

# Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council.

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 6th December 2010

Present: Councillors Pete Barrass, John Davison, Diane Hinchcliffe, Ian Hall, Maggi Hunt, Norman Hooks, Melna Martin, Helen Morris, Julia Sayce. Mrs M Williams, Clerk. Also present: - County Councillor Anne Dale, Mr Ivor Gray, Mr D Coulter Hexham Courant.

**Apologies:** Mr Pete Duncan.

### 10/81 - Declarations of Interest

Mrs Dale declared an interest in matters relating to Parking

### 10/82 - Public Participation

Sportsfield Parking - Mr Ivor Gray raised concerns about the parking outside the Sportsfield, particularly on Saturday mornings. He said that cars that were parked in the Eastern sportsfield were in danger of being bogged down when the ground was very wet. Her was particularly concerned about the cars parked on the pavement as these constituted a danger to pedestrians. He said that Saturday mornings were the worst problems as there could be 9 teams playing (up to 150 children and young people).

There was a general discussion on this issue and the following points were made:

The Parish Council has already ordered notices to request motorists not to obstruct the pavement.

Planning permission would be needed to turn the sportsfield into a car park.

Would cutting back the bank behind the skips make a difference - it was not thought that this would help very much as access was still required to the skips.

Could Telfer's field be used - the Clerk advised that she had spoken to SITA who had indicated that expanding into the next field would not be possible as a reduction in Telfer's acreage could affect the viability of their farm.

Should the grass verge be cut back to widen the pavement at this point.

Should team managers be asked to contact parents of children to either walk down to the Sportsfield or car share. Should parents receive a letter pointing out the dangers of parking on the pavement, particularly on Saturday mornings.

NCC to be asked what they know about grass matting.

Mr Gray was thanked for bringing his concerns to the Parish Council and assured that the Council was looking into this problem with a view to finding a permanent solution.

Changes in the bus service from New Ridley - Mrs Dale suggested that the new bus timetable meant that the service from New Ridley to Newcastle had now changed. She suggested and it was agreed that a discussion be held in January about the possibility of working with ADAPT to run a bus from Whittonstall to Prudhoe.

Bad Weather - Mrs Dale advised that County Council staff had been working very hard over the past days to ensure that roads were cleared. She said that these duties were putting a strain on the staff. She acknowledged that the Estate roads had not been cleared of snow, and felt that as Stocksfield was largely built on a hillside this caused problems. She asked that residents and councillors reported all weather related problems to [ask@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:ask@northumberland.gov.uk). Other problems at any time of the year should also be reported to [ask@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:ask@northumberland.gov.uk). Mrs Dale said that there is a need to ensure that winter services are not cut back when the County has to make savings. Mrs Dale also raised the question of grit bins. She asked if the bins in the parish had been numbered and audited. She was advised that as far as the Clerk and councillors were aware this had not been carried out.

### **10/83 - Planning - Hoodsclouse (Whittonstall) proposals to extract coal and fireclay by opencast mining**

Mrs Sayce advised that the planning application for this proposed opencast mine had been received. She said that purely on Planning grounds she felt that there was nothing to object to. She said that whether or not individuals or the Parish Council supported the proposal to have an opencast mine at Whittonstall, we were at this stage being asked to comment on a planning issue. There was a debate on the issue and the following points were raised:

The proposal to build a haul road to the A68 was supported.

Comments from the public meetings had been listed in the documents.

The Planning Authority should be rigorous about enforcing traffic control measures.

Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council is sympathetic with the views of neighbouring parishes who will be more directly affected by the proposed mine.

The Planning Authority must enforce the restoration programme and ensure it is carried out in consultation with local residents.

Mrs Sayce and the Clerk are to liaise over drawing up a response to the proposals.

It was agreed to wait until January to see whether or not a public meeting should be called to discuss the issue. A letter is to be written to Shotley Low Quarter Parish Council advising that Broomley & Stocksfield would like to be advised of any public meeting that they call.

### **10/84 - Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st November 2010**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st November were proposed as correct by Maggi Hunt and seconded by Norman Hooks were agreed.

### **10/85 - Matters Arising**

Remembrance Day - this had been a very successful occasion. It was reported that sadly Dennis Wellings, who had laid the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council had since died. It was said that he had been grateful for being given the honour of laying the wreath.

