

# BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

**Present:** Mr P Barrass, Mr R Berg Rust, Mrs A Dale (also present as a County Councillor),  
Mr P Duncan, Ms M Hunt, Mrs M Martin, Mr M Parker, Mr K Woods  
Mrs M Williams, Clerk  
Mrs G Brown, Hexham Courant  
Mr & Mrs F Harris

**Apologies:** Mr C Balmer Mr J Davison, Mr I Hall, Mr Verheyden

### 12/51 Declarations of Interest

Mr Duncan declared an interest in the Branch End Toilets.

Mr Woods declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Branch End Toilets.

Mr Balmer's interest in the garage at Branch End was queried. It seemed that this was a potential business interest.

### 12/52 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012

Mrs Dale proposed, Mr Parker seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes, excluding the confidential item on the "Pink" sheet, be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

### 12/53 Matters Arising

It was agreed to defer the discussion on the Patients' Forum until November.

It was noted that the hedge at Hall Farm Close had been cut.

### 12/54 Public Participation

#### *Signage to Wansbeck Hospital*

A resident had raised the question of signage on the A1 to Wansbeck Hospital in Ashington. County Councillor Mrs Dale advised that she had attended a meeting at which this topic had been discussed. She had asked the County Council to refer the issue to the Highways Agency. She said that the County Council wished to review the numbers of residents who need the signage. It was stressed that any sign on the A1 should say Wansbeck Hospital.

Mrs Martin proposed, Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that a letter be written to the County Council supporting the Council in pursuing additional signage on the A1 indicating the turn to Wansbeck Hospital.

#### *Proposal to build 55 "affordable homes" at New Ridley*

A number of Parish Councillors and many residents from New Ridley and the wider community had attended a pre-planning event at Stocksfield Golf Club at which representatives of the consultants, Fairhurst, the developers, Esh Group, and Two Castles Housing Association explained to attendees the proposals for a development in New Ridley. Details of the scheme had been circulated to parish councillors.

During the discussion the following points and suggestions were made:

- Currently there are approximately 60 houses in New Ridley. The proposed 55 new homes will double the size of New Ridley. It was agreed that New Ridley is not a "sustainable" community having no shops or other facilities apart from a pub.
- There are traffic and parking issues. Currently there are only two buses a week serving New Ridley – one on Tuesdays and an ADAPT service on Fridays. The proposals could mean that there was an increase in the number of cars using New Ridley Road of up to 100.
- No planning application has been submitted to date. A planning application is expected to be submitted in October/November. The Parish Council can make no comments until a planning application is submitted. The proposals could be speculative.
- Mrs Dale had spoken to a lot of residents in New Ridley and felt that there was no support for the development.
- There are issues with developments of this type in relation to the Northumberland Core Strategy which is

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currently being consulted upon. Ms Hunt is to attend a workshop being organised by the County Council on the Core Strategy.

- Under the Core Strategy the Parish of Broomley & Stocksfield has four settlements:
  - Stocksfield (which includes Branch End, Painshawfield Estate and Guessburn)
  - Hindley
  - Broomley
  - New Ridley
- Stocksfield is currently in the Tier 3 category.
- The proposed development is in the Green Belt. In its response to the consultation on the Core Strategy, the Parish Council supported the retention of the Green Belt.
- The current Parish Plan notes that 80% of residents of the parish are opposed to new housing development on Green Belt sites. If the development were to go ahead it could “open the floodgates” for the development of other sites. For example, any suggestion to develop the site opposite Broomley School would be a “disaster”.
- The proposal does not fit with the County's strategy or with the National strategy. It also does not fit with Broomley & Stocksfield's Housing Needs.
- Mr Duncan said, and it was agreed, that Stocksfield is not opposed to affordable homes per se, but the location and scale of the development is crucial. He pointed out that SCATA is currently proposing to develop a much smaller number of affordable dwellings on Brown Field sites.
- Some doubt was expressed about the plan to develop the site in two phases, although it was noted that Esh Group say they have the ability to develop the whole site. Mr Duncan felt that phase 2 may not go ahead.
- It was agreed to ask the developers if the plans could be put on the Stocksfield.org website.
- It was generally felt that the proposal is opportunistic and ill-judged by the developer.

Ms Hunt re-iterated

that there had been no planning application submitted for the development;  
that the Parish Council could make no comment until an application for planning permission had been submitted.

