

BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 14 May 2012 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

Present: Mr P Barrass, Mr J Davison, Mr P Duncan, Ms M Hunt, Mrs M Martin, Mr M Parker,
Mr A Verheyden, Mr KJ Woods

Mrs M Williams, Clerk

Also Present: County Councillor Mrs A Dale
Mrs G Brown, Hexham Courant

Apologies: Mr R Berg Rust, Mr I Hall

Ms Hunt opened the meeting by paying tribute to Mrs Julia Sayce who had died in April. Ms Hunt said that Mrs Sayce had been a fantastic parish councillor and her contribution to the community at large would be much missed. Ms Hunt then asked those present to hold a minute's silence in remembrance of Mrs Sayce.

Mrs Williams then took the Chair.

12/01 Election of Chairman

Mrs Williams asked for nominations for the Chair of the Parish Council. Mr Barrass proposed and Mrs Martin seconded Ms Hunt as Chairman. Ms Hunt was duly elected and took the Chair.

12/02 Election of Vice Chairman

Ms Hunt asked for nominations for the Vice Chairman of the Parish Council. Mr Verheyden proposed and Mr Duncan seconded Mr Woods as Vice Chairman. Mr Woods was duly elected.

Ms Hunt then welcomed Mr Mike Parker to the Parish Council. Ms Hunt said that the agenda for the meeting was very long and asked councillors to be brief in their remarks.

12/03 Declarations of Interest

Mr Parker declared an interest in the item on parking in Guessburn.

12/04 Advisory Groups and Representatives

Mr Woods advised that the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group had reviewed all of the Council's Advisory Groups and carefully considered their role and remit. The Clerk had issued a paper summarising the discussions of the group and suggesting the remit of Advisory Groups in 2012/13. The recommendations were agreed and councillors were asked to consider which groups they would be interested in joining with a view to finalising the groups' membership at the June meeting.

12/05 Finance

Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer – The Clerk, Mrs Williams, was confirmed as the Responsible Financial Officer.

Appointment of Internal Auditor – Mr K Woods proposed, Mr P Barrass seconded and it was agreed that Mr P Basnett be appointed internal auditor.

12/06 Calendar for 2012/13

The Clerk had circulated the proposed schedule of meetings for 2012/13 and Mr Verheyden proposed, Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that this be accepted.

12/07 Management of Land adjacent to 15 Branch End Terrace

It was noted that during 2011/12 Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council had continued to maintain this site, keeping the grass cut and the planting and shrubs cared for appropriately.

12/08 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd April, 2012

Mr Duncan proposed, Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 2nd April 2012.

12/09 Matters Arising

Patients' Forum – no response had been received to concerns raised with the Forum regarding the difficulty of making appointments with particular doctors. Mrs Martin reported that the Forum had not met for some

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time. It was agreed to write to the Surgery to ask what had happened to the Forum and if it was still meeting.

Speeding on A695 – It was reported that the police had been operating speed checks immediately to the east of Branch End.

Hedge on Welton Close – Mrs Dale advised that the County Council Enforcement Officer had suggested that the Parish Council should take over the maintenance of this hedge.

Scaur Steps – Mrs Dale advised that County Council staff are to clear the debris on the Scaur Steps.

12/10 Correspondence

Correspondence received since the meeting on 2nd April was listed on the agenda and was noted.

Ms Hunt drew attention to the e-mail regarding Empowering Town & Parish Councils – ending Government delays. She asked councillors to consider whether the Parish Council should comment on this and be prepared to make a recommendation to the June meeting.

12/13 Finance

Mr Woods advised that the new system for reporting on the finances had been implemented. He said that the Finance & General Purposes Group recommended accepting the accounts and approving the expenditure for April. The Clerk was requested to clarify the sum of £480 under the heading of Contingency and advise councillors accordingly. The Clerk is to list expenditure under Special Projects and Contingency in future months. Ms Hunt advised that in July and after every quarter the Finance & General Purposes Group would hold a meeting open to all councillors to view expenditure against budget.

12/14 Co-option of new Parish Councillors

Mrs Dale was asked to leave the meeting.

Ms Hunt advised that two applications had been received to fill the vacancies.

Mr Duncan proposed and Mr Verheyden seconded and it was agreed that Mr Christian Balmer be co-opted to the Parish Council.

Mr Duncan proposed and Mr Verheyden seconded and it was agreed that Mrs Anne Dale be co-opted to the Parish Council.

Both proposals were agreed and Mr Balmer and Mrs Dale were duly co-opted to the Parish Council.

Ms Hunt noted that this meant that after several months the Parish Council was up to full strength of 12 members and that this should mean that the workload of individual councillors should be reduced.

Mrs Dale was recalled to the meeting and advised of her co-option.

It was noted that councillors in all parishes in Northumberland were due to be re-elected in 2013.

12/15 Community Development

Olympic Torch Relay and Diamond Jubilee – The Clerk up-dated councillors on the plans for both these events.

Focus on Young People – Ms Hunt suggested that once membership of the new advisory groups had been finalised, the Children's & Young People's Facilities Group should study her recent report on young people and make recommendations as to future actions and policies.

The Urban Fun Day in the Easter holidays had been poorly attended.

Mr N Hooks had spoken to Lord Allendale who had agreed in principle to the siting of a skate ramp facility on the eastern sportsfield. However, Mr. C Catnach of the Cricket Club had recently suggested that he was not aware of the proposals. It was agreed that this needed to be clarified.

Rev P Revill (Baptist Minister) had circulated plans for a visit of young Norwegians in the summer and had asked if there were tasks that the group might undertake. Mrs Dale suggested that the Norwegians might be asked to talk to the children at Broomley School. It was also suggested that they might be asked to weed the flower beds around the perimeter of the station car park.