Extension of the football pitches into the next field - as reported above, the Clerk had spoken to SITA and no further action can be taken on this proposal.

Rabbit Catcher - The Clerk had spoken to the Rabbit Catcher who advised that he was careful not to work when there were people about on the sportsfields.

### **10/86 - Correspondence**

Correspondence received since the November meeting had been listed on the Agenda and was noted. It was agreed that a letter should be sent in response to the communication from the Environment Agency thanking them for the work that had been done in relation to potential flooding at Burnside.

### **10/87 - Finance**

The Accounts for November 2010 had been circulated, queries raised were answered and the accounts were accepted.

The Balance Sheet was accepted

The Bank Reconciliation for November was noted - the Clerk was requested to include the list of uncleared cheques with the Bank Reconciliation in future.

Spend v Budget - the reports for October and November were circulated and will be considered by the F&GP Group. The F&GP will carry out a quarterly review of Spend v Budget in future.

Annual Audit - The report from the external auditors, BDO, was noted and the Audited Annual Return approved. The F&GP looked at this and its recommendations are included in its report tabled at the meeting.

Interim Audit - The Internal Auditor had carried out the half-yearly audit of the accounts. His report had been passed to the F&GP for consideration and recommendation.

### **10/88 - 2011/12 Precept**

An extraordinary meeting of the F&GP and other councillors had been held to discuss the precept and budget for 2011/12. Pete Barrass was thanked for all the effort he had put into his presentation for this meeting. A paper on the discussions held at this meeting had been circulated.

Following that meeting a proposal is to be put to the Parish Council for ratification.

That the agreed proposal to increase the Precept for 2011/12 by 2.5% be rescinded.

Melna Martin proposed, Julia Sayce seconded - passed 7 for with 1 abstention

That as a result of the discussions held on 22nd November the Precept for

2011/12 be set at £58,833 which is a 5% increase on the precept for the current year of £56,032.

Pete Barrass proposed, Maggie Hunt seconded - passed 6 for with one abstention

It was noted that a 2½% increase would result in approximately a £1 pa increase on Band D Council Tax whilst 5% would result in approximately £2 p.a.

Councillors were thanked for attending the special meeting on 22 November.

### **10/89 - Review of Tender documents**

The tender documents had been circulated and were noted. It was noted that to date no tender for emptying litter bins had been raised. Currently litter bins are emptied by the County Council. It was agreed to advertise the invitation to tender in the Hexham Courant.

(Mrs Sayce left the meeting at 9.00 p.m.)

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

### **10/90 - Restructuring of the Youth Service**

Mrs Hunt and Mr Hooks had drawn up a briefing paper on this topic and this had been circulated. Mrs Hunt advised that she had been an HMI for the Youth Service. She acknowledged that the Youth Service would have to cut its budgets and suggested that councillors need to look at the youth service from the point of view of Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council. She went on to say that the Parish Council needs to understand what we would like the Youth Service to provide for our young people. Mrs Hunt said that she had looked at the Parish Plan. Stocksfield has lots of sports facilities which are available for young people. She asked if the Parish Council could come up with a Service Level Agreement for youth service provision. She said that the Youth Service had certain legal requirements which had to be met. She said that the core service provided by the Youth Service needs to deal with those young people with special requirements and that it is unlikely that there are many young people living in Stocksfield who would fit these core requirement. She went on to say that there is a need to bring young people together to find out what they want. She asked if the Youth Service can provide a consultation service. Mrs Hunt said that the Parish Council should respond to the consultation document. It was acknowledged that County Councillor Mrs Dale had done a lot of work in this area to get to the present stage.

The Parish Council needs to decide what we can do for the young people in our parish. Can we use the High School, Rachel Cochrane's column in the Courant and NE43 News to contact young people? The Parish Council needs to ensure that it meets with young people. Such a meeting might be on neutral ground.

There is a need to ensure that young people attending private schools are also contacted. There is a need to liaise with LMAPS. What do we do ourselves? Do we create a young people's Parish Council? It was suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting might focus on Young People.

How do we respond to the document - Mrs Hunt agreed to liaise with the Clerk and to draft a response.

It was agreed that this topic would be discussed further in January and that target dates would be drawn up.

Mrs Hunt and Mr Hooks were thanked for the work they had put into the briefing paper.

(Mrs Dale left the meeting at 9.15 p.m.)

