

Stocksfield Parish Council

Papers for the meeting of
the Parish Council
to be held on

Monday 2 December 2024

Additional papers and reports may be included on the website where it has been impractical to incorporate them within this document or may have been circulated separately.

This document relates only to the items to be considered during the section of the meeting which is open to the public and press.

Documents containing confidential information are not included, even though the related item may be considered during the open section of the meeting.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
held on Monday 4 November 2024
at Stocksfield Community Centre**

Present: Professor P Vickers (Chair), Mrs A Dale, Mr K Graham, Mr J Harrison, Mr T Hills,
Mr M Parker, Mrs A Dale

Ms L Guthrie (Clerk to the Council)

Apologies: Mr C Liddle

Professor Vickers opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed those present to the meeting.

24/11/119 Apologies for absence

It was AGREED to authorise the absence of Mr Liddle.

24/11/120 Declarations of Interest

Mrs Dale declared her interest as a County Councillor in planning matters. Mr Harrison declared an interest as Jo Robinson is his neighbour.

24/11/121 Public Participation

Mr Hills noted that the hedging at New Ridley Road at Stobarts Field has still not been cut.

A resident has contacted him about a water leak near the Baptist church, this has already been reported to Northumbrian Water who say they will repair it.

He further noted that posters were affixed to bus shelters for an event and after removal they have left substantial sticky residue. The Clerk is contacting Visit Hexham about the issue as a named party on the posters.

24/11/122 Co-option of Mrs J Robinson

After discussion, it was AGREED unanimously to co-opt Mrs Robinson to the Council and to permit Mrs Robinson to complete and deliver a declaration of acceptance of office before the date of the next meeting of the Council. Mr Graham then returned to the meeting and the Chair confirmed his co-option and welcomed him as a member of the Parish Council. Mr Graham took his seat as a councillor. **Action: Clerk and Mrs Robinson DISCH**

24/11/123 Clerk's Salary Review

The Chair brought forward item 16 of the agenda so it could be discussed during the Confidential session with public excluded. It was AGREED to award the Clerk a salary increase of two spinal points to spinal point 28. **Action: Chair and Clerk DISCH**

24/11/124 County Councillor update

Mrs Dale had provided a written update which had been previously circulated to members. This included an update on the hedging at Stobart's Field which the owners have agreed to cut.

Mrs Robinson joined the meeting at 19.28 and was welcomed by the Chair who confirmed her co-option and welcomed her as a member of the Parish Council. Mrs Robinson took her seat as a councillor.

24/11/125 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2024

It was AGREED that the previously circulated minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2024 were a true and accurate record. **Action: Clerk discharged**

24/11/126 Clerk's Report

The Clerk provided a written update which was circulated ahead of the meeting and a copy is appended to these minutes.

24/11/127 Matters Arising

a) *Tree inspection reports (previous item 24/10/107(g))*

It was AGREED (proposed Mr Hills, seconded Mr Graham) to accept the quote from MWA to carry out a tree survey and implement OTISS. **Action: Clerk DISCH**

b) *Microsoft 365 (previous item 23/3/28)*

The Chair proposed to accept the Clerk's recommendation to take out a subscription to Microsoft 365 Apps for a cost of £8.60pcm and further to apply for a Unity Corporate MultiPay Card with a limit on spend of £500 which was AGREED. **Action: Clerk DISCH**

c) *Emails and website (previous item 24/5/40)*

All proposals were AGREED.

Action: Clerk

d) *Village map (previous item 23/11/164)*

It was AGREED that Mrs Dale would work with the Clerk to utilise an existing map and spend would not exceed £100. **Action: Clerk and Mrs Dale**

e) *Remembrance Service (previous item 24/9/95)*

It was AGREED (proposed Mrs Robinson, seconded Mr Graham) to make a donation of £250 to the Royal British Legion. **Action: Clerk**

24/11/128 Finance

a) *Approval of October 2024 payments*

It was AGREED to approve the payments for October 2024 as detailed in the previously circulated schedule and the summary of receipts and payments for the months was noted.

b) *Budget 2024/25*

Members received the previously circulated Budget Report from the Clerk.

c) *Draft budget 2025/26*

Members discussed the draft budget generally.

24/11/129 Rights of Way and Environment Group

a) *Proposed diversion of FP15*

Members AGREED to make no comment.

b) *Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan*

Members noted that Mrs Dale has already responded to NCC on this draft.

