

# BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

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

**Apologies:** Mr C Balmer, Mr P Duncan, Mr I Hall

Ms Hunt opened the meeting by wishing all those present a very Happy New Year.

She then went on to pay tribute to Mr David Bell who had died on Christmas Eve. Mr Bell had lived in Stocksfield since 1949. He had been a parish councillor, a chair of the Parish Council, a District Councillor and chair of Tynedale District Council. He had been head teacher at Broomley School in the early 1960s and went on to be a lecturer in English and Child Development at Northumberland College of Higher Education.

### **12/88 Declarations of Interest**

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

### **12/89 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012**

Mr Barrass proposed, Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012.

### **12/90 Matters Arising**

*Patients Forum* – there had been no meeting recently of the Patients' Forum.

*Planning* – Mrs Dale confirmed that at meetings of the County Council Planning Committee Parish Council representatives and ward county councillors would have only a total of five minutes to speak on any one planning application.

*Involving Young People in Democracy* – Mrs Dale had attended this meeting which had been organised by the County Council. She advised that only two young people were present. She also said that she had made contact, at the meeting, with the youth worker from the Baptist Church in Stocksfield, who had suggested that the Church had land which might be suitable for a skate park of some kind. This is to be explored further.

### **12/91 Public Participation**

*Hedge Cutting* – an e-mail had been received from a resident raising concerns about the width of the pavements as a result of hedges not being cut back far enough. It was pointed out that articles in NE43 News on several occasions had urged residents to cut their hedges back to the original fence lines without any noticeable success. Mrs Dale suggested that if hedges encroach onto the highway then the County Council might be able to cut them back and then charge the owners. Mrs Dale also offered to look up the relevant statute that referred to hedge cutting.

*Collapse of B6309 North of Stocksfield Station* – Mrs Martin raised concerns about this. It was suggested that County Highways were aware of the situation and that it was being monitored.

### **12/92 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.

### **12/93 Correspondence**

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

### **12/94 Finance**

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

Additional cheques were approved as follows:

NBT - Stationery -	£87.18 (2 invoices)
Neetfleet – balance -	£198

*Expenditure against Budget* – The report was tabled and noted.

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## **12/95 2013/14 Precept/Budget**

Ms Hunt advised Councillors that the Precept for 2013/14 had to be agreed at this meeting.

She read the following extract from NALC E-News for December 2012

### ***Precepts and Declarations of Interest***

*Across the country, queries have arisen over whether all or most councillors have a DPI (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest), when they set the precept. This has arisen for one or two reasons:*

- 1. 'Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority' is a DPI. Therefore a councillor's home, if within the council's area, is a DPI. Council Tax liabilities are calculated on a formula which is based on a value ascribed to each residential property. Therefore, the precept has a link to every residential property, including a councillor's home, if this is within the council's area.*
- 2. The NCC model Code of Conduct requires a councillor not to participate in a decision which may affect his/her own finances (or those of a partner/spouse) if the matter is so significant that it might prejudice their judgement of the public interest.*

*There is no consensus over the force or validity of either or both of these arguments. However, local councils do now have the power to grant dispensations to those councillors who believe that they may be affected by this. We advised on the procedure in our November NALC e-newsletter. If any council or member requires further advice, they may wish to contact the Monitoring Officer at NCC.*

Following a discussion, and having considered these comments, Councillors agreed that it was their considered view that the proposed increase on the Precept is not significant enough to prejudice their decisions.

It was noted that new Government regulations mean that Band D of the Council Tax in Broomley and Stocksfield will increase by £1.45 this year. An increase of 5% on the precept will mean a total increase on Band D in 2013/14 of £4.70.

It was stressed that if a 5% increase is approved then the Council will be looking at reductions in expenditure under certain headings. These savings will then enable expenditure to be made for young people's development, a Housing Needs Survey and to cover the costs of an election in May.

Mr Davison proposed and Mrs Martin seconded and it was agreed unanimously by those present that the Precept for 2013/14 be increased by 5% on 2012/13 to £73500.

## **12/96 Parish Plan Review**

Ms Hunt advised that she hoped to have completed the compilation of the Parish Plan Review Report by the February meeting of the Parish Council.

## **12/97 Annual Parish Meeting**

It was proposed, and agreed that Ms Vera Baird, Police & Crime Commissioner, should be asked if she would be the Speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was suggested that she be requested to concentrate on Rural Policing.

## **12/98 Local Government Elections – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013**

Councillors were requested to advise the Clerk or the Chair if they intended to stand for election to the Parish Council in May. It was stressed that any indication that they gave now would not be binding.

## **12/99 Community Development**

Mr Woods advised that Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA) had not met recently but that the Group is continuing to work on the development of its partnership with Isos Housing.

## **12/100 Advisory Groups & Council Representatives**

**a) Consultations** – It was noted that the County Council Core Strategy will be sent out for further consultation in February. The Planning Advisory Group will be asked to draw up a response to this for approval at the March meeting of the Parish Council. The East Tynedale Parish and Town Councils Forum has arranged a meeting with County Council officers to discuss this issue on 11<sup>th</sup> February and Ms Hunt and Mrs Dale offered to represent the Parish Council on this occasion. It was agreed that it will be useful to discuss the proposals with the representatives of neighbouring councils. Mrs Dale is to suggest what questions need to be raised. She said that there were major differences between the needs of the urban and rural areas of the county.

