

Stocksfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 13 May 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 7.46pm and welcomed those present.

19/5/52 Election of Chair of the Parish Council

Ms Hunt was elected as Chair of the Parish Council (proposed Prof Thompson, seconded Mr Parker) and it was AGREED to suspend paragraph 3.2 of Standing Orders relating to the term of office of the Chair. The acceptance of office was completed

19/5/53 Election of Vice Chair of the Parish Council

Dr Vickers was elected as Vice Chair of the Parish Council (proposed Mr Parker, seconded Mr Parke) and it was AGREED to suspend paragraph 3.3 of Standing Orders relating to the term of officer of the Vice Chair.

19/5/54 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19/5/55 Public Participation

The Chair reported having received a significant number of emails from a resident, also copied to the County Councillor, in respect of goods vehicles which are not from the North East using the A695. It has already been explained to the resident that this is not the responsibility of the Parish Council. Mrs Dale said that as far as the person is concerned a line has been drawn under that and there should be no further correspondence from the resident at all on that subject. Mrs Dale clarified that this related to communication between herself and the resident. The Chair referred to another resident who had made direct contact with goods vehicle operators whose vehicles appeared to be using New Ridley Road excessively and who had received an explanation from at least one of the operators.

19/5/56 County Councillor update

Mrs Dale updated the Council in respect of door to door sales in the area, lighting at the north side of Stocksfield Station, ticket machines at the station and fibre cable laying on the A695. She said that the planters on the A695 at Ford Rise will not be installed by Northumberland County Council (NCC) and her budget was insufficient to fund them. Mrs Dale said people were quite upset that the seat at New Ridley was removed and she has received complaints. She has paid for removal of the gorse bushes on private land that had obstructed the view from the seat's previous location. Mrs Dale said she will provide a seat there but nothing will happen until the traffic calming measures are introduced. The Chair reminded Mrs Dale that the original decision to relocate the seat was founded on safety concerns. Mrs Dale said that NCC would not allow anything to be installed unless it was safe. She AGREED to come back to the Council once the final detail is known. Mrs Dale then left the meeting.

19/5/57 Advisory Groups

Members AGREED that the existing terms of reference of the Advisory Groups should be unchanged and that Mrs Furniss would join the Rights of Way and Environment Advisory Group.

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19/5/58 Review of existing arrangements for Internal Audit

Members considered a report of the Clerk and AGREED that the existing arrangements for internal audit are effective.

19/5/59 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2019/20

It was AGREED to appoint Mr Peter Basnett as internal auditor for the financial year 2019/20.

19/5/60 Schedule of Parish Council Meetings 2019/20

Members AGREED to approve the previously circulated schedule of Council meetings.

19/5/61 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 April 2019

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2019 were a true and accurate record (proposed Dr Vickers, seconded Mrs Furniss).

19/5/62 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

19/5/63 Finance

a) Approval of April payments

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

b) Schedule of recurring payments 2019/20

Members AGREED to approve the previously circulated schedule of recurring payments.

c) Report of Internal Auditor 2018/19

The report of the internal auditor for 2018/19 was considered. It was AGREED to receive and note the report and that no action was necessary in consequence of the report.

d) Approval of statement of receipts and payments 2018/19

It was AGREED to approve the statement of receipts and payments for the financial year 2018/19.

e) Approval of annual governance statement 2018/19

Members considered and APPROVED the annual governance statement 2018/19.

f) Approval of accounting statements of accounts 2018/19

Members considered and APPROVED the accounting statements 2018/19.

g) Approval of statement of significant variances 2018/19

Members considered and APPROVED the statement of significant variances 2018/19

h) Northumberland and Newcastle Society – subscription renewal

It was AGREED to renew membership at a cost of £25.

i) Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NorthALC) membership renewal

After discussion it was AGREED to renew membership at a cost of £577.91.

19/5/64 Parish Council Representatives

On 25 April 2019 the Chair had attended a meeting of the East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils' Forum. At the meeting Stephen Rickitt (NorthALC) spoke about planned training for councillors and clerks, the pending design of template policies for social media and for safeguarding, and the newly appointed Director of Planning at NCC (Mr Rob Murfin) who is keen to develop the role of Parish Councils in the planning process. She suggested that the Council might consider inviting Mr Murfin to a future meeting of the Council.

19/5/65 Advisory Groups

a) General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

i) Notes of GGAG meeting 15/04/19

Members noted the previously circulated notes.

ii) Bank reconciliation to 31 March 2019

Members noted that Mr Parke has checked and will sign the bank reconciliation to 31/03/19.