24/11/130 Planning Advisory Group

Members noted the planning report and noted use of delegated authority as outlined below:

New application(s) for note/endorsement/decision:

Reference/ Address	Description	Parish Council recommendation – (see Planning Report for details if applicable)	NCC Decision/Date Copies of the Planning Decisions can be found on NCC website
24/03530/FUL Oakhurst 1 Apperley Road	Erection of 1no dwelling, with associated access, landscaping and parking (self/custom build)	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
24/03265/FUL Skirbeck, 38 Painshawfield Road	Proposed first floor ensuite extension with garden store below.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	

24/11/131 Parish Council Representatives

None.

24/11/132 NE43 News

Members AGREED the proposed charges for the 16 page edition and chose the winner of the Broomley First School drawing competition which will feature on the front page. **Action: Clerk DISCH**

24/11/133 Stocksfield Festival 2025

It was AGREED (proposed Mr Hills, seconded Mr Graham) to approve the application for the festival on the same terms as in 2023. **Action: Clerk bring forward**

24/11/134 SCA heating cost proposals

Members discussed the matter generally and agreed to discuss the matter further in the December meeting. **Action: Clerk bring forward**

24/11/135 Request for Donation

Members AGREED (proposed Mrs Dale, seconded Mr Harrison) to donate £50 to WAG. **Action: Clerk DISCH**

24/11/136 Any other business

None.

24/11/137 Date of next meeting

Monday 2 December 2024

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 21.04.

Appendix

CLERK'S REPORT – NOVEMBER 2024

1. Unity bank accounts

Users have been updated to the Clerk, the Chair and Cllr Parker.

2. Bulb planting at Branch End Play Area

Daffodil bulb planting went ahead in collaboration with Broomley First School on the morning of Tuesday 8th October 2024 and was a huge success. All of the children at the school attended, it was huge fun and we planted well over 200 bulbs. Many thanks to all those who volunteered at the event and to the school for supporting the event.

3. Swarco speed sign at Brumwell Court

Swarco confirm that the repair works were carried out in July and the radar was replaced.

4. Branch End bench

A replacement bench has been ordered from GE Views for a cost of £565.46 plus VAT and will be delivered and fitted by the groundsman on Tuesday 12 November 2024.

5. Branch End Play Equipment

Installation has now been completed and there will be an opening ceremony on Friday 8th November (after half term) with the school council in attendance. The equipment will be open to the public ahead of this date, given the delay before the ceremony, and has been added to the Zurich insurance policy at no additional premium. The Hexham Courant will be featuring the new equipment and opening ceremony in an article in the w/c 11 November edition.

6. Wording in SCAN re new NE43 News

The next edition of SCAN will feature a short entry letting residents know about the new look NE43 News coming out shortly.

Public Participation

A resident has contacted the Clerk to note that:

“A wooden communications pole (No.41) has been erected at the west entry to New Ridley village just before Lead Road. The pole is visually intrusive. It spoils the “gateway” entry into the village and it blights the open panoramic view enjoyed by people resting on the new bench provided by the parish council in the wide grass verge. A better location for the pole would be somewhere within this wide grass verge either side of the bench close the field boundary. This would overcome the above issue and the wires between the poles would cross the carriageway fewer times. I contacted Cllr Anne Dale and the highways department at Northumberland CC and they say there is nothing technically wrong with the chosen location of the pole. However, there appears equally to be no reason why the pole could not be placed on the grass verge on the opposite side of the road. I expect the council’s highways department would consider either location as acceptable. I understand that the parish council provided the new bench in the wide grass verge to offer a safe resting place for people wishing to enjoy the panoramic view as an alternative to the other bench situated very close to high speed traffic approaching the village.

I wonder if the parish council is aware of this recent development and has made, or will make, representations to the county council to request that the pole is relocated so that the views from the parish council bench remain unspoiled.”

A photograph of the pole is shown below.



County Councillor Update

Mrs Dale’s report will be circulated separately to members prior to the meeting.

Agenda Item 6

Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report will be circulated separately to members prior to the meeting.

Agenda Item 7(a)

SCA Electricity Charges

SCA will consider the matter of heating charges further and will come back to the Council with a proposal in the new year. Councillors are asked to note the update.

