

# BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

**Present:** Mr C Balmer, 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 M Parker, Mr K Woods,  
Mrs M Williams, Clerk

**Also Present:** Ms A Cryer, Environmental & Maintenance Manager (West)  
Mr Leyton Rahman, Network Improvement Manager  
Mr S Rudman, Highways Asset Manager  
( all three of the above from Northumberland County Council)  
Mr J Landale, Land Factor, Allendale Estates  
Mr & Mrs R Blakeburn

**Apologies:** Mr P Barrass, Mr A Hinchcliffe, Chairman, Newton & Bywell Parish Council

Ms Hunt opened the meeting by welcoming those present.

**12/120 Declarations of Interest** - none

### **12/121 Closure of B6309 north of Stocksfield Station following a landslip**

Ms Hunt asked the County Council officers to bring members up-to-date on the situation.

The following points were made:

- Funding the repair is not an issue. The repair is included in the 2013/14 Local Transport Plan budget.
- The Stocksfield Burn has washed away a lot of material.
- The repairs will involve digging out the gas and water mains and also the electricity and telephone cables. It was not certain where the utilities are situated. The County Council officers are mobilising and working with all the relevant authorities and organisations.
- The County Council officers had spoken to the Environment Agency.
- The repairs will involve installing gabions to strengthen the river bank and reinforce the bed of the river. Officers are looking at design options to try to ensure that the likelihood of the landslip occurring again is minimised.
- It was reported that it may not be possible to start the work until the end of the fish migration for spawning.
- Parish Councillors were advised that there is a badger sett on the edge of the landslip. It is also believed that there are bats in a tree which will have to be taken down and that there are otters on the burn. The badger sett is to be surveyed and the tree checked for bats. The necessary licences have to be obtained from DEFRA. It was stressed that the County Council has to abide by all the regulations. The matter is being discussed by the relevant ecologists.
- The County Council is expecting to start the repairs from the middle to the end of May. The work is expected to take 8-10 weeks. Ms Cryer said that she expected the work to last until the end of August. She said that anything earlier would be a bonus.
- Concerns were raised over whether the pavement is affected by the landslip. Assurance was given that once the repair work is started, pedestrian access round the landslip will be maintained.
- It was felt that there was some confusion over the routes indicated by the diversion signs. Road links for the County Show in May are all in place. Concern was expressed that the road to Newton is being widened by passing traffic. Assurance was given that the road was being inspected every two weeks, with repairs being given priority.
- The County Council has set up a webpage, accessed through the County Council website, which will be regularly up-dated. It was suggested that it would be useful to have a work schedule included on the webpage.
- Mrs Dale suggested that businesses affected by the landslip might be able to get a reduction in their business rates. It was suggested that the Parish Council would support applications for such a reduction.

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•Ms Cryer agreed to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April and take the opportunity to up-date residents on the situation.

Ms Cryer and her colleagues were thanked for attending the meeting. (Ms Cryer and Messrs Rudman, Rahman and Landale then left the meeting).

## **12/122 Public Participation**

Mr and Mrs Blakeburn were invited to comment on their planning application to build a house at Branch End. They were advised that the Planning Advisory Group of the Parish Council had not yet met to consider this application. Mr Blakeburn said that he was a resident of the area and had a workshop on the site. Proposed development of the larger site at Branch End had not come to fruition. He felt there was a need to make progress on developing his section of the site and he would expect to live in the house himself. The question was asked if this proposed development would sterilise any future development of the larger site. Mrs Dale said that the Planning Authority could only make a decision on the application before them, and could not be influenced by the possibility of future development.

Mr and Mrs Blakeburn were thanked for attending the meeting. (They then left the meeting).

