

# BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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

**Present:** Mrs A Dale (also a County Councillor) Mr J Davison, Mr P Duncan, Ms M Hunt, Ms C Jonas, Mr M Parker, Mrs K Pollock, Mr J Roy, Dr P Vickers

Mrs M Williams, Clerk

**Also Present:** Ms L Grabham, Eljay Research  
Mr S Braysher (SCATA), Mr Dennis Parke,  
Ms Kathleen Moore, Hexham Courant

**Apologies** Prof. R Thompson

Ms Hunt opened the meeting by welcoming the new Parish Councillors and Ms Lisa Grabham to the meeting.

### **13/69 Housing Needs Survey**

Ms Lisa Grabham gave a brief presentation on the findings of the recent Housing Needs Survey. Handouts of the presentation were tabled and a copy of the full report will be sent to the Clerk and uploaded onto the website in due course. Copies of the report are to be made available to all Parish Councillors.

Ms Grabham said that the response had been 629 surveys returned from 1250 households, which meant that the margin for error in the results was +/- 2.7%.

The main findings of the report suggested that residents of Stocksfield are:

- not "NIMBYs"
- prepared to consider change
- not prepared to accept development on the Green Belt

It was agreed that the findings of the survey provided evidence which would enable the Parish Council to make decisions on planning applications.

The report needs to be read in conjunction with the County Council's Local Plan, currently being consulted upon.

Ms Hunt thanked Ms Grabham for attending the meeting and providing an excellent presentation.

### **13/70 Introduction**

Ms Hunt asked the new and existing councillors to introduce themselves to each other.

### **13/71 Declarations of Interest**

As a County Councillor, Mrs Dale declared an interest in discussions on planning applications.

### **13/72 Public Participation**

A request had been received to consider the possibility of introducing a lower speed limit throughout Painshawfield Estate. Mrs Dale said that the County Council is reviewing all policies relating to speed limits. It was suggested that the only way to control speed was to install "speed humps" but it was acknowledged that this option was not considered acceptable or popular. It was also acknowledged that lowering speed limits was only practical if they are policed.

Mrs Dale advised that she has received requests for new Grit Bins. She advised that the County Council's Highways department had grit bins on order, and asked for suggestions as to where additional bins might be sited.

Mrs Dale advised that Ovingham Bridge was likely to be closed from Spring 2014 for 10-12 months. County Council officers were meeting with local schools to assess the impact of the closure on students. Generally it was felt that the closure would have little impact on residents of Stocksfield.

Ms Jonas suggested that there was a need for more gritting in bad weather, particularly on the Painshawfield Estate. Mrs Dale advised that the County had a Winter Service Plan and under this plan estate roads were not considered a priority. It was noted that New Ridley Road was considered a secondary route. She said that residents having problems during the winter should contact her.

### **13/73 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

Dr Vickers proposed, Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that, subject to minor amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October were a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

**13/74 Matters Arising**

*Seat outside Branch End Toilet Block* – the Handyman has been asked to move this to Branch End Play Area.

The improvements to the pavement at Birches Nook and on the A695 have been referred to the Local Transport Plan.

**13/75 Correspondence**

Correspondence received since the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013 was listed on the Agenda and was noted.

**13/76 Finance**

*Co-op Bank* – The Clerk had sought advice from NALC but this had not proved particularly helpful or decisive. It was agreed to take no action at present but to continue to monitor the situation.

(Ms Hunt advised new members that at the induction meeting in January 2014 she would bring them up to speed with the format of the accounts and other matters relating to the finances and financial conduct of the Parish Council.)

*Bank Reconciliation* - The bank reconciliation to the end of September had been circulated and was noted.

*October Accounts* – The accounts for October had been circulated and, there being no queries, Mr Davison proposed, Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that they be accepted.

*Expenditure for October* - The expenditure for October had been circulated and, there being no queries, Mr Davison proposed, Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that it be accepted.

