the Forums answer to the Area Partnerships and the NSP.

Prudhoe Community High School - Community & Extended Services Meeting - a paper had been tabled and was noted.

West Area Committee - a paper had been tabled and was noted.

**[Suspension of Standing Orders -it was agreed that Standing Orders should be suspended and the meeting should continue until 10.00 p.m.]**

e) Transport & Highways

Station Car Park - Norman Hooks up-dated councillors on the current position. He advised that the work had been completed with the exception of the pedestrian access from the A695 which will be completed shortly. He said that we now need to submit the paperwork to make the claim for the grant to the DfT. We are still awaiting an invoice addressed to the Parish Council. The invoice initially submitted by Northern Rail had been addressed to the County and included an amount of 12.5% for a Management Fee which had not been agreed to. Northern Rail had seen the initial application for funding and the costings which had been the basis of the application and had not mentioned a management fee at that point. In addition, it is understood that there is no mention of a management fee in the funding agreement between Northern Rail and the County Council for this project. It was noted that the major beneficiary of this project would be Northern Rail. A letter has been sent to Northern Rail raising the issue of the Management Fee.

Work on the pedestrian access was to be carried out by the County. The estimated cost of this was revised to £7681 (reference was made to the paper from the Chairman, Ian Hall on this matter). The cost of the work is to be funded by County Councillor Anne Dale's members' fund, the LTP funds and the Parish Council. Cost to the Parish Council approximately £2560.

The overspend on the north side of the track was due to the unexpected cost of the large drain which had had to be provided.

The Committee was thanked for its hard work.

VATS machines - The installation of the machine on New Ridley Road was to be delayed slightly so that the work could be carried out in conjunction with the installation of the replacement machine at Brumwell Court. This machine had been destroyed in a road traffic accident and steps were being taken to recoup the costs through the court and the Motor Insurers' Bureau.

New Ridley Road Flooding - County Councillor Mrs Dale was asked what progress had been made to resolve this problem. Flooding had occurred again following heavy rain. Mrs Dale advised that the County Council only had powers over drains. She said that solicitors were dealing with this issue and headway was being made. She said that residents had had meetings with County officers. The County pays for the road clearing.

It was thought that the problem lay in the fact that water cascaded off the non-porous gallop. It was noted that this problem had gone on for a long time and it was felt that it should be sorted.

Mrs Dale suggested that residents should contact Mel Richardson at the County depot in Hexham if problems occur.

Fords Repair - no notice of further closure had been received to date. It was reported that the road closure sign at the top of the Lead Road had disappeared - Mrs Dale offered to check this out with County Highways. It was reported that vehicles were still using the closed ford and the Lead Road. It was hoped that the Fords would be repaired during the summer and it was asked if the repair would include the Lead Road as this was reported to be in a very poor and dangerous condition.

(Steve Gleadhill left the meeting).

#### f) Footpaths Gardens & Environment

Hanging Baskets - a paper had been circulated and was noted and agreed.

Garden Share Scheme - this is to be publicised.

Spring Tidy Up - It was noted that Pete Barrass and his son had swept the pedestrian bridge over the Stocksfield Burn.

#### g) Communication

Information Card - It was felt that the Information Card had been well-received.

NE43 News - It was noted that this issue had been easier to distribute as all the additional material had been inserted prior to being given to the distributors. Councillors were advised that the Cubs would be unable to distribute the summer issue of NE43 News.

Website - a letter had been received from Voice Systems advising that they would no longer be providing a domain hosting service and that their business had been transferred to a new company. Dave Porter is to speak to the new company to see what services can be provided.

#### h) Planning

The Planning report had been circulated.

Burnside Yard - it was reported that the most recent application for this site had been approved at the latest meeting of the County Council West Area Planning Committee.

21 Cade Hill Road - no ruling on this application had been received to date. The Clerk is to look at previous applications for this site, in relation to Tree Preservation Orders.

Windfarms - Katharine Russell had arranged for Jason McCray to talk about wind turbines to the Environment Group. This meeting will not discuss specific proposals or planning applications.

(Pete Duncan left the meeting)

i) Finance & General Purposes Group

The F & GP report had been circulated and was noted.

j) Play Facilities - nothing to report

Kates Plain - the Clerk is to look into the cost of removing the moles on Kates Plain

Community Garden - Katharine Russell is helping to organise an opening event on 19th June.

Branch End Play Area - continues to be well-used

k) Community Development - nothing to report

l) Policy Group -

People & Places consultation - it was agreed to make no further comment.

**09/104 Any Other Business - None**

**09/105 Date of next meeting -**

Annual Parish Meeting - 26th April. Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council - 10th May

The meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.