

BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 5th November 2012 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

Present: Mr C Balmer, Mr P Barrass, Mrs A Dale (also present as a County Councillor), Mr J Davison, Mr P Duncan, Mr I Hall, Ms M Hunt, Mrs M Martin, Mr M Parker, Mr K Woods
Mrs M Williams, Clerk

Apologies: Mr R Berg Rust

12/62 Declarations of Interest

Mrs Dale declared an interest as Governor of Broomley County First School.

12/63 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st October 2012

Mr Duncan proposed, Mr Woods seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 1st October.

12/64 Matters Arising

Patients' Forum – It was reported that the Patients' Forum had not met recently. Mr Hall was asked to raise the following points at the next meeting:

- The difficulty of getting appointments
- To clarify the relationship between the Patients' Forum and the Patient Referral Group
- To clarify how the Parish Council refers concerns and issues to the Surgery

Signage to Wansbeck Hospital – a response to the Parish Council's query on this matter had been received from the County Council's Highways department. It was agreed that as Northumberland LINK were pursuing the issue, there was no need to take further action at this time.

12/65 Public Participation

Mr Hall raised the issue of the difficulties faced by passengers catching the No 10 bus at the eastbound stop at Birches Nook. He alleged that because of the number of cars parked in the layby at this bus stop, the bus drivers were unable to see potential passengers and did not stop. County Councillor Mrs Dale offered to take this matter up with the County Council and the Police and to request that those parking in the bus stop be warned and fined.

Parking Enforcement Officers are also to be asked to look at the problems of parking outside the Sportsfield at peak times.

The question was also raised of passengers not being able to see the approaching bus, and drivers not being able to see potential passengers who are seated in the bus shelters at the two bus stops at the Station. Go North East are to be contacted with a request that all buses stop automatically at these stops.

12/66 Co-option of New Parish Councillor

No response had been received to date.

12/67 Correspondence

Correspondence received since the meeting of 1st October was listed on the Agenda and was noted.

12/68 Finance

Mr Woods and Ms Hunt had examined the accounts for October and recommended the approval of the October expenditure. Mr Barrass proposed and Mr Hall seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for October be approved.

Additional cheques were approved as follows:

NBT – stationery –	£316.95
Wylam Nurseries – Winter Bedding	£66.52

2013/14 Precept/Budget

The Clerk had circulated initial figures for consideration when setting the budget/precept for 2013/14. The following points were made:

- Sportsfield Car Park - the question of business rates needs to be considered, in terms of whether these will apply and what the cost will be
- Grants budget - a range of views was expressed and the Chairman advised that these would be taken into account when the F&GP Advisory Group discussed the issue later in the month

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The F&GP Advisory Group will look closely at the figures and come up with a proposal for consideration at the December meeting of the Parish Council and final approval at the January 2013 meeting.

12/69 Community Development

Parish Plan Review – The Parish Council’s Advisory Groups had considered the Parish Plan of 2009 and their recommendations had been summarised in the accompanying papers or, in the case of the Children & Young People’s Facilities Advisory Group, tabled at the meeting. Nothing had been received from the Rights of Way & Environment Group. Following the discussion, Ms Hunt offered to draw up a revised and updated Action Plan, based on each Advisory Group’s proposals, for presentation to a future meeting of the Council. A brief summary of the Action Plan would also be published in the Spring 2013 edition of NE43 News.

The Children & Young People’s Facilities Advisory Group had made the following proposals:

- That, further to a successful outcome of the current trial project with Northumberland Clubs for Young People (NYCP), they be contracted to continue the work, at a cost of £4000 p.a.
- That a seat be provided at Branch End Play Area at a cost of c£500.
- That consideration be given to providing a flat multi-purpose area at Branch End Play Area
- That equipment suitable for adults be installed at Branch End Play Area

It was agreed that the current trial project being run by NYCP needed to be closely monitored. It was also noted that West Northumberland Youth Service is now running a bus for outreach work in the villages.

It was stressed that the Parish Council’s Advisory Groups need to “take ownership” of their areas of responsibility in the Parish Plan.

Development Trust/SCATA – Mr Duncan drew members’ attention to the Leader article in the Hexham Courant of 10th October. He advised that a pre-planning event will take place at Broomley County First School on 12th November to provide residents with an opportunity to find out more about the proposals for Guessburn and the Branch End Toilet Site. He went to say that SCATA had had a technical meeting with the architects about the Branch End Toilet site and the proposal has been revised to provide a two-bedroom bungalow (rather than a house) on the site. The building would be designed to align with the houses at Hillside Villas. The revised proposal does not resolve the problem of access onto New Ridley Road.

It was reported that the Homes & Communities Agency had taken an interest in the Burnside site and were considering the possibility of developing “Custom Build” housing on the site.

12/70 Advisory Groups & Council Representatives

a) Consultations

Mr Woods had drawn up a response to the County Council’s consultation on Northumberland Special Schools and Special Units. Mrs Dale proposed and Mr Hall seconded and it was agreed that this be adopted as the Parish Council’s response. Mr Woods was thanked for drawing this up.

A letter had been received from the Northumberland & Newcastle Society requesting support for their response to the County Council’s Core Strategy proposals regarding Wind Energy. Mr Hall is to consider a response.

Rural Services Network had forwarded information regarding a Government Consultation on the reform of the bus subsidy system. Mrs Dale offered to consider a response.

[Suspension of Standing Orders – Mr Hall 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.

Asset Transfer – Because a portion of Branch End Play Area actually belongs to BT and is only licensed to the Parish Council, County Council officers have advised that the area as a whole cannot be transferred into ownership by the Parish Council. Instead, they have suggested that a better option is for the Parish Council to take out a 99 year lease on the site. Once the process for this has begun, the Parish Council will be able to register the play area with Fields in Trust. Ms Hunt proposed and Mr Barras seconded and it was agreed that a 99 year lease should be taken out on Branch End Play Area. Mrs Dale was thanked for her input on this matter.

