

BROOMLEY & STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th January 2014 in the Community Centre, Stocksfield

Present: Ms M Hunt (in the Chair), Mrs A Dale (also present as a County Councillor),
Mr J Davison, Mr P Duncan, Dr M Mansour, Mr M Parker, Mrs K Pollock,
Prof. R Thompson, Dr P Vickers,
Mrs M Williams, Clerk to the Council

Also Present: Mr A Banfield, Mr Dennis Parke,
Ms Kathleen Moore, Hexham Courant

Apologies Ms C Jonas, Mr J Roy, Mr G Young

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

13/94 Declarations of Interest

As a County Councillor, Mrs Dale declared an interest in discussions on planning applications and in issues relating to Prudhoe Community High School.

13/95 Public Participation

Mr Parker advised that the VATS machine near Brumwell Court was not working. The Clerk advised that she had reported this.

13/96 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 2013

Dr Vickers proposed and Prof. Thompson seconded and it was agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December were a true record of the meeting.

13/97 Matters Arising

Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA)/Tennis Club – Mr Duncan advised that the issue of access to the Tennis Club had been resolved.

Patients' Forum – Dr Mansour reported that he had discussed this issue with the Surgery and had been advised that they would be happy to re-instate the Forum. It was agreed that there was a need to find out what the Surgery wants from the Forum. It was further agreed that the spring edition of NE43 News should contain an article describing the remit for the Forum and inviting patients to become volunteer members. Dr Mansour is to follow this up with the Surgery. Dr Mansour was thanked for his efforts in taking this matter forward.

Nuisance Telephone Calls – A response had been received from Mr G Opperman MP to the Parish Council's letter regarding nuisance phone calls. Mr Opperman had sent copies of Parliamentary papers relating to this matter. The Clerk advised that these were available for councillors to read. It was agreed to follow this matter up in 3-6 months' time.

13/98 Correspondence

Correspondence received since the December meeting had been listed on the Agenda and was noted.

13/99 Finance

The financial reports had been circulated with the agenda.

Bank Reconciliation - noted.

Summary of Accounts - noted.

Spend v Budget – the spend v budget to the end of December was noted.

Expenditure for December – Mrs Dale proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that the Expenditure for December be approved.

Additional Cheques - Payment of £70.69 to NALC was approved.

2014/15 Precept – as agreed previously, it was unanimously agreed that the Precept for 2014/15 would be set at £73,500.

2014/15 Budget - Papers outlining the proposed budget for 2014/15 had been circulated. The figures were noted and were unanimously agreed, although it was also noted that it may be necessary to adjust the figures at the end of the current financial year in the light of final expenditure.

13/100 Community Development

SCATA Development - Mr Duncan brought councillors up-to-date with the SCATA development. He advised that the transfer of the assets to SCATA had been held up because of the length of time some of

the legal processes were taking. He said that there were particular issues with the apparent dilatoriness of the Parish Council's solicitor. Mr Duncan advised that building work is now expected to start at the end of January.

Energy Saving Group - The inaugural meeting will be held on 10th February with the main speaker being Mrs Alison Vipond of Newton.

East Tynedale Action Plan – This had been produced by the office of Mr G Opperman MP, and was in essence a desk top review of Parish Plans and equivalent documents. It was noted that this Plan was included on the Agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils Forum. The following comments were made:

Item 3 – this should read the A69

Item 8 – it was noted that this is no longer up-to-date as the Business Forum in Broomley & Stocksfield's 2009 Parish Plan did not in fact come into being

The date given for the Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Plan is inaccurate and should be 2009.

There were no other comments.

It was noted that Ovingham Bridge is to undergo major repairs in 2014 but that there are no plans to replace the bridge.

It was felt that Mr Opperman had listened to the concerns of Parish and Town Councils when preparing the Plan. It was agreed that the Parish Council was generally happy with the Action Plan which pulls together Parish Plans in East Tynedale.

It was hoped that Mr Opperman would regularly up-date the Action Plan.