Stocksfield Parish Council**Agenda Item 8(a)**

Listing of payments between 01/11/2024 and 30/11/2024

Date	Ref.	Account	Supplier / customer	Paid	Auth	Net	VAT	Total
01/11/2024		Transfer Seats	Gordon Ellis	Y	CKC	565.46	113.09	678.55
01/11/2024		Transfer Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Northumbrian Citizens Advice Bureau	Y	COU	500.00	0.00	500.00
04/11/2024		Transfer Grounds Services contract	Neetfleet	Y	CON	2,060.00	0.00	2,060.00
04/11/2024		Transfer BEPA maintenance	Neetfleet	Y	CK	20.00	0.00	20.00
04/11/2024		Transfer Grounds Services ex contract	Neetfleet	Y	CK	60.00	0.00	60.00
04/11/2024		Transfer Sports field maintenance	Neetfleet	Y	CK	90.00	0.00	90.00
04/11/2024		Transfer Salary	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	1,569.10	0.00	1,569.10
04/11/2024		Transfer National Insurance	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	111.93	0.00	111.93
04/11/2024		Transfer Payroll	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	8.33	1.67	10.00
04/11/2024		Transfer Employee pension	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	-41.96	0.00	-41.96
06/11/2024	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	12.88	0.64	13.52
06/11/2024	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	12.51	0.63	13.14
06/11/2024	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	12.51	0.63	13.14
18/11/2024	DD	Employee pension	NEST Pension	Y	CON	41.96	0.00	41.96
18/11/2024	DD	Employer pension contribution	NEST Pension	Y	CON	31.47	0.00	31.47
19/11/2024		Transfer BEPA maintenance	Kompan	Y	COU	5,803.00	1,160.60	6,963.60
19/11/2024		Transfer Newsletter delivery	Accent Distribution	Y	COU	600.00	0.00	600.00
19/11/2024		Transfer Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	WAG	Y	COU	50.00	0.00	50.00
20/11/2024		Transfer Website	Multimedia Convert	Y	CK	60.00	0.00	60.00
27/11/2024	DD	Telephone	BT	Y	CON	27.11	5.42	32.53
30/11/2024	DD	Bank charges	Unity Trust	Y	CON	8.40	0.00	8.40

Authorities key

CON Continuing authority of the Council

COU Other existing authority of the Council

CK Delegated authority of the Clerk

CKC Delegated authority of the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair

Stocksfield Parish Council

Summary report from 1-Nov-2024 to 30-Nov-2024 (figures exclude VAT)

Agenda Item 8(a)

Payments		Environment (contd)		Play Facilities (contd)	
Employment		Defibrillators	37.90	Footbridge	0.00
Salary	1,569.10	Tree inspections	0.00	Total Play Facilities	<u>5,823.00</u>
National Insurance	111.93	Bus shelters	0.00	Community Support	
Employee pension	0.00	Christmas tree	0.00	Remembrance Service	0.00
Employer pension contribution	31.47	Misc Environment	0.00	Burial Board	0.00
Payroll	8.33	Litter bins	0.00	Grants - Sec 137 Parish	0.00
Clerk expenses	0.00	VATCS maintenance	0.00	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	550.00
Total Employment	<u>1,720.83</u>	Climate change	0.00	Grants - general	0.00
Administration		Total Environment	<u>2,723.36</u>	Total Community Support	<u>550.00</u>
Office rent	0.00	Communications		Contingency	
Meeting room hire	0.00	Website	60.00	Contingency	0.00
Telephone	27.11	Newsletter printing	0.00	Total Contingency	<u>0.00</u>
Stationery	0.00	Newsletter design	0.00		
Office equipment	0.00	Newsletter delivery	600.00	Total Payments	<u><u>11,602.70</u></u>
Photocopier lease	0.00	Misc comms	0.00	Receipts	
Photocopy and print	0.00	Total Communications	<u>660.00</u>	Precept	
Audit fees	0.00	Sports Facilities		Precept	0
Courses and training	0.00	Grass cutting (SF)	0.00	Total Precept	0.00
Subscriptions	0.00	Sports field rent	0.00	Sports facilities	
Insurance	0.00	Sports field rates	0.00	Sports field rents	<u>0.00</u>
Misc Admin	0.00	Sports field initiatives	0.00	MUGA rent	0
Bank charges	8.40	Car park loan	0.00	Total Sports facilities	0.00
Councillor expenses	0.00	Sports field maintenance	90.00	Misc Receipts	
Total Administration	<u>35.51</u>	MUGA rent	0.00	VAT Repayments	0.00
Environment		Total Sports Facilities	<u>90.00</u>	Miscellaneous Receipts	25.00
Estate and verge cutting	0.00	Play Facilities		Grounds services recharge	<u>0.00</u>
Seats	565.46	Grass cutting (PF)	0.00	Bank Interest	0
Planters	0.00	Equipment inspection	0.00	Total Misc Receipts	<u><u>25.00</u></u>
Bedding plants	0.00	BEPA maintenance	5,823.00		
Grounds Services contract	2,060.00	Kates Plain Maintenance	0.00	Total Receipts	<u><u>25.00</u></u>
Grounds Services ex contract	60.00	Kates Plain rent	0.00		

