

# Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 9 January 2017 at Stocksfield Community Centre

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

Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council).

**Apologies:** Mr D Parke, Mrs K Pollock, Mrs J Robson, Mr J Roy.

**Also present:** Mrs A Dale (County Councillor).

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

### **17/1 Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made: Chair, Dr Vickers, Mr Parker - Stocksfield Community Association; Mr Davison, Prof Thompson, Dr Vickers – Stocksfield Golf Club.

### **17/2 Public Participation**

#### *Footbridges in Community Woodland*

Mr Davison said that two footbridges in the community woodland are in need of repair. The Clerk said that neither bridge is on a public right of way nor has been erected by the land owner. The Clerk was asked to inform Allendale Estates.

**Action: Clerk**

### **17/3 County Councillor Update**

Mrs Dale said there would be no addition to existing polling stations in Stocksfield and updated members on the proposed relocation of Branch End Post Office and traffic surveys on New Ridley Road and the A695.

### **17/4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2016**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were a true and accurate record (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mrs Furniss).

### **17/5 Matters Arising**

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

The Chair reminded members of previous discussions in respect of VATCS and the ongoing issues relating to speeding vehicles which included communication with the police. The Clerk said that the police recognise a community concern and the need to identify a sustainable solution but that payment by the Council for police officers to undertake this work is not appropriate. The Neighbourhood Inspector for Tynedale has proposed a review to clarify the situation that would be informed by traffic surveys and involve all relevant parties, including the Council. The resulting actions are likely to involve a combination of the camera enforcement unit (or speed camera vans) on approved sites, the deployment of police officers with handheld devices, an increased use of community speed watch and an interactive sign that is placed on the roof of a police vehicle and displays the actual speed of approaching vehicles. Critically, Northumbria Police do not possess the type of handheld equipment that can download and send images of speeding vehicles for subsequent prosecution by the central Criminal Justice Unit. This restricts the deployment of officers to locations only where it is safe to stop a vehicle at the time of the offence. The inspector also proposes to nominate speeding as a neighbourhood priority in Stocksfield. Information about neighbourhood priorities is posted on the neighbourhood policing team's webpage and should enable residents to view what actions have been taken to address the issue and the results.

Members welcomed the response and AGREED to consider the matter further once the traffic survey data is available. It was AGREED that the matter of VATCS on New Ridley Road should be considered further in a broader item about speeding in the village.

**Action: Clerk Bg Forward**

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

The Clerk reported that ground conditions have prevented the removal of the container.

## **17/6 Finance**

### **a) Approval of December Payments**

It was AGREED that the payments for December be approved as detailed in the previously circulated schedule (proposed Mr Davison, seconded Mrs Furniss) and the summary of receipts and payments was noted.

### **b) Budget monitoring to 31 December 2016**

Members noted the previously circulated budget monitoring document.

## **17/7 Consultations**

### **Planning Application Validation Checklist – Northumberland County Council (NCC)**

Mr Parker reported that this document has no effect on the Parish Council and it was AGREED to make no comment.

### **Pre Application Advice Protocol - NCC**

Mr Parker reported that a previously circulated response had been provided before the deadline in December. Mr Parker added that there were broader areas of concern that questioned the effectiveness of involving town and parish councils in the pre application process. After discussion it was AGREED that the Chair would raise the matter further at the next East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils' Forum.

## **17/8 Advisory Groups**

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

#### *i) Notes of GGAG meeting 12/12/16*

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

#### *ii) Budget and Precept 2017/18*

The Clerk referred to a previously circulated paper that identifies the Council's predicted payments during 2017/18 compared with predicted receipts. He highlighted additional costs for grass cutting (some of which are estimated), the proposed parish survey and lease renewal. The Council has unallocated reserves of £55,000 and a predicted underspend of £10,000 in the current year however the unknown cost of extending the car park in the sports field has not been included in the predictions. The report concluded that without amendment or use of unallocated reserves, the predicted budget would require a precept of £85,260. Dr Vickers said that there are a number of one-off items of predicted expenditure in the next financial year that explain the increase. Members discussed the need to ensure the precept is justified and appropriate and looked at the budget headings in detail. Mr Davison expressed concern about a significant increase in the precept considering the Council's reserves. Prof Thompson added that great caution needs to be exercised when drawing down reserves and that most people understand the Parish Council precept is used directly to the benefit of Stocksfield. It was AGREED (proposed Mr Parker, seconded Prof Thompson) that the presented budget should be accepted unamended and that the precept for 2017/18 should be set at £85,260.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

#### *iii) Branch End Post Office – proposed relocation*

Members discussed the previously circulated proposal to relocate Branch End Post Office to within Branch End Garage and considered comments received from a member of the public. The following comments were AGREED in response to the consultation:

- **How suitable do you think the new location and premises are, and how easy is it to get there?**  
It is easy to get to the new location, but the premises as they are currently designed are not suitable for the proposed additional use. Although parking is available at Branch End Service Station, it is limited both there and in the vicinity.
- **Are the new premises easy for you to get into and is the inside easily accessible?**

The new premises are easy to get into, but the interior is currently cluttered and the spaces between the shelves and fittings are cramped and narrow. In order to

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accommodate the new service and additional footfall, the interior would require redesign.

