

Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 6 February 2017 at Stocksfield Community Centre

Present: Ms M Hunt (Chair), Mrs J Furniss, Mr C Liddle, 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).

Apologies: Mr P Newman, Mr J Roy.

Also present: Mrs A Dale (County Councillor), Ms A Hawes (resident)

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed those present, including Mr Chris Liddle who was attending his first Council meeting. The Chair also informed members that Mr Davison has resigned from the Council. Members recognised his valuable contribution to the work of the Council over many years and the Clerk was asked to write to him accordingly.

Action: Clerk

17/14 Declarations of Interest

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

17/15 Public Participation

Birches Nook Cottages

Ms Hawes updated members on developments in respect of the water ingress at her property. There appear to be no formal records of changes in water table levels although she has acquired details of rainfall over many years. A meeting between interested parties had to be cancelled and is rearranged for 6 March 2017 and Ms Hawes said she would update Councillors at a future meeting.

Footbridges in Community Woodland

The Clerk has reported the concerns about the two footbridges to Allendale Estates who has agreed to look at the problem but there has been no update.

Litter at bus stop adjacent station car park

The Chair referred to a report from a resident of Riding Mill of a significant deposit of litter at the above location which was visible from the upper deck of buses and gave a poor impression of the village. The Groundsman quickly cleared the litter and the Council has received an email commending its swift response to the problem. The Chair also mentioned graffiti on the bus stop at Branch End which she had seen and which the Groundsman had removed by the following day. Further graffiti had been found by him at Branch End Play Area which was again dealt with. Members recognised the excellent work of the Groundsman around the village and in particular his quick response to problems identified to him. The Clerk was asked to contact the Groundsman and thank him on behalf of the Council.

Action: Clerk

17/16 County Councillor Update

Mrs Dale said the disabled parking bay had been introduced on the A695 outside the Doctors' Surgery. She added that between 2012 and 2020 Northumberland County Council's (NCC) revenue budget will have seen a reduction of £178.3M. NCC is looking at the three houses that are for sale on Stobarts Field at New Ridley.

7.50pm Mrs Robson joined the meeting.

17/17 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 January 2017

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 were a true and accurate record (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mrs Furniss).

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17/18 Matters Arising

a) Stocksfield Sports Field – Storage Container

The Clerk reported that ground conditions have continued to prevent the replacement of the container.

b) Stocksfield Sports Field – Admission of dogs

The Clerk reported that the Senior Animal Welfare and Enforcement Officer of NCC believes the circumstances at Stocksfield Sports Fields are not suitable for a Public Space Protection Order and without it, those that exercise dogs on the sports fields commit only a civil trespass. Members expressed grave concern that young children from the school using the sports fields could be exposed to the remains of dog faeces that are left on the grass, even when owners do their best to clear up after their dogs. After discussion it was AGREED to consult with sports fields users to establish the extent of the problem and to reconsider the situation in due course.

Action Clerk

17/19 Finance

a) Approval of January Payments

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

b) Pension provision – auto-enrolment

The Chair reminded members that the Council is required to offer a pension to relevant staff. The new arrangements allow NCC to undertake much of the background administrative work and minimise the involvement of the Clerk. Members noted the role of NCC, the initial fee of £132.50 and an annual fee of £5.

DISCHARGED

17/20 Consultations

Stakeholder Engagement – Northumberland County Council

Mr Parker said he found the stakeholder engagement survey to be a strange combination of questions and most of the second half of the survey was covered during the consultation in respect of NCC's Local Plan Core Strategy. Whilst welcoming the principle of stakeholder engagement, members AGREED that there is little point in completing the survey and asked the Clerk to respond to the consultancy company accordingly.

Action Clerk

17/21 Advisory Groups

a) General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

i) Notes of GGAG meeting 23/01/17

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

ii) Bank Reconciliation to 31/12/16

Members noted that the bank reconciliation had been checked by the GGAG.

DISCHARGED

iii) Vexatious communications policy

Members discussed the existing policy and it was AGREED to retain the policy unamended and review it in January 2019.

DISCHARGED

iv) Purchase of office equipment

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report relating to improved working practices and after discussion it was AGREED to purchase a laptop and projector at a revised total cost of £675.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

v) Renewal of Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) membership

Members recognised the work of CPRE and AGREED to renew membership at a cost of £36.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

vi) Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) – ownership

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report which explained that Allendale Estates owns approximately a third of the area on which the MUGA is built and which is subject to a lease. There may be an opportunity to purchase this land and after discussion it was AGREED to offer, subject to contract, to purchase that section of the MUGA owned by Allendale Estates for £2,000 and to pay their legal and professional fees.

