

# Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 5 December 2016 at Stocksfield Community Centre

**Present:** Ms M Hunt (Chair), Mr J Davison, Mrs J Furniss, Mr P Newman, Mr D Parke, Mr M Parker, Mrs K Pollock, Professor R Thompson, Dr P Vickers.

Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council).

**Apologies:** Mrs J Robson, Mr J Roy.

**Also present:** Mrs A Dale (County Councillor), Ms A Hawes and Mrs J Grieveson (residents), Ms K Moore (Hexham Courant).

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed those present.

### **16/134 Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made: Chair, Dr Vickers, Mr Parker - Stocksfield Community Association; Mrs Pollock – Stocksfield Cricket Club.

### **16/135 Public Participation**

#### *Birches Nook Cottages*

Ms Hawes updated members on developments in respect of issues of water ingress at her property. A chartered surveyor had been instructed who identified that moisture levels had fallen significantly although she is awaiting a report concerning the water table levels. Mrs Dale said that she has a report from the Environment Agency (EA) which she agreed to send to Ms Hawes but a further report from Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) is awaited. Mrs Dale said that the EA report covered all houses at that location and should be shared in private. Ms Hawes had been told by representatives of both Northumberland County Council (NCC) and NWL that peaks in the water table level have caused the problem, yet nobody is prepared to put that in writing. Mrs Dale said a further meeting is to take place once all the reports are available. The Chair asked that all reports concerning Ms Hawes's property are made available to Ms Hawes so that she can prepare for any meeting. The Chair expressed concern that large public service organisations are incapable of providing apparently simple information needed by Ms Hawes for her insurance company. Ms Hawes agreed to update members at a future date.

### **16/136 County Councillor Update**

Mrs Dale updated members on BT telephone boxes, Active Northumberland, Prudhoe High School, New Ridley gateways, Hexham Hospital closure and housing at Stobarts Field, New Ridley.

### **16/137 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 November 2016**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2016 were a true and accurate record (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mrs Pollock).

### **16/138 Matters Arising**

#### **a) Proposed Vehicle Activated Traffic Calming Sign (VATCS) at New Ridley**

The Chair reminded members of the decision not to support a VATCS device at New Ridley and the intention, in conjunction with NCC, to look at further traffic calming measures that might apply there and to the rest of the village. This information has been communicated to residents and, after discussion, the Chair highlighted the need to clarify the extent of traffic monitoring in Stocksfield that could be used to inform decision making. It was AGREED that the Clerk will write to NCC officers to establish what surveys are being undertaken, where and when.

#### **Action: Clerk**

Mrs Dale said that she had already asked NCC to look at measures to mitigate vehicle speed entering both ends of New Ridley. Proposals will be developed and put before the Parish Council. The Chair referred to a request from a resident to move an existing VATCS device

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from New Ridley Road (near the Hedley Road) to New Ridley. Members agreed that decisions should be based on evidence from the traffic monitoring schemes. **Bring F'wd**

### **b) Stocksfield Sports Field – Storage Container**

The Clerk reported that the container is due to be moved in the next few weeks but this is weather dependent.

### **c) Draft budget 2017/18**

The Chair reminded members of the discussion at the last meeting and the desire to maintain the existing standard of grass cutting. The cost of the additional cuts beyond the existing minimum standard provided by NCC has been established. After discussion, members concluded that separating the grass cutting of estates between two service providers in these circumstances was impossible and it was AGREED (proposed Mr Parke, seconded Prof Thompson) to extend the existing contract with NCC for 2017/18. **Action: Clerk**

### **16/139 Finance - Approval of November Payments**

It was AGREED that the payments for November be approved as detailed in the previously circulated schedule (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Prof Thompson) and the summary of receipts and payments was noted.

### **16/140 Consultations – Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (NCC)**

After discussion it was AGREED that the last amendments had no effect on Stocksfield and no comment should be made. **DISCHARGED**

### **16/141 Advisory Groups**

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

##### *i) Notes of GGAG meeting 21/11/16*

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

##### *ii) Bank reconciliation to 30/09/16*

Members noted that the bank reconciliation to 30/09/16 had been checked by Mr Parke.

