

Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th June 2006 in the Supper room of the Parish Hall at 7.45pm

Present: Councillors Horton, Nitsch, Howey, Ryder and Heslop. Also present were District Cllr Latham, County Cllr Thompson, A member of the press and 20 members of the public.

1. **Apologies** were received from Cllr Cairns.

2. **Cooption:** Following an expression of interest from Mr Andy Dunhill, the council agreed to co-opt him and he agreed, signing the necessary forms.

It was also agreed to that Cllr Nitsch would take up the second position on the Village Hall trust committee, together with Cllr Cairns.

3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

4. **Matters arising:**

a. Website: Cllr Horton had obtained costings from Stocksfield for both setting up a website and for maintaining it. The set up cost quoted was £500. Cllr Heslop suggested there should be further quotes for the work. Cllr Ryder was concerned about the immediacy of information for Riding Mill if done by someone in Stocksfield. There was some more discussion. It was agreed that it be set up, but that a small working party should look in more detail at the running costs and the best way to get that done.

b. It was reported that so far there had been 8 positive expressions of interest in the tender; and two refusals.

5. **Pre-School:**

Cllr Nitsch declared an interest in the subject. The public were allowed to hold discussion on this matter.

Mrs Humble, Chair of the Pre-School, summarised the state of affairs for those who had not been at the APM. The essential point is that the increase in rental charges by the Village Hall Trust could have significant effect on the viability of the Pre-School. Facts and figures as requested by the Parish Council had been provided to Council members. The rent will be approximately double from £1500 to £3000. Cllr Latham pointed out that the rents had originally been very low in the Millennium Hall to comply with the terms of the Lottery Funding used to help build it. Cllr Thompson indicated he could provide some funding but it could only be for capital items. Mr Dawson raised the issue of the importance of the Pre-School to the village. This point was reiterated by many people there. The school Governors want to support the Pre-School as well. As Custodian Trustees, the Parish Council could act as an intermediary and liaise with the Village Hall Trust on a way forward. It was noted that differential charging for the various member groups was an option. The Treasurer of the Pre-School, Steve Foskett, indicated that reserves were being used at present to offset deficits. He pointed out that donations to the Charity could be gift aided which benefited the Pre-School by 28pence for every pound. Cllr Horton reiterated that a working party would be a good idea to thrash out the issues with the VHT.

At this point, members of the public who wished to, left the meeting and the Council continued the discussion amongst themselves.

There was much detailed argument. Cllr Ryder noted that the VHT already received a large grant from the Parish Council and that the Council should possibly look at reallocating its 'free resource'. The Pre-School issue for now was an immediate problem. All noted the importance to the village of continued use of both Halls. There is obvious fear amongst the parents in the village about the long- term status of the pre-school if funding becomes tighter.

Cllr Nitsch did make a couple of comments including the fact that the long-term survival could become an issue. Cllr Ryder suggested a stopgap funding of £500 and Cllr Dunhill agreed with that. A working party with the VHT was suggested and it was agreed that Cllrs Horton, Nitsch and Howey should be on that from the Council's side. The three stage approach was formally agreed: a) the intermediate funding; b) the working party with the VHT to thrash out longer term solution; and c) the Parish council would look at how it allocates the 'free resource' prior to the budget meeting which is in December. The Clerk would write to Mrs Niven and indicate that the Chairman would be in touch with her.

6. Planning

2006/0475 Dower House east/listed - Withdrawn
06/00082/TPO The Rookery, Riding Mill - Consent given

Cllr Horton raised the matter of change of use application under consideration for the Post Office and felt it needed a brief discussion. Both Cllrs Horton and Heslop objected to the application because of the permanent loss of Post Office this would imply. It appears that the property has never been put up for sale as retail premises, which it should be for a period of a year. The Council will ask the planners to take this into consideration. Even if the Post Office cannot be returned, the retail space should be kept for other possible uses. Councillors felt that other villagers should protest individually if they felt strongly on the issue.

7. Correspondence:

a) General, for circulation
b) Tynedale Council: A letter had been received from the council with respect to a special meeting concerning the down-grading at the Hexham hospital. Although short notice, it was felt that at least one Councillor should attend. Cllr Heslop volunteered to go and Cllr Nitsch indicated he might also be able to get there.

8. Finance:

a) The financial statement and receipts were accepted. Proposed by Cllr Heslop and seconded by Cllr Ryder
b) The following payments were authorised. Following the earlier agreement re the Pre-school, an additional payment of £500 was added to the list. Cllr Ryder proposed the payments and Cllr Heslop seconded them

M F Anderton/Salary/May:	£344.06
M F Anderton/Expenses/May:	£102.06
MF Anderton/Extra payment:	£344.06
Northumbrian water:	£6.00
NALC/Ann.subs.:	£134.89
Loan repayment/bus shelter:	£500.00
Pre-school:	£500.00

c) The Annual accounts were presented and approved. The statement of assessment was approved, Points 1-8, all agreed as 'Yes'. A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes.

9. Minor matters:

It was agreed that the Playpark rota could now be turned over faster with more Councillors available, one per month preferably.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm. The next meeting is on July 10th.