Community Flood Plan/Flood Planning Meeting – Mr Parker and Mr Roy had met with Mr Samuels of the Environment Agency. A leaflet had been delivered to every property in the flood risk zone inviting residents to a meeting on 13th January with a view to developing a Community Flood Plan.

Ms Hunt offered to liaise with Mr Samuels regarding the conduct of the meeting. The draft Community Flood Plan had been circulated and it was agreed to accept the draft.

Carers' Information Card – this topic is deferred to the February meeting.

Provision of a new Burial Ground – members of the Working Group were asked to liaise with the Clerk to arrange a meeting.

13/101 Advisory Groups and Council Representatives

A paper had been circulated outlining the previous and current arrangements and making proposals for the future. The proposals were discussed and amendments proposed and agreed as follows:

The future – from May 2014

1 Planning Advisory Group

This group needs to meet on an ad hoc basis, probably monthly, dependent on the number of planning applications received, to make recommendations to the Parish Council on its response to planning applications. The Planning Advisory Group should be put in place from February 2014.

2 Sportsfields Advisory Group

This group, which incorporates the Sportsfields Management Group, should continue as at present, with verbal reports being made to the Parish Council and copies of the notes of the meetings circulated to Parish Councillors. Reporting to the Group by the Multi Use Games Area Management Group needs to be tightened up.

3 Environment & Footpaths Advisory Group

This Advisory Group should be discontinued, but the remit of the Rights of Way and Environment Group should be reviewed, and the Chairman of that Group should always be a parish councillor who will report back to the Parish Council on the proceedings of the group and on environmental and rights of way issues as they occur. If possible, a second parish councillor should be a member of this group.

4 Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group

This Group should be renamed and its remit reviewed.

Membership should be the Chairman and Vice Chairman and 2 or 3 other councillors. The Group would continue to meet in the middle of each month. One of its remits would be to set up Working Groups which would be relatively short-lived and with a very specific purpose. The Group should have overall responsibility for the overview of all aspects of the Parish Council's work including:

Finance
Recreation areas
Environment
Responses to consultations
Transport & Highways
Communications

5 Other Groups should be discontinued

It was noted that planning applications had to be dealt with without delay and it was agreed that the following would make up the Planning Advisory Group with immediate effect:

Mr M Parker, Prof. R Thompson and Dr P Vickers.

Mr Parker agreed to act as convenor for the Group.

It was felt that a small group could usefully have an overview of Communications, particularly the website and NE43 News. Mr Duncan and Dr Vickers volunteered to be members of this group, working alongside the Parish Clerk. This being agreed, there was no need to include communications in the remit of the new Finance and General Purposes Advisory Group.

Councillors were asked to consider which groups they would be interested in joining so that this could be discussed at the meeting of the Parish Council in February.

It was agreed to defer appointing the representative to the SCATA Board until February.

a. Consultations

NCC Core Strategy – The draft response had been sent to the County Council before Christmas. There being no further amendments or comments to add to the response, Mr Duncan proposed and Dr Vickers seconded and it was agreed that the draft be endorsed.

County Council 2014/15 budget – Papers had been circulated and full details were available on the County Council's website. Following discussion, it was felt that councillors were not in a position to understand the detailed implications of the proposals and cuts in funding, and it was agreed to make no comment on the budget.

b. Finance & General Purposes Advisory Group

The notes of the meeting held on 9th December had been circulated.

Item 5 - Mr Parker proposed and Mr Duncan seconded and it was agreed that the response to the consultation on the creation of a North East Leadership Board be endorsed.

Asset Transfer – The Clerk had written to the Parish Council's solicitor, but to date no response had been received.

Annual Parish Meeting – It had been hoped that the Police & Crime Commissioner, Ms Vera Baird, would be the speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting. Ms Baird, however, had a previous engagement and could not attend. It was agreed to ask the Inspector from Prudhoe Police Station to talk about policing priorities for Stocksfield, including Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.

