

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council  
held on Monday 1 December 2014  
at Stocksfield Community Centre**

**Present:** Ms M Hunt (Chair), Mrs A Dale (also present as County Councillor), Mr J Davison, Mr D Parke, Mr M Parker, Mrs K Pollock, Mrs J Robson, Professor R Thompson, Dr. P Vickers

Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council)

**Also Present:** Ms Gemma Brown (Hexham Courant)

**Apologies:** Mr P Duncan, Mr J Roy

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30pm and welcomed those present.

**14/82 Declarations of Interest**

Mrs Dale (as a County Councillor) declared an interest in discussions on planning applications.

**14/83 Public Participation**

*New Ridley Recreation Area*

Mrs Pollock had been asked if the plans for the recreation area were known. The Clerk reported that the design had not yet been considered by the developers. The Chair added that the developers intend to hold a meeting with residents once building has commenced. **DISCHARGED**

*Speed limit repeater signs New Ridley Road*

Mr Parke asked if speed limit signs could be placed on New Ridley Road after leaving Stocksfield as drivers could easily think they have left a built up area. Mrs Dale agreed to look into the matter.

**ACTION: Mrs Dale**

**14/84 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 November 2014**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2014 were a true record of the meeting (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mr Parke).

**14/85 Matters Arising**

**a) Defibrillators**

The Clerk advised that the defibrillators had been ordered and the installation date was to be notified. Before the equipment can become operational, the provider must deliver a 'familiarisation' session. It was AGREED that the proposed session would take place at 7pm on Monday 8 December 2014 at the Cricket Club and that councillors would attend. It was also AGREED to give retrospective authorisation for the payment of £2,000 to the Stephen Carey Fund to purchase the cabinets and pay for fitting.

**ACTION: Clerk to BFd**

**b) Review of Sports Fields Charges**

The Chair reported that work to review the charges for use of the sports fields is continuing and that proposals would be brought before a future meeting. It was AGREED that the interim arrangements should continue until 31 March 2015 and any changes would take effect from 1 April 2015.

**ACTION: Clerk to BFd**

**c) Development at New Ridley**

The Chair reported that a copy of correspondence had been received from the Department for Communities and Local Government addressed to a resident of New Ridley who had been trying to clarify the decision making process of the Northumberland County Council Planning Committee. The resident has decided, after receipt of the letter, to take no further action and to forward it to the Parish Council for information only.

**DISCHARGED**

**d) Branch End Play Area (BEPA) western footpath**

The Clerk presented three quotes for work to the footpaths within BEPA, the cheapest being £2,480 (plus VAT). After discussion it was AGREED to instruct Debrat Surfacing Ltd to remove and reposition the section of footpath near to the entrance, described within proposal (i), as previously discussed at the Parish Council Meeting on 3 November (item 14/75 (b) refers).

**ACTION: Clerk**

**14/86 Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA)**

The Clerk reported that the work at Guessburn is still on schedule and that SCATA, in conjunction with ISOS Housing Association, will be holding two sessions at Stocksfield Community Centre when ISOS Housing and Tenancy Allocation Officers will be available to assist those interested in applying for tenancies. The events are on Wednesday 17 December 2014 between 1pm and 4pm and on Thursday 18 December 2014 between 5pm and 7pm.

**14/87 Finance**

**a) Approval of November Expenditure**

It was AGREED that the expenditure for November, as listed, be approved (proposed Mr Davison, seconded Mr Parke).

**b) Spend v Budget to November 2014**

The Chair highlighted that the balance available to the year end for each budget head took account of committed as well as actual expenditure. Members noted the current position.

**14/88 Consultations**

*Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Update*

The Chair, Dr Vickers and Mr Parke are to meet to propose a response.

**ACTION: Chair, Dr Vickers, Mr Parke**

*Pharmacy Needs Assessment*

Mrs Pollock AGREED to look at the Pharmacy Needs Assessment and propose a response.

**ACTION: Mrs Pollock**

*Northumberland County Council's Proposed Budget 2015-16 and 2016-17*

This consultation had been received after the finalisation of the agenda for this meeting. Prof Thompson AGREED to look at the consultation document and propose a response.

**ACTION: Prof Thompson**

**14/89 Advisory Groups**

**a) General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)**

*i) Notes of GGAG meeting 20/10/14.*

Members noted the previously circulated notes of the meeting. The Chair added that the GGAG required an additional member and any interested councillor should contact her.

*ii) Budget and Precept 2015/16.*

The Chair summarised the discussions at the most recent GGAG and the view of some that the budget should not exceed 2.5%, given that the Retail Price Index increase is currently 2.3%. The proposed budget is a 3.76% increase on last year, equating to an increase of £2.15 per annum on a band D house.

The Clerk outlined the structure of the proposed budget and the process used to develop the current proposals. He highlighted the cost of Play Area maintenance and the need to continue to establish adequate reserves. Mrs Dale said that the Parish Council must ensure it can maintain the services it currently provides, including the provision of adequate reserves. Mr Davison agreed to building reserves but questioned the proposed grant budget. The Chair referred to a previously circulated email from the Vicar of Bywell and Mickley that recognised the contribution of the Parish Council to maintenance of the burial provisions at Hindley.

Members discussed the relevance of the proposed budgeted amounts for a number of other specific budget areas. After further discussion, Mr Parker proposed and Mrs Pollock seconded that the current proposed budget be accepted and that the precept for 2015/16 be set at £76,270. The

motion was AGREED by a majority vote and the Clerk was instructed to notify the precept requirement accordingly.

**ACTION: Clerk**

*iii) Confirmation of appointment of clerk*

The Clerk left the meeting during this item. The Chair said that the thirteen week probationary period for the Clerk has expired and after discussion it was AGREED to confirm the appointment of the Clerk in the post.

**DISCHARGED**

**b) Planning Advisory Group**

It was AGREED to endorse the response to the following planning application as outlined:

<b>14/03691/FUL</b> <b>17 Painshawfield Road</b>	Construction of rear extension, loft conversion and proposed patio area with garden walls	01/12/14 No objections
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**14/90 Parish Council Representatives**

There were no issues raised in respect of historic representatives.

**14/91 Any Other Urgent Business**

*Stocksfield Cricket Ground*

Mrs Pollock advised members that Stocksfield Cricket Ground had won an award as the 'Best West Tyne Ground of the Year'.

**14/92 Date of Next Meeting:**

7.30pm 5 January 2015 – Stocksfield Community Centre

The meeting closed at 8.42pm.