Action: Clerk

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vii) Papers for GGAG

The Chair referred to her recent email and outlined the new arrangements for the circulation of agenda and papers for future GGAG meetings.

b) Planning Advisory Group (PAG)

i Planning report

Members noted the previously circulated planning report, the delegated powers used and the additional applications received as outlined below.

16/04646/FUL Snowdrop 20 Painshawfield Rd	Minor adaption of existing two storey rear ext with new roof and windows, small two storey infill at rear and widen pedestrian access to form vehicular access onto side lane	No comment
16/04687/FUL 10 Baliol Road	First floor extension over garage and single storey ext to side of house	No comment
17/00045/FUL Meadow Rise 283 New Ridley Rd	Front single storey porch extension and rear single storey ext providing utility and sun room.	No comment
17/00159/FUL 16 Baliol Road	Demolition of existing single garage and rear entrance, construction of single storey extension, alteration to road entrance and construction of porous parking area.	No comment
17/00144/FUL Burnside 39 Apperley Road	Construction of front porch.	No comment

ii Pre application protocol – correspondence from NCC

Mr Parker referred to the above correspondence and expressed concern about those pre applications which NCC will not refer to the Council. The Chair said the approach undermines the rhetoric from NCC about collaborative working with town and parish councils. Dr Vickers also highlighted the more speculative pre applications that are being made and it is important that parish councils are part of the process to determine all responses. The Chair said she would ask representatives of the East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils' Forum to raise the concerns at the separate NCC Town and Parish Councils' Liaison Group. **Action Chair**

17/22 Parish Council Representatives

East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils' Forum

The Chair reported that she had attended the above meeting on 11 January which covered a presentation by CPRE and the funding issue facing the forum. Town and parish councils comprising the forum will be asked to contribute to maintain the forum and members recognised its benefit. The forum next meets on 19 April and any members who wish to attend were asked to contact the Chair.

SCA Community Forum

Mrs Pollock was unable to attend the meeting on 11 January although the minutes are available and will be circulated. **Action Clerk**

17/23 Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA) – Representation on Board by Parish Councillor

The Chair reminded members that the Council had expressed a preference for Dr Vickers to represent the Council in the event that he is appointed to SCATA's board and the Clerk had been asked to clarify the position of Stocksfield Community Association (SCA) in respect of appointing directors. After exchanges of emails and a discussion with SCA's Chair, it has become clear that SCA will not allow a person who represents the Council or any other body to be appointed to SCATA's board but they can only be appointed as an individual. Dr Vickers said that he wishes to join SCATA's board as a representative of the Council not as an individual. The Chair explained that there is no apparent legal or documented policy reason why a SCATA board member cannot represent the Parish Council. Members questioned who SCATA's board represents and to whom they are accountable, particularly considering SCATA is responsible for public money.

8.57pm Mrs Furniss left the meeting.

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The Chair added that discussions with SCA's Chair also related to working in partnership with SCATA to undertake a parish wide survey which would then, amongst other things, inform the development of the Parish Plan. After further discussion it was AGREED to revisit the aspects of representation and accountability of SCATA in more detail in due course and to organise a meeting of interested councillors to consider the content of a survey before meeting with SCATA representatives.

Action: Chair

17/24 Stocksfield Festival

The Clerk reported that Stocksfield Festival Committee has asked permission to use the sports fields for the Stocksfield Festival on 9 September 2017. It was AGREED to approve this use subject to the Committee providing insurance cover and appropriate risk management procedures.

Action Clerk DISCHARGED

17/25 Stocksfield Cricket Club (SCC) – use of sports fields for fundraising

The Clerk said that SCC has asked for permission to use the sports fields for one or two car boot sales during the summer to assist with fundraising for the clubhouse extension. Some concern was expressed about frequency and potential damage to the fields. It was AGREED to support the proposal in principle and to delegate authority to the Clerk to grant permission on each occasion, subject to appropriate insurance cover being provided by SCC and any other necessary permissions.

Action Clerk DISCHARGED

17/26 Any other urgent business

Letter of thanks

The Chair drew members' attention to a letter of thanks received from Northumberland Community Voluntary Action in respect of a previously approved donation.

17/27 Date of next meeting

Monday 6 March 2017

9.06pm Mrs Pollock left the meeting in view of her declared interest in the next item.

Members resolved under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to exclude members of the press and public in order to consider the following item:

17/28 Grass cutting tenders 2017/20

The Chair reminded members that tenders had been received in connection with three separate grass cutting contracts. After discussion members AGREED (proposed Mr Parke, seconded Chair) to award the following contracts

- Sports fields – Stocksfield Cricket Club
- Play Areas – NCC
- Verges – NCC

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.26pm.