##### *iii) Tenders for grass cutting and litter collection*

Members considered previously circulated tender documentation. After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Mr Davison, seconded Mr Parke) to approve the tender documents for grass cutting of sports fields, play areas and verges and to deal with the litter collection by way of extension to the existing contract with NCC which is carried out free of charge. The timetable for the tender process was AGREED as follows: advertise by Friday 9 December 2016, tenders to be received by 5pm on Monday 16 January 2017 and decision at the Parish Council meeting on 6 February 2017. **Action: Clerk**

##### *iv) Volunteer Policy and Risk Assessment*

The Chair referred to a previously circulated Volunteer Policy and Risk Assessments. It was noted that risk assessments apply to councillors although they are not regarded as volunteers. After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Mrs Pollock, seconded Mr Parker) to approve the policy and risk assessments. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

##### *v) Fireworks display – donations to charity*

The Chair reminded members that £425 was available from the collection at the firework display for charitable causes. It was AGREED to donate £50 to Project Parent (under Sec 137 Local Government Act 1972) and to retain the balance for future consideration. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

##### *vi) Donation requests*

It was AGREED to donate £100 to Lifespan Complementary under Sec 137 Local Government Act 1972: **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

##### *vii) Sports Field User Group*

The Clerk was asked to organise a meeting in the New Year. **Action: Clerk**

##### *viii) Internal audit 2016/17*

Members noted the interim report of the internal auditor who described the Council's financial and management systems as robust. There were no matters to draw to the attention of members. **DISCHARGED**

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## **b) Planning Advisory Group (PAG)**

### *Planning report*

Members noted the previously circulated planning report and the delegated powers used as outlined below.

<b>16/03739/FUL</b> Ryedale 3 Cade Hill Road	Retrospective application for single storey bedroom extension to rear and attached garage	No comment
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## **c) Communications Advisory Group (CAG)**

### *i) Notes of the meeting held on 02/11/16*

Members noted the notes of the meeting held on 8 September 2016.

### *ii) Parish Information Card (PIC)*

CAG has previously considered the future of the PIC and after a request in NE43 News for views about its future, ten residents have contacted the Clerk, all of whom asked for PIC to be retained. Members recognised that a section of the community could be disadvantaged if PIC were not produced in some way. The potential to include specific questions in a parish wide survey to understand the needs of residents was discussed.

### *iii) NE43 News*

The quality of the content of the Council's quarterly newsletter was discussed, particularly with regard to the degree it is relevant to a broad section of the community. It was agreed that anecdotal evidence was unreliable when considering this matter and that the opportunity to understand the views of residents should be seized in any parish wide survey. The future of NE43 News could then be considered as part of a broader communications strategy. Members discussed difficulties in providing sufficient relevant content every thirteen weeks. After discussion, it was AGREED (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mr Parke) to

- reduce the number of issues of NE43 News to between two and three per year – one in or around the first week of December and up to two others depending on sufficiency of content at varied times of the year
- authorise the Clerk to increase the size of each edition by one double sided page depending on content.

**Action: Clerk**

## **16/142 Parish Council Representatives**

There were no relevant representative meetings.

## **16/143 Damage to bus shelter A695 opposite The Pastures**

The Clerk referred to a broken window in the above shelter, the cause of which is unknown. A replacement glass bearing the Council's name has been ordered at a cost of £422.14. Members noted the report and AGREED that funds should be vired from 'Contingency funds'.

**Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

## **16/144 Eastern Sports Field**

### **a) Proposed clearance of ditch at eastern boundary**

The Clerk referred to a previously circulated report and the Council's duty to maintain the ditch at the eastern border of the eastern field. The ditch is severely obstructed by trees and undergrowth. Its removal will be labour intensive with an estimated cost of £1,100. After discussion it was AGREED to authorise the work by the Groundsman and to vire £1,500 from the 'Contingency funds'.

**Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

### **b) Lease renewal and car park extension**

The Clerk informed members of a planned meeting to progress the lease renewal and referred to a previously circulated draft plan of the proposed car park on the eastern field. The plan is broadly similar to the previously approved application. After discussion, it was AGREED to approve the plan and to authorise the Clerk to make any necessary minor adjustments and to submit the plan on behalf of the Council, subject to permission from Allendale Estates.

**Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

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### **16/145 Any other urgent business**

The Chair drew members' attention to letters of thanks received from Stocksfield Methodist Church Coffee Club and Age UK Northumberland in respect of donations previously approved.

### **16/146 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 9 January 2017

The Chair wished all those present a Merry Christmas and closed the meeting at 9.20pm.