- **Do you have any concerns about the new location?**

As well as the concerns mentioned above, we would also point out that wheelchair access within the proposed new premises is much more restricted than it is in the current Post Office.

- **If so, do you have any suggestions that could help us make it better for you?**

As we have already mentioned, there will need to be a comprehensive redesign of the interior of the proposed new premises to ensure that there is wheelchair accessibility throughout the space as well as at the entrance. We are also worried that the new service will result in greatly increased queuing at the tills, which will lead to further congestion and inconvenience to customers.

- **Are there any local community issues which you think could be affected by the proposed move?**

It is likely that notification of the proposed move of the Post Office will give rise to local speculation and concern about the future of the Branch End branch of Boots the Chemist.

- **Is there anything that you particularly like about the proposed change?**

We are pleased that we will continue to benefit from a Post Office at Branch End.

The Clerk was asked to respond accordingly.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

*iv) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)*

After discussion it was AGREED to renew membership of the SLCC at a cost of £139.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

*v) Donation: Northumberland Community Voluntary Action (NCVA)*

After discussion it was AGREED to donate £25 to NCVA (under Sec 137 Local Government Act 1972).

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

**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.

<b>16/04336/COU Hindley Hall Hindley</b>	Change of use of former design office to dwelling house.	No comment
<b>16/04373/FUL Ridley Mill House Ridley Mill</b>	Demolition of 1950/60s single and two storey flat roof extension to northern facade of original 18/19 <sup>th</sup> Century house and replacement/extension more sympathetic to the original.	No comment
<b>16/04507/FUL 6 Brettonby Avenue Stocksfield</b>	Proposed formation of sliding door opening and rear extension.	No comment
<b>16/04497/FUL 36 Apperley Road Stocksfield</b>	Single storey kitchen and garage extension, recover main roof with concrete tiles and replacement windows.	No comment

*ii) 16/00480/PREAPP Warehouse, Apperley Bank House – replacement dwelling*

Mr Parker referred to the above application which relates to a disused building with planning consent to convert to a dwelling. The pre application concerns the demolition of the existing building with planning consent and the construction of a new dwelling on a site within the green belt. The Council AGREED that the construction of a new dwelling within the green belt was not appropriate and it should be objected to.

**Action: Clerk, Mr Parker**

**17/9 Parish Council Representatives**

*NCC Local Services Liaison Meeting for East Tynedale*

The Chair reported that she had attended the Local Services Liaison Meeting for East Tynedale with the Clerk and there was nothing to report.

*SCA Community Forum*

This meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 11 January. Mrs Pollock is unable to attend. Any members willing to attend in her place were asked to contact the Clerk.

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## **17/10 Eastern Sports Field – Proposed Heads of Terms Agreement**

The Clerk referred to a previously circulated document, saying that Allendale Estates has proposed to backdate the commencement of the lease to 1 August 2016 and to increase the rent from 1 August 2017. The Chair discussed the potential to use an alternative and more conveniently located solicitor. After discussion it was AGREED to approve the 'Heads of Terms' document (as amended) and to instruct Caris Robson to act on behalf of the Council in respect of the lease renewal.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

## **17/11 Sports Field – Admission of dogs**

The Clerk referred to a previously circulated report outlining the circumstances when a male refused to leave the sports fields whilst in possession of two dogs. Members reiterated an earlier decision of the Council to prohibit dogs from entering the sports fields at any time. Parish Councils are no longer able to implement Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) which replaced Dog Control Orders. Early discussions with NCC (who have responsibility for PSPOs) suggest that the circumstances may not be suitable for a PSPO. The Clerk was asked to look at all options to ensure that members of the public do not trespass on the sports fields with dogs at any time.

**Action: Clerk**

## **17/12 Any other urgent business**

### *Letter of thanks*

The Chair drew members' attention to a letter of thanks received from the Great North Air Ambulance in respect of a previously approved donation.

### *Rainwise*

Mr Parker said that he had met with staff from Northumbrian Water, together with Mr Newman and the Clerk, in connection with the above initiative. He circulated a leaflet which outlined actions that residents can take to assist with surface water flooding. The main focus is on communicating the initiative to residents, which will be undertaken through the website and newsletter, however examples of surface water flooding or sewerage problems should be notified to the Clerk as soon as possible so they can be passed to Rainwise staff.

### *Stocksfield Community Association (SCA) – payment of grant 2017/18*

The Clerk reminded members that a grant of £1,000 had been approved for SCA from the financial year 2017/18. SCA has requested that the funds be paid in this financial year to enable the purchase of replacement chairs to be completed, as permitted within the grant policy. Members AGREED to allow payment to be made in this financial year.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

## **17/13 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 6 February 2017

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:

## **17/14 Co-option of councillor**

After discussion members AGREED that Mr Christopher Liddle should be co-opted as a councillor.

**Action: Clerk, DISCHARGED**

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.29pm.