Stocksfield Parish Council**Agenda Item 8(b)**Budget Monitoring Report to
General Fund

30/11/2024

	Annual Budget	Receipts/ Payments to date	% spent or committed
RECEIPTS			
Precept	102425	102425	
Groundsman contract	750		
Sports Facilities	3043		
Defibrillator			
Misc		937	
VAT refund			
Total Receipts	106218	103362	
PAYMENTS			
Employment	22313	12127	54.35%
Administration	8655	5678	65.61%
Environment	44125	22926	51.96%
Communications	5780	1520	26.30%
Sports Facilities	19955	10679	53.51%
Play Facilities	11420	22283	195.12%
Community Support	6400	3350	52.34%
Contingency	2500	0	0.00%
Total payments	121148	78563	64.85%

Notes:

The 2024/25 pay award has been agreed as a flat rate payable across the spinal column points and is payable retrospectively from 1 April 2024. The anticipated additional cost to the Council is yet to be calculated.

Draft Budget 2025/6

This has been circulated previously to Councillors. Councillors are asked to agree the budget and precept for the financial year 2025/2026.

Planning Advisory Group

Agenda Item 9

New application(s) for note/endorsement/decision:

Reference/ Address	Description	Parish Council recommendation – (see Planning Report for details if applicable)	NCC Decision/Date Copies of the Planning Decisions can be found on NCC website
24/03978/FUL Arnside House, Birches Nook	Refurbishment of ground floor shop unit and first floor apartment; Installation of new shopfront; additional bedroom to first floor apartment; associated internal and external alterations.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
23/01717/FUL Land at Whittonstall, Consett	Construction and operation of a renewable energy scheme comprising ground mounted photovoltaics with associated battery storage and associated infrastructure.	To be discussed at PC December meeting Objection made 21 July 2023	
24/03747/VARYCO Nene Cottage 13 Meadowfield Road	Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and discharge of conditions 3 (materials), 7 (ground gas) and 17 (landscaping scheme) on approved application 22/03233/FUL to allow amendments to cantilever, first floor windows and first floor cladding, removal of panelling and shutters, convert ground floor garage into additional master suite, amendments to retaining wall and first floor balcony, removal of chimney feature, omit roof lights to allow installation of solar panels, restructure ground and first floor internal layout, refurbish existing garage, addition of fence on West boundary	No comment Note use of delegated powers	

Existing planning applications (for information only)			
Reference/ Address	Description	Parish Council recommendation – (see Planning Report for details if applicable)	NCC Decision/Date Copies of the Planning Decisions can be found on NCC website
Pending or recently decided application(s) for information:			
24/03530/FUL Oakhurst 1 Apperley Road	Erection of 1 no dwelling, with associated access, landscaping and parking (self/custom build)	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
24/03265/FUL Skirbeck, 38 Painshawfield Road	Proposed first floor ensuite extension with garden store below.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Application withdrawn 11 November 2024
24/03053/FUL The Whinns 3 Apperley Road	Construction of a new dwelling with associated landscaping and infrastructure.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
24/01965/AGRGDO Land west of Kipperlynn Farm	Notification for prior approval for a general purpose storage building	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Appeal made to Secretary of State
24/02793/FUL Maple Cottage 9 Apperley Road	Extension to existing kitchen, infill of existing door and one window to North West Elevation. (Retrospective).	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
24/02661/FUL Applegarth 30 Painshawfield Road	The proposed works seek to replace an existing detached dwelling for a new self build detached dwelling and detached garage with gym above	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Granted 13 November 2024
24/02519/FUL Kent Cottage 60 Meadowfield Road	2 storey extension to create a large kitchen, utility, bedroom and improved garage	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Granted 15 November 2024
23/01717/FUL Land at Whittonstall	Exagen - proposed Highfield Energy Park Further information has been made available in relation to Environmental Statement which has already been provided for this application	Objection to extension to the planning lifetime to 10 years	
22/03027/FUL Mickley Bank Farm	Retrospective application for the erection of storage sheds – appeal to Secretary of State	No further comment made. No comment was made for original application which was refused 04/11/2022	Refusal is being appealed
20/03997/FUL Broomley House Main Road	Construction of detached dwelling and garage, retaining wall to southern boundary, new boundary treatments and associated works and landscaping (retrospective)	Objection. See Parish Council minute 21/9/116(a)	
PRE APP			