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iii) Seat at New Ridley

A previously circulated report of the Clerk referred to a further request from the same resident that the seat at New Ridley be reinstated in its original position in the light of the removal of the gorse on the adjacent land. The Chair reminded members that the original decision of the Council had been influenced by safety concerns due to the proximity of the seat to the road and the excessive speed of passing vehicles. After discussion it was AGREED to take no action on this request on safety grounds. Members recognised the comments of the GGAG that, if future traffic calming measures significantly change the risk of injury from passing vehicles at the location, it may be possible for the Council to reconsider the request.

Members also discussed the information provided by Mrs Dale, the County Councillor, in respect of her intention to replace the seat and expressed concern that best use of funding would be ensured by working together, rather than in isolation. It was AGREED that the Clerk should write to Mrs Dale and NCC to provide details of the reasons behind the Council's decision.

Action: Clerk

iv) Proposed planters on A695

The proposal to install planters had been withdrawn by the County Councillor. **DISCHARGED**

v) Data Protection Policy - review

After discussion it was AGREED that the Data Protection Policy should remain unchanged and be reviewed in May 2023. The Clerk will ensure that any legislative changes that affect the policy are brought to the attention of the Council. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

vi) Email and Internet Policy - review

The Chair said that, in considering the Email and Internet policy, GGAG members felt that all Councillors should be reminded of Appendix A – Guidance on the use of social media by members, in order to ensure that they are taking due regard of internet security and that their communications remain proper and appropriate. It was AGREED that Appendix B (the standard format for the signature on all Council emails) should be amended as previously circulated, that the policy should otherwise remain unchanged and that it should be reviewed in May 2021.

Action: Clerk DISCHARGED

vii) Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) – subscription renewal

It was AGREED to renew the Council's membership at a cost of £36.

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.

19/00947/FUL Pennlea, 8 Meadowfield Road	Construction of single storey extensions to side and rear	No comment Note use of delegated powers
19/00967/FUL Garden Reach, 41 Painshawfield Road	Demolition of existing porch and construction of an oak framed porch to front	No comment Note use of delegated powers
19/01393/FUL 19 Birkdene	Conversion of existing garage to provide garden room/bedroom, shower room and utility room and extension for storage	No comment Note use of delegated powers

ii) 18/04446/OUT Stocksfield Golf Club: Outline planning application for residential development

The Chair referred to the Council's objection to the above application and the right of the Council to be represented at any meeting of the Local Area Council where the application would be considered and determined. The Council has previously been represented at some planning determinations but not on every occasion. After discussion it was AGREED that the Council will not be represented at the determination of the application but delegated authority was granted jointly to the Chair and the Convener of the PAG to reconsider the matter in the light of the case officer's report (when available).

Action: Chair, Mr Parker

19/5/66 Land adjacent to 15 Branch End Terrace

The Chair referred to a previously circulated report of the Clerk concerning the maintenance of the above mentioned land and his discussions with adjacent landowners. After discussion it was AGREED to terminate the Council's existing arrangements for the maintenance of the land, with the exception of the planted area at the northwest corner, on the understanding that the owner

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of 15 Branch End Terrace will maintain the land and boundaries to an acceptable standard and to remove the task from the Groundsman's contract. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

19/5/67 Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2019-2021

The Chair referred to the previously circulated consultative document from NCC and after discussion it was AGREED to make no comment. **DISCHARGED**

Mrs Furniss left the meeting.

19/5/68 Parish Council Plan Group

The Chair reported that action points are being developed on various themes. The Group has discussed using a stand at the Stocksfield Festival on 13 July 2019 to enable residents to comment on the proposals. Members who are able and willing to assist on the day were asked to contact the Chair as soon as possible.

19/5/69 Northumberland Day 2019

The Chair referred to a previously circulated email and newsletter from NCC regarding the above, which will be on Sunday 26 May. The event aims to celebrate the county and act as a force for tourism and economic benefit and community cohesion by drawing together events across Northumberland. After discussion it was AGREED to take no action in view of the short notice and to reconsider the matter early next year. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

19/5/70 Climate Emergency Petition

The Chair referred to previously circulated documentation relating to a petition to NCC to declare a 'climate emergency' and undertake other actions in support of preventing climate change. The petition has been instigated by a group of Northumberland residents under the name 'Climate Action Northumberland' and has asked the Council to support the petition by writing to NCC and to publicise the petition locally. After discussion it was AGREED to publicise the petition on the Council's website and social media page without indicating support for or opposition to the petition from the Council. **Action: Clerk DISCHARGED**

19/5/71 Any other urgent business

There was no other business.

19/5/72 Date of next meeting

Monday 3 June 2019.