

Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 13 April 2015 at Stocksfield Community Centre

Present: Ms M Hunt (Chair), Mrs A Dale (also present as County Councillor), Mr D Parke, Mrs K Pollock, Mrs J Robson, Mr J Roy, Professor R Thompson.
Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council)

Also Present: Ms H Dixon, Mr M Hall, Ms F Nicholson (residents)

Apologies: Mr J Davison, Mr M Parker, Dr P Vickers

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.35pm and welcomed those present.

15/41 Declarations of Interest

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

15/42 Public Participation

Litter on A695 between Branch End and Mickley

Ms Dixon complained about litter at the above location and Mrs Dale AGREED to look at the matter and refer it to Northumberland County Council (NCC). **Action: Mrs Dale**

A 695 near the War Memorial

Ms Dixon commended the display of flowers at the War Memorial but complained that the gutters near that location were continually blocked, bringing an associated risk of flooding. Mrs Dale said that clearing gutters was a constant task undertaken by NCC and asked that she be informed whenever problems arose. Mrs Dale AGREED to notify NCC accordingly.

Action: Mrs Dale

A695 at Merryshields

Ms Nicholson raised the issue of the speed and ever increasing size of heavy vehicles using the A695, in particular those operated by SITA. She added that a drain cover is now making excessive noise when hit by large vehicles. The Chair recommended deploying Community Speedwatch to the location and Mrs Dale said she would contact the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Mrs Dale also said that an agreement exists with SITA about the types of vehicles that can use the road but she needs registration numbers of vehicles. She added that in other respects the A695 is classified as a strategic route without weight restrictions, however there is potential that a 20mph speed restriction may be introduced outside Broomley First School. Mrs Dale AGREED to contact NCC about the drain cover, although it had already been reported by the Clerk. Ms Nicholson AGREED to attempt to record vehicle details. Ms Nicholson also complained of cars parking on the footpath outside the cricket club. The Chair said that a long term solution had been identified in the provision of additional car parking space within the sports fields but this is not imminent.

Action: Mrs Dale

Drilling at Merryshields Farm

Mr Hall asked whether councillors were aware of the drilling rigs and other equipment that has recently been used on the site of Merryshields Farm. The Chair referred to an email, received a few hours earlier, about the same matter and which attached photographs of the equipment. The author, like Mr Hall, was concerned about the implications. The Chair said that a licence exists for mineral extraction and Mrs Dale AGREED to liaise with NCC and arrange a visit by an appropriate officer.

Play Area in Ayton Close

A tarmac play area at the end of Ayton Close has been allowed to degenerate over many years and is currently severely overgrown. The area is not adopted by NCC and is likely to be owned by the original developer. The residents of Ayton Close are prepared to clear the area but have asked if the Parish Council will fund the hire of a skip because there is too much waste to remove by private car. After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Prof Thompson, seconded Mrs Pollock) to authorise the expenditure of £120 (excluding VAT) for the hire of a mid-sized skip.

Action: Clerk

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Hindley Cemetery

The Chair referred to a complaint from a resident of Hindley that rats have infested the cemetery and some have been sighted in her garden. The Burial Board are looking at the situation but NCC is unable to assist in the cemetery. Mrs Dale asked that details be forwarded to her and she would look at the issue. **Action: Mrs Dale**

The Chair thanked the residents for attending and raising the issues that concerned them.

15/43 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 March 2015

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2015 were a true and accurate record (proposed Mrs Dale, seconded Mrs Robson).

15/44 Matters Arising

a) Branch End Surgery Patients' Forum (previous item 14/7(a))

The Practice Manager has confirmed that the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is progressing and soon there will be a request for expressions of interest from potential members. The Clerk has also reminded the Practice Manager of the offer of membership from a parish councillor. Additionally the Practice Manager gave a positive response to a suggestion from Mr Roy that patients who could benefit from involvement in the 'healthy walks' within the village are referred directly to the health walks co-ordinator, rather than leave the patient to make contact. This will require patient permission and the establishment of a protocol. **DISCHARGED**

b) A695 Verge (previous item 15/28)

Mrs Dale reported that NCC are addressing the issue and undertaking work along the whole verge. **DISCHARGED**

c) Banking and financial arrangements (previous item 15/34)

The Clerk reported that the changes to banking arrangements approved at the last meeting are complete. **DISCHARGED**

15/45 Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA)

The Chair updated members from a report by Pete Duncan of SCATA. The two bungalows and four flats at Guessburn are complete and the keys have been formally handed to SCATA and ISOS. The tenants are expected to move in within the next few weeks and there will be a formal opening in May or June. Work to bury a power supply at Branch End should be complete this week and the bungalow there is expected to be complete in June.

