

BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 3rd December 2012 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

Present: Mr P Barrass, Mr R Berg Rust, 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 K Woods
Mrs M Williams, Clerk
Mrs G Brown, Hexham Courant

Apologies: Mr C Balmer, Mr M Parker

12/74 Declarations of Interest

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

12/75 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th November 2012

Mr Duncan proposed, Mr Hall seconded and it was agreed that, with the inclusion of the agreed amendments, the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 5th November 2012.

12/76 Matters Arising

Patients' Forum – The Forum met recently but no representatives from the Parish Council had been able to attend the meeting.

Station Bus Stops – a letter had been received from Go Ahead North East in response to our letter regarding buses not stopping at the bus stops. Go Ahead had agreed to make these both compulsory stops, and are to be thanked for their encouraging response. The possibility of providing mirrors in both bus stops was discussed. It was however felt that mirrors could be a target for vandalism and it was agreed to monitor the situation for three months before taking any further action.

Asset Transfer – A meeting has been arranged on 4th December with County Council officers and representatives from the Parish Council (Ms Hunt, Mr Woods, Mrs Dale and Mrs Williams) to discuss the transfer of the former public toilets at Branch End to the Parish Council. The new lease for Branch End Play Area had now been received from the solicitor and it was agreed that Ms Hunt, Mr Woods and Mrs Williams should meet with the solicitor to discuss the implications of the lease.

Grass Cutting – A letter had been sent to the County Council stating that the Parish Council was only willing to pay for the work actually carried out under the contract.

Planning – Concerns had been raised over the apparent lack of acknowledgement by the County Council of the Parish Council's comments on planning applications.

Bus Subsidy Consultation – Mrs Dale had drawn up a response on behalf of the Parish Council and this had been submitted.

12/77 Public Participation

Planning – As a County Councillor, Mrs Dale advised that it had been proposed that at future meetings of the County Planning Committee, ward councillors and parish councillors would share a five minute slot to make comments on individual applications. She was concerned about the democratic principles of this ruling. Councillors raised concern that this time scale appeared to apply to all planning applications, regardless of their complexity, and reiterated their perception of the apparent lack of respect for the views of Parish Councils.

Mrs Dale was asked to recommend to a forthcoming meeting of the full County Council that the views of Parish Councils be sought on the proposal.

B6309 from Whittonstall to Apperley Dene – it was reported that on 28th November this road had been "treacherous". Mrs Dale advised that there was a drainage problem at Kipperlynn which had resulted in water running across the road. She advised that this problem will be fixed. A crossroads sign at Apperley Dene was missing. Mrs Dale advised that a replacement had been ordered in January 2012. Councillors were concerned that this dangerous crossroads was currently not signed adequately.

12/78 Co-option of New Parish Councillor

No response had been received to date. Ms Hunt issued a further plea for councillors to encourage residents to volunteer.

12/79 Correspondence

Correspondence received since the meeting of 5th November was listed on the Agenda and was noted.

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Ms Hunt highlighted the recent edition of CAN E-News which carried an article on Superfast Broadband. She asked councillors to encourage businesses and individuals to register and it was agreed that the Parish Council would register its interest.

(Mr Barrass had to leave the meeting)

12/80 Finance

Mr Woods and Ms Hunt had examined the accounts for November and recommended the approval of the November expenditure. Mrs Dale proposed and Mr Woods seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for November be approved.

Additional cheques were approved as follows:

2B Graphics	NE43 News	£558
Turnock	Xmas Lights – cable and bulbs	£656.22
SLCC	Annual subscription	£145
Martini Entertainment	Sound system on Remembrance Day	£120

Internal Auditor's Report – this had been received and there were no actions to be taken. The report had been positive and the Clerk was thanked for keeping the accounts in good order.

12/81 2013/14 Precept/Budget

Various communications had been received from the County Council and Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) regarding the Government's proposals on Localising Council Tax support which had given rise to uncertainty about the funding for Parish Councils. Concern was expressed at the lateness of this information and the fact that no costings had been received from the County Council. After some discussion it was agreed that the budget/precept should be set using available information. It was noted that the return to the County Council had to be made by 22nd January 2013.

A summary of the proposed budget and precept for 2013/14 had been circulated. Mr Woods outlined the thinking behind these figures and advised that the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group recommended a 5% increase on the 2012/13 precept/budget. It was noted that the Parish Council will need to approve the Precept at its meeting on 7th January 2013. It was asked what difference a 5% increase would make on the Band D Council Tax bill. It was also asked when the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group would be making recommendations on the level of grant funding for the next financial year.

(Mr Barrass returned to the meeting)

12/82 Parish Plan Review

Ms Hunt advised that she hoped to have completed the compilation of the Parish Plan Review Report if not by the January meeting, then by the February meeting of the Parish Council.

12/83 Community Development

Mr Duncan reported on the attendance and feedback received at the recent pre-planning events for the proposed affordable homes at Guessburn and Branch End. He advised that

- 63 people attended the drop-ins at Broomley County First School and Stocksfield Community Centre from November 12th to 14th.
- From the 39 questionnaires completed during the events:
 - 83% agreed that there was a shortage of affordable homes in the village; 17% were not sure
 - 100% agreed that any new homes in the village should be built on brownfield rather than greenfield or green belt sites
 - 92% supported the idea of a community owned organisation taking the lead in providing affordable homes in the village
 - 74% agreed with the specific Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA) proposal for the two sites in the village, 21% were not sure and 5% did not agree

A small number of people was concerned about traffic, parking and environmental issues, and SCATA will now do their best to address these with Isos Housing and the architects before submitting a planning application in early 2013.