### **10/91 - Resignation of Councillor**

The Chairman advised that he had received a letter of resignation from Dave Porter. This means that we now have two vacancies on the Parish Council. It was noted that both Katharine Russell and Dave Porter had expressed willingness to continue to help with the work of the Council, Mrs Russell with the Footpaths & Environment Group and Mr Porter with NE43 News).

Co-options - Alan Verheyden had been asked to re-consider his previous application. It was however, agreed to wait until January before contacting him formally - his previous letter of application would stand.

### **10/92 - Brief Reports from Advisory Groups & Council Representatives**

Membership of Advisory Groups - Pete Barrass has volunteered to move to the F&GP and this was agreed.

Planning - Mrs Sayce had offered to look after Planning. Mrs Martin volunteered to join the Planning Group. The Membership of the Planning Group will now be:

Mrs Sayce - convenor, Mrs Martin, Mrs Hunt, Mrs Hinchcliffe. Norman Hooks will be a reserve member.

It was agreed to look again at membership of Advisory Groups once the two vacancies had been filled.

#### **a) - Finance & General Purposes Group**

The Report of the most recent meeting of the F&GP was tabled.

Insurance - it was agreed to send the letter to our insurance company as amended by the Chairman. The Clerk to re-issue the list for insurance purposes of assets and to ask for quotes for specific items.

Asset Transfer - it was agreed to go ahead with the transfer of Branch End Toilets and Branch End Play Area from the County Council to the Parish Council.

Parish office - The Community Association is proposing to make changes to the Mary Clayton room and to make provision to provide a Parish Office. It was agreed in principle to set aside money for SICA to support this project if called for.

Community Governance Review - an e-mail had been received from the Head of Democratic Services at the County Council and was noted.

Snooker/Rifle Club - no further information had been received and it was agreed to wait and see what transpires.

Banking - the Clerk had drawn up a paper for the F&GP to consider and report back in January.

Publication of Expenditure over £500 - the Clerk had circulated a paper and it was agreed to publish the information as recommended.

#### **b) - Transport & Highways**

NCC Parking Strategy - a draft response to this consultation had been circulated and it was agreed to send the letter.

Bus Shelter Repairs - three quotations had been received:

R W Quinn      £500-£750

Jason Dalton     £1,175

Bob Brown        £1,652

It was agreed to accept R W Quinn's quotation

Double Yellow Lines at Branch End - a formal consultation had been received from the County Council and it was agreed to support the proposal.

Lorries on New Ridley Road - an e-mail had been received from a resident and it was agreed to discuss this further in January.

Brumwell Court VACS machine - a quotation had been received from Dambach to turn the machine round and adjust the detection distance for £377 - it was agreed to accept this.

To Grit or Not to Grit - a paper had been received from the Eastern Parishes Forum and was noted.

Local Transport Plan - Draft Strategy - this had been received from the County Council - a response is required by 21st January.

c) - Planning

The Planning Report had been circulated.

Contaminated Land Strategy - a consultation document had been received from the County. It was agreed to make no comments on this.

Burnside - it was noted that a response had been received to our letter of 21st October. The Clerk is to check if a response had been received from Highways regarding the entrance to this site.

d) - Sports Facilities - nothing to report

e) - Development of a Village Trust - nothing to report

f) - Footpaths Gardens & Environment -

Merryshields to Eltringham Footpath Claim - the Inspector has asked the County Council to issue a definitive notice for this path.

Regional Flood Information - A request had been received from County for information on flooding and a response is to be drawn up.

g) - Play Facilities

BEPA - Replacement equipment - The contractors are on site. However, the installation is held up due to the recent heavy snowfall and continued bad weather.

Mrs Martin advised that Egger had agreed to provide more bark, but had requested a donation towards the cost.

h) - Parish Plan Action Group - nothing to report

i) - Council Representatives - nothing to report

j) - Communications

NE43 News is at the printers.

k) - Community Development - nothing to report.

l) - Policy Group - Sustainable Communities Act - it was agreed to wait until a specific request to comment before looking further into this.

### **10/93 - Any Other Business**

Ms Morris advised that Rachel Cochrane had published a new play on her website.

### **10/94 - Date of Next Meeting - 10th January 2011**

The Chairman closed the meeting by wishing everyone the compliments of the season and inviting councillors to join him in a glass of champagne and mince pies.

The meeting closed at 10.25 p.m.