15/46 Finance

a) Approval of March Expenditure

It was AGREED that the expenditure for March be approved retrospectively (proposed Mrs Pollock, seconded Mr Parke) and the summary of expenditure for the month was noted.

b) Accounts 2014/15 (unaudited)

Members noted the provisional accounts for the previous financial year.

c) External Audit 2014/15

The Clerk reported the annual return to the external auditors is required by 16 June 2015 and the accounts must be available for public inspection between 18 May and 15 June 2015.

d) Recurring payments 2015/16

The Chair referred to the schedule of recurring payments during the year that, if authorised, would enable payment to be made upon receipt of invoices and then reported to the subsequent Parish Council Meeting. It was AGREED (proposed Mr Parke, seconded Mr Roy) to authorise the schedule of recurring payments as circulated.

15/47 Consultations

NCC – Review of Planning Service

The Chair reminded members that the Parish Council had objected to some of the proposals outlined by NCC and had commented to this effect. Despite objections from many Parish and Town Councils, NCC has agreed to proceed with the changes.

NCC – Flood Risk Strategy

Mr Roy is to liaise with NCC in respect of the response.

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NCC – Property Review and Town Plans

Although there is no requirement to comment, correspondence from the Leader of NCC was circulated to all members. Hexham Town Council in particular is aggrieved at the proposals in view of their original expectations to see staff relocated to Hexham from Morpeth.

15/48 Advisory Groups

a) General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

i) Notes of GGAG meeting 16/03/15

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

ii) Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The Chair referred to the previously circulated scheme and said that it already existed as an approved document but had been updated in line with current requirements.

iii) Data Protection Policy

The Chair said that this policy had been drafted using a national template.

iv) Guidelines for the Retention of Records

The Chair reported that this document had been updated.

v) Information Security Policy

The Chair said this policy is new.

vi) Email and Internet Policy

The Chair reported that this document is new and had been drafted in the light of the increased use by the Parish Council of email and internet. There are implications for members who already use email in that they will need to adopt a bespoke email address for their role as a councillor, if they have not already done so. Those councillors who are elected, as opposed to co-opted, and who do not use email in a personal capacity will be unaffected. Additionally, Mrs Dale, who has an email address in her role as a County Councillor will not be affected. The Chair referred to a new Appendix A which had not been seen by the GGAG which related to guidance in respect of the use of social media. The guidance has been provided by NCC and it is proposed to incorporate it into the Parish Council's policy. Additionally the Clerk said there may be some practical difficulties in using the standard signature specified in Appendix B depending upon the device being used but in most cases the standard signature would be required.

In relation to items ii) to vi) above, the Chair said the GGAG recommended the approval of all the documents listed. After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Mrs Pollock, seconded Prof Thompson) that the following documents are approved as circulated: Freedom of Information Publication Scheme; Data Protection Policy; Guidelines for the Retention of Records; Information Security Policy; and Email and Internet Policy.

vii) Allocation of Reserves

The Clerk referred to a previously circulated paper that outlined the current method for allocating reserves and proposals for change. After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Mr Roy, seconded Prof Thompson) to:

- allocate reserves for specific purposes only where the Parish Council knows or can reasonably expect it will need to spend in the future or where funds have been provided from an external source for a specific purpose,
- hold remaining reserves as general or unallocated reserves,
- not distinguish in which reserve bank account specific reserve funds are held and
- allocate the existing reserves as identified in the following table

Purpose	Amount (£)
Defibrillators	550.00
Scout Hut	500.00
Community Garden	657.90
Sports Fields Car Park	4500.00
General unallocated	41207.98
Total	47415.88

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b) Planning Advisory Group (PAG)

Members noted the contents of the planning schedule. It was AGREED to endorse the planning applications as outlined:

15/00119/FUL 02/03/15 Glendale, 84 New Ridley Road	Small UPVC lean-to conservatory	25/03/15 No objections
15/00552/FUL 02/03/15 Kipperlyn Farm Kipperlyn	Proposed access off existing highway to new private track servicing existing dwelling	25/03/15 No objections
15/00648/FUL 05/03/15 4 Winston Way New Ridley	Alterations to application 14/03989/FUL inc extended front entrance, pitched roof to replace flat roof on south side and create balcony above bedroom, dormer window installation in west facing roof elevation and create new window above stair landing and door to balcony on south side	25/03/15 No objections
15/00525/FUL 19/03/15 Kipperlyn Farm Kipperlyn	Proposed detached garage	25/03/15 No objections
15/00998/FUL 07/04/15 Apperley Farm East Cottage	Proposed glazed link between dwelling and garage and erection of garden room to rear.	13/04/15 No objections

15/49 Parish Council Representatives

There were no issues to report from any representative meetings.

15/50 Ivor Gray Football Festival

Stocksfield Football Club has approached the Parish Council to request sponsorship of the trophies for the four age groups between 7 and 10 years of age. The total cost will be £80. After discussion it was AGREED unanimously to approve expenditure of £80 for the trophies.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

15/51 Annual Parish Meeting

The Chair reminded members that the Annual Parish Meeting is at 7.30pm on Monday 20 April at the Community Centre. She asked members to encourage residents to attend to hear the Police and Crime Commissioner.

15/52 Any Other Urgent Business

There was no other business.

15/53 Date of Next Meeting

7.30pm 11 May 2015 – Stocksfield Community Centre. The Chair reminded members that the next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting and membership of the Advisory Groups will be considered.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.