

Stocksfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 1 April 2019 at Stocksfield Community Centre

Present: Ms M Hunt (Chair), Mrs J Furniss, Mr C Liddle, Mr D Parke, Mr M Parker, Mrs H Rae, Professor R Thompson, Dr P Vickers.

Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council).

Apologies: Mrs J Robson.

Also present: Mrs A Dale (County Councillor).

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

19/4/38 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19/4/39 Public Participation

There were no items of public participation.

19/4/40 County Councillor update

Mrs Dale updated the Council in respect of fibre cable laying on the A695; ticket machines, car park improvements and lighting at Stocksfield railway station; repainted double yellow lines on New Ridley Road; and the intention to consult in June on the 20mph proposals for the A695. Mrs Dale then left the meeting.

19/4/41 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 March 2019

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 were a true and accurate record (proposed Mrs Furniss, seconded Mr Parke).

19/4/42 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

19/4/43 Finance

a) Approval of March payments

It was AGREED that the payments for March be approved as detailed in the previously circulated schedule (proposed Mr Parke, seconded Mr Liddle).

b) Budget monitoring report to 31/03/19

Members noted the budget monitoring report.

19/4/44 Parish Council Representatives

On 26 February Dr Vickers had attended a meeting organised by Stocksfield Community Association Trading Arm (SCATA) to look at the potential to establish a Community Transport Scheme at Stocksfield. He said that over 30 residents attended and a number indicated a willingness to be volunteer drivers. Any scheme is likely to involve a nominal annual membership fee and a donation for each use of a dial a ride service. Further consideration is being given to a trial using donated vehicles.

19/4/45 Advisory Groups

a) General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

i) Notes of GGAG meeting 18/03/19

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

ii) Sign cleaning – proposed addition to the Groundsman's contract

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk and after discussion it was AGREED to amend the Groundsman's contract to include annual cleaning of specified road signs and the clearance of any obstructions.

Action: Clerk

DISCHARGED

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iii) New litter bin – New Ridley

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk and it was AGREED to install a new litter bin on Lead Road at the lay-by southwest of New Ridley.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

iv) Placement of advertising banner on Council land

The Chair referred to a request from the organiser of Slimming World to place an advertising banner on the fence at Branch End Play Area and/or Stocksfield Sports Field. In addition to permission of the landowner, any signs would need permission of the Planning Authority. Members were concerned about the precedent that would be established and the likely complaints from local residents. After discussion it was AGREED to refuse permission.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

v) Provision of hanging baskets

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk which outlined the history of the provision of hanging baskets to business establishments in Stocksfield. Members considered the practical difficulties facing the volunteers, Mr and Mrs Cummings, who assemble the baskets and the implications of extending the service to all businesses in Stocksfield. After discussion it was AGREED to discontinue the existing arrangements with immediate effect and to write to Mr and Mrs Cummings to express the Council's gratitude for their work over many years.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

vi) Review of Standing Orders, including Appendix A (the Code of Conduct) and Appendix B (Financial Regulations)

The Chair said that the Group had considered the documents and proposed a minor amendment to Standing Orders (at para 2.9). She said that recommendation 20 of the report on Local Government Ethical Standards by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, dated January 2019 proposes that Section 27 (3) of the Localism Act 2011 should be amended to state that parish councils must adopt the code of conduct of their principal authority, with the necessary amendments, or the (proposed) new model code (to be created by the Local Government Association). Although there was therefore no immediate need to change Appendix A, it was likely that it would need to be reviewed in line with new legislation in future. The Group felt that Appendix B remained fit for purpose, though it was recognised that it may require amendment should the legislation on financial regulations be changed. After discussion it was AGREED to make a minor amendment to Standing Orders, to approve no immediate change to Appendices A and B, and to review Standing Orders and Appendix A in March 2021 at the latest and Appendix B in March 2020.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

vii) Review of Members' Allowances Policy

After discussion it was AGREED to make no changes to the policy and to review it in March 2021.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

b) Planning Advisory Group (PAG)

i) Planning report

Members noted the planning report and the delegated authorities used as set out below.

<p>19/00834/FUL 170 New Ridley Rd</p>	<p>Extension to side of existing dwelling to form enlarged utility and bedroom accommodation, new pitched roof and associated alterations</p>	<p>No comment Note use of delegated powers</p>
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ii) 18/04446/OUT Stocksfield Golf Club: Outline planning application for residential development

The Chair referred to a previously circulated document which had been submitted by Stocksfield Golf Club to Northumberland County Council (NCC). The document is a response to the decision of the Parish Council to object to the application and contains significant inaccurate statements. In particular the club criticises the Council's voting arrangements; questions the validity of the Council commenting on the application in respect of planning considerations; claims that the Council fundamentally misunderstands the nature of both the club and an outline planning application; and is critical of one individual councillor. Whilst it is unusual for the Council to make a subsequent comment on any planning application, members were concerned that any members of the public who read the club's document on NCC's website should be able to understand the Council's position. After discussion it was AGREED to submit a further comment to NCC based upon the previously circulated draft (as amended). **Action: Clerk**

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Members also discussed the specific comments made by the club that relate to a particular councillor and AGREED to write to the club to explain the process for reporting an alleged breach of the Council's Code of Conduct, correct the misinterpretation of the Council's voting arrangements and, in the absence of the club making a formal complaint, request that the club refrains from repeating the allegation. **Action: Clerk**

c) Rights of Way and Environment Advisory Group

Notes of the meeting on 11/03/19

Members noted the notes of the meeting. Dr Vickers added that the station adoption group is now in existence and the river watch report showed the effective use of the water testing kits which had been funded by the Parish Council.

19/4/46 Stocksfield Remembrance Service 2019

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk concerning the traffic management arrangements for future services. The increased attendance at the event has placed pressure on the area that separates the attendees from passing traffic to the extent that safety could be compromised. After discussion it was AGREED to

- make an application under the Town Police Clauses Act (1847) for a full closure of the A695 on Sunday 10 November 2019 and for the purposes of the Remembrance Service.
- authorise the Clerk to liaise with NCC to make the detailed arrangements and
- notify those houses and other premises that will be affected by any closure of the Council's intention to make the application

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

19/4/47 Parish Council Plan Group

The Chair reported that the Group has met and each member has been allocated one or two themes to research. The Group will next meet on 29 April 2019.

19/4/48 Bus shelter at New Ridley

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk which identified necessary repairs to the bus shelter at New Ridley. After discussion it was AGREED to undertake the work using the Council's Groundsman. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

19/4/49 Any other urgent business

There was no other business

19/4/50 Date of next meeting

Monday 13 May 2019. The Council's Annual Parish Meeting will also be held on this day, immediately before the main meeting.

Members RESOLVED under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and members of the public to consider the remaining item.

19/4/51 Land adjacent to 15 Branch End Terrace

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk which outlined the refusal of the Land Registry to register the Council's possessory title to the land. After discussion it was AGREED that the Clerk explores other alternatives to resolve the matter.

Action: Clerk

The Chair thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 8.47pm.