Neighbourhood Planning – Following the Annual Parish Meeting, the Clerk had circulated the handouts from the presentation given by County Council officer, David English. It was agreed to defer the debate on Neighbourhood Planning to the June meeting.

12/16 Advisory Groups & Representatives

a) Finance & General Purposes Group

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The report of the most recent meeting of the Group had been circulated. Mr Woods outlined the recommendations in the report.

Asset Transfer – Branch End Toilets – Mrs Dale suggested that by imposing restrictions the County Council was protecting the value of the property. It was noted that there was a strategic element to owning the toilet site. Mr Duncan suggested that the matter should be taken to a more senior level if the covenant is not reviewed. It was stressed that the transfer of this asset was of no benefit to the Parish Council if the restrictions remained in place. However, it was felt that all possible avenues should be explored in relation to the removal of the restrictive covenant, and it was therefore agreed **not** to endorse the recommendation on this topic.

Photocopier – Mr Duncan offered the Parish Council the use of the Social Regeneration Consultants' photocopier. He is to send the Clerk suggested costs and his generous offer will be considered along with other quotations by the Advisory Group.

Annual Parish Meeting - the report was noted.

Grant Aid – requests for grant aid had been received from Stocksfield Players and Carers Northumberland and recommendations will be made to the June meeting.

b) Transport & Highways Advisory Group

Parking at Guessburn – Another meeting had been held with residents who were largely in agreement with the proposals to improve the parking situation in Mount View Terrace. There will now be a formal consultation on the proposals. Signs are to be erected to prevent non-residents using the lane at the back of Mount View Terrace.

Parking at Branch End – residents had raised concerns about parking in general, access to Cross Street and parking outside the garage. For some reason the County Council apparently had no record of Brettonby Avenue having been adopted over 20 years ago. The record has now been up-dated to clarify that the road was adopted 20 years ago.. Concerns had also been raised with regard to vehicles pulling out of Cross Street. Mrs Dale stressed that not everyone's requirements can be met.

Review of Supported Bus Services – There is to be a meeting of parish councils in our neighbourhood to discuss this issue on 21st May. Mrs Dale said that the County Council is cutting back on supported bus services. She stressed the need for residents to use the bus services in order to ensure that they are kept. Mr Verheyden offered to travel on the bus to try to gauge passengers' views.

Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – Mrs Dale and Mr Verheyden are to attend a meeting on 22nd May which will consider station adoption.

Use of Taxis – Mrs Martin had been in correspondence with County Council officers with regard to use of taxis. Mrs Martin is to find out more about what is on offer and the matter will be debated further in June.

Road markings outside Broomley School - Mr Verheyden advised that the proposed changes to the "zig-zags" outside the school are in order to bring the markings in line with current regulations.

c) Planning Advisory Group

Merryshields Quarry – the response to the latest consultation had been included in papers for the meeting. It was noted that SITA was not expecting to re-open the quarry imminently. There is a need, however, to monitor the situation. It was suggested that the Environment & Footpaths Advisory Group should consider the suggestion that a nature reserve be developed at Merryshields and make recommendations to the Parish Council.

Tree Preservation Orders – the regulations had changed and the Clerk is to circulate the changes. The County Council is to be asked for guidance on the new regulations.

d) Play Facilities Advisory Group

Branch End Play Area – it was noted that the wetpour surface was damaged.

Mrs Dale is setting up a group to look at the replacement of the Twist.

Kate's Plain Play Area – new seats have been ordered for the toddler swings.

A comment was made about providing exercise equipment for adults at the play areas. It was pointed out that at present at least some funding bodies would not grant aid the provision of such equipment.

e) Footpaths, Gardens & Environment Advisory Group

Attracting Pollinators – Mr Verheyden is conducting a trial and has seedlings ready to plant.

Rights of Way Group - The Minutes of the most recent meeting had been circulated and were noted. It is

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hoped that a new footpaths leaflet will be produced this year with all the routes starting at the Dr Syntax at New Ridley.

A letter of appreciation is to be sent to Tim Fish, County Council Footpaths Officer, thanking him for the work done on the burnside footpath. As a bonus it was noted that the willow whips can be used for weaving and Broomley School is keen to take advantage of this.

[Suspension of Standing Orders – Mrs Martin proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that Standing Orders should be suspended and the meeting should continue until 10 p.m.]

f) Sports Facilities Advisory Group

The Minutes of the most recent meeting of the group had been circulated and it was noted that the provision of the additional car parking spaces and the skate ramp would be combined as one project.

It was noted that Broomley School was now using the MUGA during the day.

The sportsfield users had responded positively to the suggestion that they fund raise towards the cost of providing additional car parking.

Girls Football and Rugby – one of the main obstacles to providing this is finding suitable coaches. Mr Phil Murray is to approach the Guides with a view to finding football coaches. The group was not so confident about finding rugby coaches but it was thought that a girls' rugby team was being started in Ovingham.

g) Communication

Issue 43 of NE43 News is now at the printers and will be distributed by the Scouts at the end of May.

12/17 Council Representatives

East Tynedale Parish Councils' Forum – It was stressed that we need to send a representative to the meetings of this group.

Northumberland County Council, West Area Committee

Mr Hall was thanked for producing excellent notes on the last meeting (17th April). The next meeting is on 15th May at Allendale.

12/18 Any Other Business

Mr Verheyden said that he had been approached by a resident who had asked if they did not use their household refuse bins but disposed of their waste themselves would they get a reduction in Council tax. The feeling of the meeting was that they would not.

12/19 Date of next meeting

11th June 7.30 p.m. Community Centre

The Chairman then asked the press to leave as the next item on the agenda was Confidential. After discussion of the confidential item, the meeting closed at 9.20pm.