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

Mr Woods outlined the proceedings of the most recent meeting of the Group, the notes for which had been circulated, and the Council was asked to approve the recommendations and to note the comments in the report. The comments were noted and the following recommendation approved:

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- That a grant of £100 be awarded to Tyne Valley Youth Theatre

It was noted that the lease agreement for the new photocopier had been made out to Stocksfield Community Association and that a revised lease was awaited.

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group will be held at 6.30 p.m. on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January in the Richardson Room of the Community Centre. This will be followed at 7.30 p.m. by an open meeting of the Group to which all councillors are invited.

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

*Speeding on the A695* – Mrs Dale advised that a meeting had been held with representatives of parishes along the A695 to consider this problem. She said that the police are to be provided with a new type of “speed gun” which will be used in these parishes. She felt that there was a need to write to bus and transport operators to advise them of this new “speed gun”. New VACS signs are to be installed at Branch End.

*B6309 through Hindley* – Mrs Dale advised that the County felt that there was insufficient weight of traffic on this stretch of road to warrant speed control measures.

*Road through Broomley* – The County Council is to install traffic counters. Consideration will also possibly be given to the installation of “gateways”.

*Double yellow lines* – Tynedale Gardens and New Ridley Road residents are currently being consulted. The consultation in the Branch End area is complete and the proposal needs to be agreed by the County Council.

*Prudhoe Transport Group* – Mr Parker tabled a report which was noted. The next meeting of the Group is on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

*Station Bus Stops* – It was reported that buses are now pulling into the stops to see if any passengers are waiting in the shelters.

*Bicycle Stands* – Mrs Dale reported on the possibility of bicycle stands being available for sites in the parish. It was suggested that the Sportsfield Car Park and Stocksfield Community Centre might be suitable sites.

*Station Adoption* – Mrs Dale suggested that Dr Malcolm Chainey had said there was an agreement. Clarification is to be sought.

*Road Accidents* – it was reported that there had been a road accident at Merryshields at the weekend, thought to be caused by speeding. It was noted that there had been an accident at Branch End on Boxing Day when several parked cars had been damaged. It was suggested that this had been the result of a driver's medical condition.

## **d) Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group**

*Branch End Play Area* – a quotation for £475 had been received to move the gate of the junior play area at Branch End Play area and it was agreed to go ahead with this work.

A meeting of the Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group needs to be arranged to make recommendations on outstanding issues.

## **e) Planning Advisory Group**

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

*Hoodsclose Opencast – Whittonstall Action Group* – there is to be a public meeting of the Group on 17<sup>th</sup> January at Snods Edge. Ms Hunt volunteered to attend on behalf of the Parish Council.,

*New Ridley Development* – it was reported that plans had been submitted to the County Council. To date the Parish Council had received no official notification of this. It was stressed that the biggest issue of this development proposal was its siting in the Green Belt. It was also noted that New Ridley is a tier 5 settlement. It was pointed out that other sites within the Parish could be the subject of future development proposals, including the field opposite Broomley School.

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

*The Group had not met recently.*

*Sportsfield Car Park* – The County Council's Highways department had given advice on the planning application.

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

The notes on the most recent meeting of the Rights of Way Group had been circulated and noted.

*Litter Bin at Fords* – it was agreed not to purchase a litter bin at this site.

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*Footpath to Eltringham* – The Public Enquiry is scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at the Spetchells Centre, Prudhoe. The claim covers land in both Prudhoe and Broomley & Stocksfield Parishes.

*Ash Tree at Guessburn* – Mr Woods is to bring this up at the next SCATA meeting.

## **h) Communications Advisory Group**

The report of the recent meeting of the group had been circulated.

*Generating income for the newsletter and website* – while it was agreed in principle that this was a good idea, it was pointed out that the Group needed to be mindful of the overall suitability of any sponsor. It was also felt that care should be taken ensure that there was no conflict of interest should an organisation of which a councillor is a member be a sponsor. The Group is to look at sponsorship criteria and guidelines and to consider value versus risk.

### *Parish Information Card*

The Information Card will need to be up-dated following the elections in May and it was agreed to do this. It was also agreed to raise some income by contacting those whose firm is listed and requesting a contribution.

*NE43 News Distribution* – it had been suggested that local young people be asked to distribute NE43 News in return for a contribution to their fundraising for a skatepark and other activities. It was felt that, largely because of the relatively small numbers of young people involved, this proposal would not work.

## **12/101 Council Representatives**

*East Tynedale Parish and Town Councils Forum* – Mr Hall volunteered to attend the next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at Wylam.

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

*“Puffing Billy” Festival, Wylam* – there is a meeting at Walbottle School on 16<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the celebrations of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the steam engine.

Other meetings were listed on the agenda.

## **12/102 Any Other Business**

*Tynedale Visitor* - The proposed entry for next year had been tabled and was agreed. The Communications Advisory Group is to look at it further.

## **12/103 Date of next meeting**

**4<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.