With reference to Branch End toilets, it has transpired that the proposal to build a house on the site means that a different system of transfer will have to be put in place. A meeting with Melissa Kidd of the County Council is to be arranged in order to progress this matter.

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Community Garden Funds – it was proposed by Mr Hall, seconded by Mrs Dale and agreed that these monies be used to set up a “Play Area Regeneration Fund”.

Accounts Package – Mr Barrass is to look at the “BOSS” accounts package with a view to making a recommendation as to its possible use from April 2013.

2013 Elections – The F&GP Advisory Group had discussed this issue and recommended that the Parish Council note the estimated cost of £1000 for the May 2013 election, an amount which had already been earmarked for the purpose. The Group had also recommended that the Parish Council endorse the view that the production of an additional election edition of NE43 News is not required. These recommendations were accepted.

Merryshields playing fields – trees – An estimate had been received from Allendale Estates for the cost of felling/pruning trees at the boundary of the eastern sports field. The amount is to be queried and two further quotes obtained.

Grants – It was agreed that more information was required before a decision could be reached on the level of grants to be made to Stocksfield Football Club and Tyne Valley Youth Theatre in 2013/14.

Grass Cutting – It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the County Council and advise them that, in view of the fact that the number of times the general grass cutting had been carried out was well below that expected under the Parish Council’s contract for this service, and because of the poor general quality of the service, the Parish Council would pay only £934 for the contract, rather than the full amount. The point was made that the County Council should have contacted the Parish Council to advise that they were unable to fulfil the contract.

It was also agreed to endorse the recommendation that the Parish Council should not take steps to carry out grass cutting “in-house” from April 2014.

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

b) Transport & Highways Advisory Group

Village Gateways – In her role as both a County and a Parish Councillor, Mrs Dale has consulted with a resident of New Ridley on this topic. It was thought that the cost to the Parish Council would be in the region of £300 plus installation costs.

County Councillor Mrs Dale is also looking into the provision of 30 mph signs in Broomley Village.

Double Decker buses on the Ten Route – it was suggested that these would provide more priority seating downstairs. The Ten Service will revert to a two an hour service in the New Year.

Speed Gun – County Councillor Mrs Dale advised that local County Councillors have provided funds for the police to purchase and operate a new generation speed gun. At present police officers are being trained in its use.

Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – Mr Parker had attended the AGM of this Group and reported on the proceedings of the meeting. He highlighted the following points:

- The Kiosk at Hexham Station is being manned by students of Dilston College. The College keeps a proportion of the profits of the operation.
- The Friends of Stocksfield Station needs to be established as a constituted body. There is a need for discussions with the Rights of Way Group as to how this project should progress.
- Disability Access at Stocksfield Station had been raised at the meeting.

c) Children & Young People’s Facilities Advisory Group

Mr Balmer tabled a report from the Group. The recommendations were noted and Mrs Dale proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that they be endorsed.

e) Planning Advisory Group

Mr Hall was supported in his general view that the opinions of the Parish Council were not being taken into account when officers and County Councillors were making decisions on planning applications. County Councillor Mrs Dale suggested that if the Parish Council was not invited to make representations to the Planning Committee then it should make a complaint. It was felt that the Parish Council needed to ensure that it was more in control of planning issues. The importance of the Planning Advisory Group ensuring that its views were made known to the County Council was emphasised..

New Ridley Development – It was reported that to date no plans for this development had been submitted.

It was agreed that Mrs Dale and Mr Duncan would draw up a brief article for NE43 News on the Parish

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Council's general views on Green Belt development, based on the response made to the County Council's consultation on the Core Strategy.

NCC Core Strategy – Ms Hunt had attended a workshop on this topic and reported that the Power Point Presentation was available from the Clerk. She advised that at least half of the responses to the Core Strategy consultation had been from developers.

Hoods close Surface Mine – The next dates for the Whittonstall Action Group meetings are:

7 th November	Mr Hall volunteered to attend
20 th November	Mr Hall volunteered to attend
4 th December	Mr Duncan volunteered to attend

f) Sports Facilities Advisory Group

The Clerk advised that she had now received all the necessary information to enable her to advise the insurance company about the outstanding issues relating to the claim against the Parish Council.

g) Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group

The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Rights of Way Group had been circulated. Concerns had been raised by the Group about the relationship between the Group and the Parish Council. It was acknowledged that in recent months this had been difficult and was currently made more so as no Parish Councillor had felt able to volunteer as convenor of the Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group and the Parish Council was therefore not represented on the Rights of Way Group. It was felt that if the Group should act without the Parish Council's input then there might be a problem with insurance. Any work proposed by the Group needs to have the support of the Parish Council.

h) Communications Advisory Group

The Group is to meet next week to discuss the next issue of NE43 News. The Group is to look at ways of generating an income from NE43 News and also the website.

12/71 Council Representatives

Mr Hall had attended the Joint Meeting of the West Area Committee of the County Council and the Parish Councils on 9th October in Hexham and his report had been circulated.

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 in Prudhoe on 13th November. Mr Hall volunteered to attend until 8.00pm.

Ms Hunt and Mrs Dale had attended the meeting with the County Council Executive and Parish Councils in Prudhoe on 25th October. Only representatives from Prudhoe Town Council and Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council attended this meeting and Ms Hunt suggested that in future the Parish Council should attend similar meetings arranged for the East Tynedale Forum as it was felt that these might be of more relevance to our parish.

12/72 Any Other Business – None.

12/73 Date of next meeting

3rd December 2012

7th January 2013

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.