*Precept 2014/15* – The Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group had recommended that the Precept for 2014/15 should remain the same as for 2013/14, i.e. £73,500. This was agreed unanimously.

*Dispensations* – It was agreed in principle that dispensations would be recommended for matters relating to the Precept and Budget. The Clerk is to check the proceedings of the County Council's Standards Committee.

**13/77 Co-option of Parish Councillors**

An application had been received from Graham Young to be a Parish Councillor. Mr Duncan proposed and Mr Davison seconded, and it was agreed that Mr Graham Young be co-opted to the Parish Council.

**13/78 Community Development**

*Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA)* – Mr Duncan brought members up-to-date on the proposed developments at Guessburn and Branch End. He advised that the tenders received had all come in below budget and that it was expected that work on both sites would be started in December. The same contractor will work on both sites. It was recognised that while the building work is going on there will be some disruption on both Guessburn and New Ridley Road.

*Energy Savings Group* – Ms Hunt outlined the background behind the proposals and advised that a meeting had been arranged for 10<sup>th</sup> February with Mrs Alison Vipond of Newton being the main speaker.

*Carers' Event* – Ms Hunt outlined the background behind the proposals for this event and advised that a meeting had been arranged with health and social care professionals (including three commercial care providers) for 11<sup>th</sup> November.

*Parish Plan Review* – Ms Hunt proposed and it was agreed that the annual review of the 2009 Parish Plan would be deferred until early in 2014.

**13/79 Advisory Groups and Council Representatives**

**a. Consultations**

The current consultations had been listed on the agenda. It was agreed to ask Prof Thompson to complete the consultation from the Northumberland NHS Foundation Trust on behalf of the Parish Council.

Ms Hunt advised that, because there had been so few Parish Councillors, the Advisory Groups had not been convened since May 2013. She went on to say that the role of the Advisory Groups was to look at the different aspects of the work of the Parish Council and to make recommendations as to the action to be taken, which the full Council would then decide upon. Once the new Councillors had had time to familiarise themselves with their role, it may be decided to establish the Advisory Groups again.

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

The notes on the most recent meeting of the Group had been circulated.

*Councillor's Allowances* – The Group had recommended and Mr Duncan proposed and Mr Parker seconded and it was agreed that no allowances would be paid to Councillors, but that they may all claim reasonable legitimate expenses (e.g. phone calls, stationery, travel expenses, loss of earnings and emergency child care). This decision will be reviewed in 12 months' time. Ms Hunt offered to draw up a policy relating to Councillors' allowances in due course.

*Grant Aid*

Stocksfield Golf Club – (As members of the Club, the following declared an interest – Mr Davison, Mr Parker, Mrs Pollock, Dr Vickers). Mrs Dale proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed by those eligible to vote that £100 should be granted to support Stocksfield Golf Club in its bid for Lottery "Inspired Facilities" Funding.

*Planning*

13/02385/TPO                      Tree Preservation Order 33 Meadowfield Road  
(further details awaited [3/09/13] )

13/02993/FUL                      30 Painshawfield Road  
Single Storey Rear Extension to kitchen

It was agreed that the Parish Council would make no objections to this proposal.

*Grass Cutting Tenders* – subject to further amendments from the sportsfield users, the wording of the tender documents was approved.

*Information Board at the Fords* – The Tyne Rivers Trust had provided an Information Board to be sited near the Lower Ford, and it was agreed that this could be installed by the Parish Handyman. There is to be an official "unveiling" of the board on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

*Free Parking in Hexham* – it was agreed to make no comment on this,

*Journal of Local Planning* – Mr Duncan proposed, Dr Vickers seconded and it was agreed to take out a one year subscription to this publication.

*Wind Turbine Applications* – Concerns had been raised by a resident that most of the published letters of support for these applications were from people who live outside the Tyne Valley. The recommendation that the Parish Council write to the County Council advising that residents have drawn this matter to their attention was endorsed.