a) **23/01717/FUL Land at Whittonstall, Consett – papers are available at:**

<https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RUHJA5QS0ML00>

NCC has granted a time extension for responding to allow Councillors to discuss the application.

Agenda Item 11

Business rates for Sports Fields

Northumberland County Council has contacted the Council regarding the business rates payable for the Sports Fields. Previously, the following discounts have been applied to the business rates payable:

- (a) Small business relief
- (b) 75% Retail, hospitality and leisure
- (c) Transitional relief

In the year 2024/25, this resulted in a reduction in rates from £2,395.20 to £205.32 which was paid in May 2024. In 2023/24, rates payable were £186.65 and in 2022/23 rates payable were £355.54.

NCC has now confirmed that Retail, hospitality and leisure relief is not permitted for precepting authorities and should not have been applied. NCC has therefore reissued the business rates invoices for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25 to exclude this relief. The sum of £1,408.03 is therefore now payable and future years' rates will not include Retail, hospitality and leisure relief. Councillors are asked to approve this payment and note the position regarding future rates.

Agenda Item 12

Defibrillators electricity supply

The Council's current contract for the metered power supply to the cabinets at Ridley Mill, Hindley and Broomley is due to expire. The table below shows the current charges, the flexible charges which will apply after 24 January 2025 and the cheapest option that BG Lite is able to offer from January based on a 12 month contract. The total cost for each existing cabinet is also shown for each scenario, based on the estimated average usage.

	Current tariff	Flexible tariff (from January)	12 month contract (from January)
Daily standing charge	£0.40	£2.1707	£0.50
Charge/kWh	£0.3025	£0.3490	£0.2635
Total annual estimated charge per cabinet	£177.85	£807.03	£193.62

It is recommended that councillors consider whether it is necessary to delegate authority to the Clerk, in liaison with the Chair, to enter into an agreement with an energy supplier in respect of supplies to those connections.

Councillors are asked to consider the request and any conditions that should be attached to any permission granted.

Agenda Item 13

Government consultation on remote meetings

Northumberland ALC has written to the Council to advise that:

“Since temporary COVID-19 powers ended in May 2021, we have been at the forefront of a national campaign to allow parish and town councils to hold remote council meetings. This is why we strongly welcome the deputy prime minister's announcement that the government is committed to allowing councils to hold remote council meetings and published a consultation paper, which closes on 19 December 2024. We will, of course, be responding, but I want to encourage all parish and town councils,

county associations, and individual councillors and clerks to participate in this essential consultation. Your responses are vital in demonstrating the continued strong support for this flexibility, building on the momentum from the previous call for evidence.”

The consultation questions have been previously circulated to Councillors separately. Councillors are asked to agree what response to provide, if any.

Agenda Item 14

Play Areas Advisory Group

Councillors are asked to consider the proposal of Mrs Dale which has been previously circulated separately.

Parish Council Meeting Calendar for 2024/25 for information

Parish Council: (current)

Monday 6 January 2025

Monday 3 February 2025

Monday 3 March 2025

Advisory Group Meetings:

General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

All Parish Councillors, whether or not members of the Advisory Group are welcome to attend GGAG meetings

(All commence at 6.30pm via Microsoft Teams)

Monday 9 December 2024

Monday 20 January 2025

Monday 17 February 2025

Monday 17 March 2025

Rights of Way & Environment Advisory Group (RoWEAG)

TBA

Communications Advisory Group

TBA

Sports Fields User Group (SFUG)

TBA