

Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council held on 14th December 2009 in the Supper Room of the Parish Hall at 7.45pm

Present: Councillors Tulip, Mills, Reid, Dunhill, Eakins, Heslop, and Stephenson. Also present were Cllr Anne Dale, 14 members of the public and one member of the Press. Mr Stephen Rickitt, the Principal Solicitor from County Hall was in attendance.

1. Apologies: None

2. Minutes of last meeting: These were agreed as a true record, subject to a rewording as noted on the master copy.

3. Matters arising:

a) Cllr Eakins queried whether there was any further progress on the Covenants Policy. It was noted there was nothing further to report at present. The Chairman confirmed that the revised policy would be brought back to Council for final approval once the sections on Change of use and Charging policy were complete.

b) Cllr Dale had queried the legality of apologies from the Parish Council with the Standards Officer at County Hall. She quoted the main part of his email relating to past actions: 'I cannot envisage any circumstances under which individual parish councillors could be held liable personally for past conduct of the Parish Council. A Parish Council, as a separate legal entity, will, of course be responsible for continuing liabilities irrespective of any changes of its membership. Ordinarily a Parish Council would not be compelled to apologise in the brief circumstances described short of a court order. Otherwise it would be entirely up to the Parish Council. Relating to an error by the Clerk he suggests that if an apology is considered appropriate, it may be made by the Clerk, the Chairman, all Councillors or a combination of all the above.'

c) Cllr Stephenson and Cllr Heslop noted they did not agree with the wording of the letter sent to Mr Young. Cllr Eakins said he was unhappy about the process used.

d) Following receipt of a summary of the retention schedule, there was a query about the keeping of planning applications. These are only kept for a year unless there is an ongoing appeal or problem. They are always available for the Planning Department. Longer retention periods might be necessary in light of the new Covenants policy.

e) The Alder tree had been cut down very efficiently. The trees on the Main Road were those near to Dove Shield but were part of the County's remit. The Wellington will be chased again about the laurel trees. A tree near the Burn belonging to a property on Long Rigg had been felled at the homeowner's expense.

f) Weir: The fencer was being contacted to look at the cost and siting of a safety fence until such time as action was decided on the Weir.

g) Cllr Tulip asked for a note to be included in the minutes thanking his Vice-Chairman, the Councillors and the Clerk who had all helped in the last 2 months.

4. Budget/Precept: Cllr Eakins summarised the budget sheets sent out to Councillors previously – what has been spent to now, what is left to spend till the end of the financial year. There is an estimate of £8500 overspend, without any further unknown expenses. It was suggested leaving most headings the same except for Legal and Audit which should be increased to £6000. Miscellaneous was increased; there are no figures for any work on the weir; there is repayment for the bus shelter which was deferred from last year and if Millfield Road goes ahead, there will be ~£2300 per year. This makes an estimated Precept of £28000, an increase of 14%. The problem of the Weir could be left for a year other than some work possibly needing doing on the retaining walls. This can be discussed in the Spring which is the earliest any work could be considered. The proposed Precept of £28,000 was agreed by all.

5. Millfield Road: The Chairman agreed to take questions from the floor to himself or Mr Rickitt on this particular issue only.

After the current meeting, a letter will be circulated to all frontagers asking for their final decision on the questions asked. There were a couple of questions arising from letters already

sent in to the Council: A query on the specifications of the work – they were those provided by the County Council to include new kerbs, new road surface, footpaths; drop kerbs where necessary and some new drainage.

The breakdown of costs were as budgeted: £77000 from NCC; the PC made it up to £88500 dealing with the road in two sections and £10000 for the bridge. The discussions the PC held were on the percentage breakdown of costs as already presented to the frontagers in October. Borrowing the money to do the work will cost ~£2300 per year over 30 years, approximately £5.80 per household per year. Cllr Heslop reiterated his belief the whole works should have been done at the time of the 2007 referendum. Cllr Stephenson wished to speak but was reminded she held a prejudicial interest and could take no part in the discussion. She was allowed to stay in the meeting to listen however. Mrs Penn raised concerns. Mr Young reiterated arguments about the accessibility to amenities via Millfield Road. Mr Bundick from Broomhaugh suggested that as a non-Millfield road resident, he believed everyone should share the costs. Various points of view were put supporting the ideas of fair sharing. Cllr Dale pointed out that if adopted, the road would be maintained at the public expense in future. Mr Rickitt summarised the three options: that the PC pay for everything; the PC and the residents share the costs; or leave as it is. Mr Rickitt offered to draft the letter to the frontagers as a local government lawyer. Cllr Tulip thanked all for their participation. Most members of the public left at this stage. The Council agreed to ask Mr Rickitt to draft the letter with the different options as previously discussed. This would be distributed to all frontagers with a cut- off time limit, yet to be decided. Cllr Tulip thanked Mr Rickitt on behalf of the PC for his invaluable input.

6. Planning:

20090819 Porch, Greenlea, Whiteside Bank Conditional permission.

Cllr Dunhill pointed out that two TPOs had been up for planning without the hard copies being received by the Parish Council. This was in contravention of the new planning procedures. NALC were querying this and Cllr Dale also agreed to ask about it.

7. Correspondence:

a) General

b) East Tynedale Forum: Comments on the Wind Farm had been requested. Cllr Dunhill stated that the PC's position was largely neutral on this matter.

c) Tynedale Visitor: the regular request for a short piece had again been received. Cllr Stephenson kindly agreed to do this.

8. January Meeting: It was proposed that the January meeting be cancelled because of the long holiday period and the subsequent short gap between a possible January meeting and the February one. This was agreed.

9. Finance:

The financial statement and receipts were accepted by all Councillors.

The following payments were authorised by all councillors:-

MF Anderton Salary/November	£407.74
MF Anderton Exp/November	£63.85
Tree surgeon	£874.00
Northumbria water	£12.37
Marchburn Lane Res. Ass./S.137	£30.00
SLCC Subs 2010	£95.00
MF Anderton Salary/Dec	£407.74

10. Minor matters: Mrs Bundick asked about signs which differentiate more properly between Broomhaugh and Riding Mill. Cllr Dale agreed to find out what could be done.

It was noted that congratulations were in order for the excellent work done on the Parish Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.20