*Clerk's Hours* - It was agreed to endorse the recommendation that the Clerk's hours should remain at 20 per week for the present.

*Clerk's overtime/website up-date*

Ms Hunt advised that as the Clerk is a salaried employee, a separate contract to cover the up-dating of the website could not be issued. She and the Clerk had discussed the issue and felt that the website could be brought up-to-date in a maximum of 20 hours and that the additional cost would be no more than £250. Mr Davison proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that the Clerk could claim up to 20 hours overtime to undertake the website up-dating.

*Green Space Audit* – a list of potential sites to be included in the audit had been circulated and was noted and agreed.

*New Burial Ground* – The Clerk had held initial discussions with the Vicar about the need to provide an additional burial ground for the Parish. It was agreed that she should continue these discussions and to initiate discussions with the owner of a potential site. The hope was expressed that such a ground would be available to all, regardless of religion, creed or beliefs.

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Group will be held in the Parish Office on 18<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30 p.m. New members of the Parish Council are under no obligation to attend.

**c. Planning Advisory Group**

*Hoodslose Surface Mine* – the decision on this application by the County Council's Planning Committee had again been deferred and it was now expected that the issue would be debated at the December meeting of the Committee. The comment was made that it was a "tragedy" for Whittonstall residents that the decision on this proposal has been delayed.

*Planning Application No:*                      13/03490/VARYCO                      *Stables & Coach House, Old Ridley*  
Amendment to Planning Ref: T/2010 0469 to include raising of roof pitch, addition of 2no. dormers to rear, velux's to front elevation and doors and windows to gable

(Mrs Pollock and Mr Roy declared an interest in this application). It was reported that there has been considerable dialogue between the County Council's Planning Officer and the applicant regarding this development. It was felt that the variation does not impact on existing properties. Mr Parker proposed and Ms Hunt seconded and it was agreed by those eligible to vote that there were no objections to the application.

*Northumberland Local Development Plan*

The next part of the consultation had now been received. Ms Hunt commented that the leading article in the Hexham Courant on this topic was to be commended. She stressed the importance for the Parish Council of commenting on this latest consultation. It was agreed that Mr Duncan, Ms Hunt and Dr Vickers would consider the proposals and draw up a response for the Parish Council to comment on and agree. Ms Hunt also advised that the East Tynedale Parish and Town Councils Forum is to meet with County Council Planning Officers on 25<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the consultation documents. She suggested that the discussion at this meeting might colour the response of the Parish Council. She stressed the need to consider the Core Strategy as a whole, bearing in mind that the current consultation covers only a small section of the total Local Plan.

**d. Transport & Highways Advisory Group**

*B6309 through Hindley* – Mrs Dale advised that the County Council was looking into the problems on this stretch of road.

**e. Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group**

Ms Hunt advised that the Handyman is to attend a course on Playground Inspections. She advised that the Parish Council would pay for this course.

**f. Communications Advisory Group**

*Website* - The Clerk has met with the Web Designer and is in communication with him to progress the improvements to the website. It is currently planned to launch the new site at the end of November and its up-dating will be continued from that time until it is complete. From then on, the site will be updated as required.

*NE43 News* – the next issue will be delivered at the end November/early December. Delivery will be by members of local church congregations

**g. Sports Facilities Advisory Group**

The notes on the latest meeting of the Group were tabled and noted. The biggest area of concern was the "plague" of rabbits on the sportsfields. It was agreed to obtain quotes for the installation of rabbit proof fencing along the northern edge of both fields.

**h. Rights of Way & Environment Advisory Group**

*Flood Planning* – Ms Hunt and the Clerk are to meet with Mr Samuels on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Mrs Dale offered to attend this meeting.

Mr Roy expressed an interest in this Group.

<b>13/80 Council Representatives</b>	Nothing to Report
<b>13/81 Any Other Business</b>	None
<b>13/82 Date of next meeting</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013</b>

The meeting ended at 9.35 p.m.