12/84 Advisory Groups & Council Representatives

a) **Consultations** – The outstanding items were highlighted and Mr Hall was asked to draw up responses.

b) Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group

Mr Woods outlined the proceedings of the most recent meeting of the Group and the Council was asked to approve the following recommendations and to note the comments in the report.

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Risk Assessment Mr Barrass proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed to adopt the revised version of the Risk Assessment and Management form which had been circulated with the meeting papers.

Grants

St Peter's PCC Mr Berg Rust proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed to make a grant of £150 to St Peter's Parochial Church Council (PCC) towards the cost of creating an area in St Peter's churchyard dedicated to the deposition of cremated remains.

Great North Air Ambulance/Northumberland Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) Mr Barrass proposed and Mr Hall seconded and it was agreed to make a grant of £100 for the Great North Air Ambulance and £100 for Northumberland CAB.

Parish Office Photocopier Mr Barrass proposed and Mr Woods seconded and it was agreed to approve the leasing of a new photocopier for the Parish Office.

Christmas Tree Lights Approval was given in retrospect for the purchase of lights for the tree at Broomley County First School.

c) Transport & Highways Advisory Group

Mrs Dale advised that a letter had been received from Mr Verheyden regarding the Friends of Stocksfield Station. An application has been made to the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACORP) for funding for the planting in the car park.

VACS signs are to be provided at West Mickley and Branch End through Mrs Dale's County Council funds.

The A695 group has put forward proposals and will meet again in February 2013. The police are aware of where the main problems are with regard to speeding.

Concerns were raised over the level of gritting on the A695, New Ridley Road and the B6309. Mrs Dale offered to check with the County Council which routes had been gritted. She asked councillors to advise her of any problems.

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

d) Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group

Mrs Dale advised that she had a pro forma constitution which could be used in establishing a Play Areas Regeneration Group.

It was reported that the Advisory Group had met with one of the detached youth workers from Northumberland Clubs for Young People who is currently working in Stocksfield, and had been impressed with her. She is meeting with around 12 young people on a weekly basis, and has also arranged to meet other local youth workers, including the Baptist Church's youth worker. She talked about establishing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme in Stocksfield, and has been working with the young people on a Key Fund application. She had agreed to up-date the Advisory Group in 2/3 months.

Mrs Dale confirmed that young people will be part of any play area regeneration group.

Play Area Inspections – the manufacturer had responded to the concerns raised by the RoSPA inspector over the "Galaxy" at Branch End Play Area.

e) Planning Advisory Group

The Planning Report had been circulated. The Group's comments were noted and endorsed

Mole Cottage – the Group's comments were noted and endorsed. Three residents had objected to the proposal. There were concerns regarding the term "affordable housing" cited in this report. It was stressed that this term had a specific technical meaning and did not refer to inexpensive housing sold on the open market. It was also noted that the site is in the Green Belt. Residents of Winston Way are concerned about drainage.

Other Planning Matters

New Ridley Development – it was reported that suggestions had been made to the effect that the developers had reduced the number of houses for this proposed development from 52 to 22 and that only Phase 1 would be built. It was noted that a planning application had not yet been submitted.

It was reported that the Government's new planning minister had said that he wants building to be allowed on 3% more of the country but that this should not be on Green Belt. It was felt that the Green Belt issue is

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most important.

Hoodsclouse Opencast – Whittonstall Action Group - the report of the most recent meetings of the group had been circulated. Mr Duncan volunteered to attend their meeting on 4th December and Mr Hall to attend the meeting on 11th December.

Sportsfield Car Park – the planning application had been received.

f) Sports Facilities Advisory Group

Sportsfield Car Park – Five tenders had been received with the quoted prices varying between £16500 and £60000. It is hoped that the work will start in the spring.

Mr Duncan is to convene a meeting to discuss fund raising.

Accident Claim – a report had been received from the match referee which indicated that he was unaware of any problems. All the information has now been passed to the Parish Council's insurance company.

Football Pitch Improvements – It was agreed to spend £1250 on the pitch improvements. However, it was stressed that it would be necessary to identify the work which needed to be done, and who would do it. It was agreed that the Finance and General Purposes Advisory Group would discuss how the funds should be made available at its next meeting.

It was also agreed that there was a need to review the agreements between the Parish Council and the various sportsfields users.

It was noted that moles were on the increase.

It was suggested that an article should be included in the next issue of NE43 News highlighting the success of the partnership working between the parish council and the users of the sportsfields and promoting the development of girls'/ladies' sports teams.

g) Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group

Mr Verheyden's report on the Attracting Pollinators project was noted.

It was reported that the new fish ladder at the lower ford had suffered some damage during the recent high water flows.

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.

12/85 Council Representatives

East Tynedale Forum – Mr Hall volunteered to attend the next meeting on 8th January 2013 at Wylam.

NCC West Area Committee – Mrs Dale will attend the next meeting as a County Councillor.

12/86 Any Other Business

Mr Duncan advised that SCATA had received a start up grant of £5000 from the County Council.

There being no further business, Ms Hunt closed the meeting and wished everyone the compliments of the Season.

12/87 Date of next meeting

7th January 2013

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.