## *New Ridley Development*

It was agreed that it would be a good idea to hold a public meeting to gauge the feelings of residents on this issue. The meeting will be at the Community Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Mrs Dale had held a meeting with residents of New Ridley on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. She said that it was important that residents writing letters of objection should highlight the relevant former Tynedale District Council and Northumberland County Council policies. She also made the point that letters should be individually composed and not be based on templates. She outlined the relevant policies, highlighting Policy H3 in the Tynedale Local Development Core Strategy. This aligns with the Northumberland Local Development Plan Core Strategy which is currently being consulted upon. Mrs Dale made the following additional points:

- New Ridley is not a sustainable settlement
- There is no daily public transport
- The proposal is inappropriate for the size of the settlement
- There are brownfield sites in Stocksfield

It was noted that, although the Parish Council had agreed an extension for its response with the Planning Officer, residents were required to submit their comments by 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Mr Davison suggested that New Ridley Road is already congested, and that the proposed development at New Ridley would exacerbate the traffic problems on New Ridley Road.

## *Coronation Diamond Jubilee*

Mr Hall asked if there were any plans to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the Coronation. It was agreed that last year's Jubilee event had been very successful. It was suggested that some kind of commemoration could be held at Stocksfield Festival in September, linked to the Fields in Trust status which would soon apply to the sports field.

## **12/123 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

Mr Balmer proposed, Mr Hall seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

## **12/124 Matters Arising**

*Patients Forum* – There had been no meeting recently. Mr Hall is to find out when the next meeting is to be held and to keep the Council informed. It was reported that the Patient Reference Group is a different group and is in fact a “virtual” group. It was suggested that the question of the Patients Forum should be raised at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM). The APM will be the opportunity to ask the doctors questions directly. It was agreed that it was important to find out what the impact of the GP Commissioning arrangements is likely to be on the general public, and also to look forward to the other potential reforms to the National Health Service.

*Pedestrian Crossing at Station* – This had now been repaired and County Councillor Mrs Dale was thanked for the part she had played in getting the work done.

## **12/125 Co-option of New Parish Councillor**

No new candidates had come forward. Nomination papers for the May 2013 elections are now available.

## **12/126 Correspondence**

Correspondence received since the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> February was listed on the Agenda and was noted.

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## **12/127 Finance**

Mr Woods and Ms Hunt had examined the accounts for January and recommended the approval of the February expenditure. The Clerk confirmed that the annual total to date for Staff Costs was correct as it included her salary for March 2012. It was agreed that the accounts for February should be approved. Ms Hunt proposed and Mr Davison seconded and it was that the expenditure for February be approved.

The Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group was authorised to approve expenditure for March in order that as many cheques as possible could be presented before the end of the financial year.

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

## **12/128 Parish Plan Review**

Amendments had been made as discussed. Mr Hall proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and the revised action plan for the Parish Plan was endorsed.

It was agreed that the revised Plan would be mentioned at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was further agreed that an article regarding the revised Plan would be published in the summer edition of NE43 News. Ms Hunt agreed to consult with Mr Hooks as Chairman of Stocksfield Community Association with a view to discussing the relevant sections with the Stocksfield Community Association Board. Mr Duncan volunteered to discuss the relevant sections of the Plan with the Board of Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA).

## **12/129 Response to Northumberland County Council Core Strategy Preferred Options**

Mr Hall and Ms Hunt had met to discuss the Parish Council's response. Mr Hall is drawing up the response. This will be circulated to members for immediate comment and then submitted to the County Council. The recent meeting of the Eastern Tynedale Forum to discuss this topic had been well-attended. Although it was felt that some of the issues raised by those attending had been peripheral, the presentation by County Council Planning officers had been good.

## **12/130 Annual Parish Meeting (APM)**

It was agreed that in order to accommodate Ms Amanda Cryer and Doctors Maguire and Corbett, the meeting would start at 7.00 p.m. Mr Woods gave his apologies for the APM.

## **12/131 Local Government Elections – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013**

It was stressed that the closing date for submission of nomination papers is 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at noon, and there is no flexibility to this time and date.