She confirmed that the general view of the meeting was that the Parish Council opposed in principle the proposal for a development of 55 affordable homes in New Ridley.

## **12/55 Resignation of Alan Verheyden**

Mr Verheyden had resigned from the Parish Council, citing musical and family commitments. The Clerk reported that she had consulted the County Council Democratic Services who had advised that the May 2013 elections were too far ahead so it was necessary to start the process of seeking another parish councillor immediately. The Clerk is to set the process in motion. Councillors were asked to advise the Clerk of any residents who might be willing to serve on the Parish Council. It was hoped that Mr Verheyden will be able to carry on with the wild flower project.

## **12/56 Correspondence**

Correspondence received since the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> September was listed on the Agenda and was noted.

## **12/57 Finance**

In Mr Woods' absence, Ms Hunt had examined the accounts for September and recommended the approval of the September expenditure. Mr Woods proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for September be approved.

Ms Hunt reminded members that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group would be on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and would be open to all councillors from 7.30pm.

## **12/58 Community Development**

*Parish Plan Review* – Councillors were reminded that the Parish Plan would be reviewed at the November meeting and Advisory Group convenors were asked to submit reports and recommendations prior to the meeting.

*Branch End Toilet Site* – A copy of SCAN Extra relating to this site was tabled. The informal pre-planning meeting held at the Baptist Church on 24<sup>th</sup> September was discussed. The concerns raised at the meeting

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were noted, viz;

- Traffic congestion at Branch End.
- How new tenants would be selected – it was suggested that those with connections to Stocksfield would be considered in the first instance.
- There are queries about the possible financial benefit to the Parish Council.
- There are queries about the issue of providing a replacement public toilet.
- It was agreed that it would be costly to re-instate and maintain the public toilets.
- Other types of public toilets are to be investigated.
- There was a query about whether the house would remain in community ownership in perpetuity – it was thought to be unlikely that it would ever be sold to a tenant, although it was not possible to predict what may happen many years hence under a different Government.
- There is a problem of access to the site – ISOS are reported to have consulted the County Council's Highways department.
- There is a possibility of reviewing the positioning of the house on the toilet site so that it is more in keeping with neighbouring houses. SCATA are talking to the Quakers about potential use of some of their land.
- It was suggested that pre-planning discussions had not been held with the Planning Authority.
- There will be formal pre-planning discussions with residents.

Other points

- There is a need to get both the Guessburn and Branch End projects on track quickly in order to assure the funding of the projects.
- The comments of the residents were useful, informative and valid.
- SCATA had received one letter and the Parish Council two from residents expressing concerns. These concerns were covered above.
- Mr Woods raised concerns about the minutes referring to the resolution agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. In his view, the minutes were not an accurate record, as they did not clarify that the proposal was the preferred option of the Parish Council and not a final decision. His view was not endorsed by others who had been present at the meeting. Mr Woods' comment was therefore noted and it was agreed to move on.

## *Parish Council Elections 2013*

The next parish council elections will be held in May 2013. It was noted that it had been many years since an election had been held in Broomley & Stocksfield. Councillors were asked to consider how residents might be encouraged to stand for the parish council.

## **12/59 Advisory Groups & Council Representatives**

*Appointment of Convenor to Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group* – there were no volunteers. It was suggested that an appeal might be made to eligible members of the Rights of Way Group to put themselves forward as a parish councillor and a possible Footpaths & Advisory Group Convenor.

*Appointment of additional member to the Transport & Highways Advisory Group* – it was felt that three members of this group was an adequate number. However, Mr Berg Rust agreed to act as the "A695 Champion" to join the Group when appropriate. He suggested that heavy traffic on the A695 could be heard through triple glazed windows ¼ mile from the road. Mrs Dale advised that an A695 Working Group had been set up comprising Head Teachers from Broomley and Mickley First Schools and County, Parish and Town Councillors. Mr Berg Rust volunteered to represent Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council on this group.

*Appointment to the Tyne Valley Rail Users' Group and the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership* – Mr Parker agreed to represent the Parish Council on both of these bodies.

*Appointment of Representative to Whittonstall Action Group* – The Clerk was requested to find out the dates of the meetings. Ms Hunt offered to attend if it were possible for her to do so. Councillors were advised that there had been an item about Opencasting on the BBC Countryfile programme on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

## **a) Consultations**

*DCLG – Renegotiation of Section 106 Planning Obligations* – Ms Hunt offered to write a response to this consultation. It was agreed that in principle Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council was in favour of retaining the Section 106 Planning Obligations.