The question was asked if there were currently Neighbourhood Watch Schemes operating in Stocksfield. It was thought that there were but it was not known how active they were.

Ofsted Report – Prudhoe Community High School – It was understood that a report on the recent Ofsted inspection was being prepared for the County Council. It was noted that, despite the current position on educational standards in the County, the County Council's senior management team had been reduced from five to three, with the loss of the Chief Executive and the Director of Children's Services. Mrs Dale advised that the County Council was not responsible for delivering education in the County, as this is the responsibility of the individual autonomous school Governing Bodies.

It was agreed to continue to monitor the situation at the High School.

c. Planning Advisory Group

Hoodslose Surface Mine – Amendments to the original application had been received, and councillors were asked to look at the documents on the County Council website and advise the Clerk of any comments they wished to make. Mrs Dale suggested that UK Coal had responded to the concerns of residents when making changes to their original application. Councillors were asked if anyone was interested in representing the Parish Council at the meetings of the Whittonstall Action Group. No one volunteered at the present time.

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Planning Applications

13//03629/FUL 13/03628/LBC 02/12/13 Apperley Farm	Conversion of attic space to new bedroom & en-suite bathroom Mr Parker proposed and Dr Mansour seconded and it was unanimously agreed by those able to vote that the Parish Council make no objection to this application
13/03561/FUL 02/12/13 6 Kimberley Gardens	Proposed two storey rear extension including loft conversion and internal alterations Mr Parker proposed and Mr Davison seconded and it was unanimously agreed by those able to vote that the Parish Council make no objection to this application

d. Transport & Highways Advisory Group

Concerns were raised about:

The fact that the 0754 train from Stocksfield to Newcastle was regularly very crowded and no longer consisted of more than two carriages, with the exception of the 0755 which has four carriages.

The fact that on the last day that Newcastle United played at home, passengers boarding the train at Stocksfield said that it was so crowded that passengers were unable to board at Wylam. It was also alleged that no fares were collected on this service and that the barriers at Newcastle Central station were open, with the result that no payments were made for the journey.

Councillors suggested that the matter be raised with the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership.

e. Children & Young People's Facilities Advisory Group

Mrs Dale advised that she had had responses to her request for volunteers to form a regeneration group for the play areas.

f. Communications Advisory Group – there was nothing to add to the comments made at the December meeting.

g. Sports Facilities Advisory Group

The next meeting of the Sportsfield Management Group is due to be held on 27th January.

Rabbit Proof Fencing – it was not possible to make a decision in the light of the information currently available. It was agreed that the Sportsfield Management Group would consider the tenders and make a recommendation to the February meeting of the Parish Council. Mr Davison had not spoken to the resident regarding the pile of garden waste at the north west corner of the cricket field.

(Suspension of Standing Orders – Mr Duncan proposed and Mrs Dale seconded and it was agreed that Standing Orders should be suspended and the meeting should continue after 9.30pm)

Sportsfield Car Park funding – the Clerk is to write to the Sir James Knott Foundation to request an extension on their offer of funding.

h. Rights of Way & Environment Advisory Group

Mr Roy has talked to Mr Hooks about taking over chairmanship of the Rights of Way Group.

Mr Banfield asked if an item could be included in NE43 News requesting walkers and visitors to take their litter home and not to drop it in the burn.

13/102 Council Representatives

East Tynedale Forum – Ms Hunt and Mrs Dale will represent the Parish Council at the next meeting of the Forum.

Northumberland County Council – West Area Committee – Mrs Dale will represent the Parish Council at the next meeting.

13/103 Any Other Business

Ms Hunt advised that the Clerk would shortly be attending a Conference in Retford, organised by the Rural Services Network, entitled "Rural Communities: development and organising....state of play in 2014".

The next meeting of the Combined Finance & General Purposes and Planning Advisory Groups will be held on 20th January at 7.30 p.m. The meeting will be preceded at 6.30pm by an Induction meeting for new councillors.

13/104 Date of next meeting **3rd February 2014**

The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.