## **12/132 Community Development**

Mr Duncan advised that the planning application for the developments at both the Guessburn and Branch End sites would be submitted later this week. It was hoped that the application would be decided by planning officers. It is hoped to start work on both sites in September 2013. SCATA is currently talking to Isos about a low energy form of construction which should result in fuel bills for the properties being halved. SCATA had received a start-up grant from the County Council. Eddie Halstead of the County Council is no longer in post and is unlikely to be replaced.

## **12/133 Advisory Groups & Council Representatives**

a. **Consultations** – apart from the NCC Core Strategy consultation discussed earlier there were no other items to debate.

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

The Report from the most recent meeting of the Group had been circulated. Mr Woods outlined the proceedings and the following points were endorsed and agreed:

*Branch End Toilet site asset transfer* – an e-mail had been received today from the solicitors. The Group will consider the e-mail and make recommendations.

*Branch End Play Area* – the fire engine is to be repaired with the manufacturer's equipment.

*Criteria and procedures for awarding grants* – a paper had been circulated and Mr Hall proposed and Mr Davison seconded and it was agreed that it should be adopted.

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

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

*Provision of Electric Car Charging Points* – The Clerk had advised that grants were available for the provision of charging points. It was agreed that in the first instance she would contact Northern Rail to find

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out what their views are on the topic, and to see if they would be willing to work in partnership on a project to provide points at Stocksfild Station. It was pointed out that at present there are only 114 electric cars in Northumberland but it is anticipated that this would change. It was also noted that the provision of charging points at the Station could potentially mean the loss of parking spaces.

*Provision of Double Yellow Lines at Tynedale Gardens/New Ridley Road* – this is to be considered by the County Council.

*VACS Machine at Brumwell Court* – It was agreed that this should be repaired and that no further action be taken on changing the messages on the machines.

*Parking at the Station* – the signs erected by Northern Rail had been removed. Mrs Dale was thanked for her efforts and diplomacy which resulted in the return to the status quo.

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

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

*Branch End Play Area* – a new supply of bark is to be sourced from Egger.

The other issues raised in the report were noted and the action to be taken agreed.

## **e. Communications Advisory Group**

The report of the Communications Advisory Group had been circulated and was noted and endorsed.

## **f. Planning Advisory Group**

The report of the Planning Advisory Group had been circulated and was noted and endorsed.

The next meeting of the Whittonstall Action Group will take place on 5<sup>th</sup> March. It is expected that the planning application for the Hoodsclose Surface Mine will be discussed by the County Council in April. (Mrs Dale declared an interest in this topic as Chair of the Governing Body of Whittonstall & Broomley Federation of Schools). The letter from the Whittonstall School Governors now says that they object to the proposals.

## **g. Sports Facilities Advisory Group**

The Group will be meeting later in March and among the items to be discussed will be a system of weekly monitoring of and monthly reporting on the condition of the Sportsfields.

A report on the usage and income from the MUGA for 2012 had been received and was noted.

## **h. Footpaths & Environment Advisory Group**

There was no report from the Rights of Way and Environment Group.

*Hanging Baskets* - . It was proposed that hanging baskets should be provided as they were last year, and that those who take them might make a small voluntary contribution towards the cost of about £10 per basket. Mr Davison proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that this suggestion be endorsed.

*Litter Pick* – it was agreed that the Parish Council would not organise a litter pick this year, but that litter pickers would be available from the Parish Office if residents wished to use them. The Clerk was asked to contact the Scouts with a view to asking them to clear litter from the Estate paths and along the burn running through Birkdene.

*Dumped Tyres* – The County Council are to be congratulated on clearing the latest dumped tyres so quickly.

## **12/134 Council Representatives**

Meetings were listed on the agenda.

Ms Hunt and Mrs Dale will attend the Joint meeting of the County Council with Parish Councils on 12<sup>th</sup> March.

Mr Parker is to attend the meeting of the Prudhoe Transport Group on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Mrs Dale will attend the next meeting of the County Council's West Area Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

## **12/135 Any Other Business**

None.

## **12/136 Date of next meeting**

**8<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.