*Northumberland County Council – No Waiting Restrictions at Branch End* – no comment.

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Northumberland County Council – Northumberland Special Schools & Special Units Consultation – Mr. Woods offered to look at this consultation and draft a response.

Localising Support for Council Tax – a response had been tabled and was agreed.

**[Suspension of Standing Orders – Mrs Dale proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that Standing Orders should be suspended and the meeting should continue until 10.00 p.m.]**

## **b) Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group**

The notes of the most recent meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group had been circulated and were noted. The position regarding the grant to Stocksfield Community Association had been clarified and was noted.

It was agreed to accept the following recommendations:

*Insurance:* to endorse the renewal of the policy.

*Play Area Funds* - To hold the sum of £1546 from the bank account of the former Kate's Plain Regeneration Group, with a view to transferring the full amount to the proposed Play Area Regeneration Group once it is established and has a bank account. To note the points made on Branch End Community Garden funds.

*Grass Cutting* - the recommendation was noted and it was agreed that the Clerk would request time sheets before any further comment was made to the County Council.

Other recommendations in the report were noted and approved.

**Code of Conduct** – The relevant papers had been circulated to Councillors and Ms Hunt outlined the reasons for the need to adopt a revised Code of Conduct.

Mr Duncan proposed, Mr Berg Rust seconded and it was agreed to accept the revised Code of Conduct as tabled.

Ms Hunt asked that Councillors return the Statutory Register of Members Interests to the Clerk by 20<sup>th</sup> October.

*Remembrance Sunday* – the Clerk advised that arrangements were in hand.

## **c) Transport & Highways Advisory Group**

The Transport & Highways Advisory Group report was tabled. The report was noted and the recommendations were agreed.

*Stocksfield Use of Taxis:* Mrs Martin outlined the background to this topic and advised that she had passed the information to Mrs Dale. It was not thought that the project, as described, was appropriate to our parish. The issue is to be reviewed under the Parish Plan Review.

Mrs Dale and Mr Parker are to attend the Prudhoe Transport Working Group meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

*Flooding on New Ridley Road* – the comments of the County solicitor were noted. Mrs Dale and the Clerk are to draw up a response.

*Buses* – the no. 613 service is to continue as costs are under the subsidy review level.

**d) Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group** – the Group had not met recently.

## **e) Planning Advisory Group**

The Planning Report had been circulated and was noted.

*2 Apperley Road* – A report in a recent edition of the Hexham Courant suggested that Retrospective Planning Approval had been given for the erection of a Tree House on this site.

*Hoods Close Opencast* – it has been suggested that the planning application for this project will be considered by Northumberland County Council in February 2013.

## **f) Sports Facilities Advisory Group**

Reports on the proceedings of recent meetings of the Group had been circulated.

A claim against the Parish Council for an injury allegedly sustained at a Tynedale Ladies Football match on 18<sup>th</sup> March is to be passed to the Parish Council insurers.

Mr Duncan reported that the Stocksfield Multi Use Games Area Group had offered to give £1000 towards the

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cost of the new Sportsfield Car Park.

**g) Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group .**

In view of Mr Verheyden's resignation, no report had been received from this group.

*Fish Pass at the Lower Ford* – A report on this project had been circulated.

It was noted that following the heavy rain at the end of September, the repairs carried out on the Stocksfield Burn had not been adversely affected by the increased flow of the burn.

**h) Communications Advisory Group**

A schedule for the publication of the next issue of NE43 News had been circulated and was noted.

**12/60 Council Representatives**

The next meeting of the East Tynedale Parish Councils' Forum would be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

Mr Hall is to attend the Joint Meeting of the West Area Committee of the County Council and the Parish Councils on 9<sup>th</sup> October in Hexham.

Mrs Dale as both a County Councillor and a Parish Councillor will attend the next meeting of the West Area Committee of the County Council at Prudhoe on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

Ms Hunt and Mrs Dale will attend the meeting with the County Council Executive and Parish Councils in Prudhoe on 25<sup>th</sup> October.

**12/61 Any Other Business – None**

**12/61 Date of next meeting**

5<sup>th</sup> November 2012

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.