**Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 10th February 2014 in the Parish Hall.

**Councillors present:**

Cllr. Malcolm Reid (Chairman) Cllr. Andy Dunhill

Cllr. Jill Mills Cllr. Brian Singer

Cllr. Eileen Carew Cllr. Bill Cairns

Co-opted at meeting: Mrs Eileen Ewen

**In attendance:**

Cllr. Anne Dale – Northumberland County Council

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

Public (6): Mrs S Done, Mrs J Rowntree, Mrs S Soulsby, Mrs L Stephenson, Mr R Walker and Mrs H Yates.

Cllr. Reid opened the meeting at 7.52 pm.

1. **Apologies**

Mrs Pam Pryor, Chair of the Village Hall Trust.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

No disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting were given.

3. **Co-option of Councillor**

Cllr. Reid proposed and Cllr. Cairns seconded that Mrs Eileen Ewen be co-opted as a Councillor. This was unanimously agreed by the councillors. Cllr. Ewen then signed the requisite form and was welcomed to the Council.

4. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 9th December 2013**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th December 2013 were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Reid.

5. **Matters arising from the December meeting other than those listed on the agenda**

(i) *Minute 4(iii) – Long Rigg*

Long Rigg was discussed in the public pre-meeting. The Residents’ Association had held a meeting and would like to initiate discussions with NCC about having the road adopted. Cllr. Dale agreed to contact the Highways Department at NCC. The PC gave its support for this way forward.

**ACTION: ADa**

(ii) *Minute 4(v) – Railway Bridge*

The Clerk reported that she had written to Network Rail regarding the leaning parapet on the main road bridge over the railway. She had received an acknowledgement from Network Rail but no further information. Cllr. Dale offered to ask a Highways Officer from NCC to contact Network Rail to progress this matter.

**ACTION: CH/ADa**

(iii) *Minute 4(ix) – Waste Bin in Mill Race Gardens*

The Clerk confirmed that no charge was levied by NCC for emptying waste or dog bins. A waste bin could be purchased for approximately £200 and NCC would charge £80 to install it. The councillors unanimously agreed to approve the purchase of a bin.

**ACTION: CH**

(iv) *Minute 6 – Gymnastics Club*

It was reported that the Gymnastics Club had not yet reopened as they were still seeking to appoint a coach. It was hoped that it may now restart after Easter.

(v) *Minute 7 – Tennis Club*

The Tennis Club Management plan was discussed in the public pre-meeting. Some nearby residents were still unhappy with a number of proposals and it was agreed that Cllr. Dunhill should meet with the residents and the Tennis Club representatives.

**ACTION: AD**

(vi) *Minute 14 – Budget (Capital Expenditure projects for 2014/15)*

It was reported that a meeting had been held with the County’s Footpaths Officer to discuss the possible installation of a ramp to allow wheelchair access from the Parish Hall car park to the play park and tennis court. Drawings of the proposal were now needed in order to establish likely costs before the project could be taken further. Peter Howe would be asked for this.

**ACTION: CH/MR**

6. **West End Bus Shelter**

It was reported that the bus shelter had been installed and NCC would be returning within the next few days to complete the base works. A hand rail had been requested, approved and installed during the preparatory works. A request for a litter bin at the bus stop had been received and was unanimously approved by the councillors. The Clerk would need to check on its placement with the Transport Planning Officer. Cllr. Reid thanked Cllr. Carew for her efforts in facilitating this project. He also thanked Cllr. Dale for her contribution of £1000 towards the project.

**ACTION: CH**

7. **Fencing**

(i) Three quotes had been received to replace the fencing around the single tennis court. All had been extremely high and the PC was inclined to remove the fencing altogether and open up the area. Mrs Done, the chair of the Pre-School Committee, reported that for the pre-school to use this area it needed to be enclosed. She had secured offers of help to remove the old fence and install a new fence for free if the PC agreed to pay the cost of the materials. Councillors agreed to meet interested parties to discuss this new proposal and awaited a further quote.

**ACTION: AD**

(ii) It was reported that Cllr. Dale had obtained permission from NCC to carry out repairs to the fence on the road leading to the station. She offered to fund the cost of the materials and councillors unanimously agreed to approve additional hours for the handyman to carry out this work.

**ACTION: CH/ADa/Linden Stephenson**

(iii) Cllr. Dunhill reported that he had obtained a quote for improving the fence from the station to Broomhaugh. A discussion was held on ownership of the adjoining land and Cllr. Dale offered to ask NCC to do a land registry check.

**ACTION: ADa**

8. **Speed Signs**

The speed signs appeared to be working again although somewhat erratically. The Clerk had contacted SWARCO and because of the continued problems they had agreed to extend the warranty for a further six months (September 2014). Cllr. Reid had met the repair engineer before Christmas, had arranged for the signs to be properly set to be activated at 30mph, and had discussed whether the signs should be repositioned. The engineer had also suggested that the signs might be moved on to lamp posts and connected to mains electricity. Both options should be explored as a matter of urgency.

**ACTION: CH**

9. **Grass cutting**

It was reported that an amended invoice from NCC had been received which took into account the reduced number of times the grass had been cut in 2013. Councillors unanimously agreed to seek three quotes for the grass cutting contract for 2014.

**ACTION: CH**

10. **Access issues over Millfield Road bridge**

Two residents had reported recent incidents of ambulances trying to cross Millfield Road bridge. The Clerk had written to the Ambulance Service but Cllr. Dale reported that she had a meeting planned with the North East Ambulance Service Trust Director and she offered to highlight these two incidents directly with him. The PC thanked her for her offer and agreed to send her a copy of the letters.

A discussion was also held as to whether changing some postcodes on Millfield Road would help and again Cllr. Dale offered to seek the advice of the Trust Director.

**ACTION: CH/ADa**

11. **Edible Riding Mill**

A discussion was held on Cllr. Reid’s proposal that use be made of land owned by the PC for commemorative gifts to the village of trees or bushes with edible fruits. The proposal was unanimously adopted although it was suggested that people should be encouraged to plant trees rather than bushes and preferably those that would need little maintenance.

Cllr. Reid reported that he personally would like to plant some fruit trees in the Spinney in memory of his wife, Magdalena and replace the logs with a seat. He also suggested that a new safer entrance be made into the Spinney from the Old Playground. These were agreed by the Council.

12. **Mill Pond Restoration**

Ideas were sought on how to improve this area although not necessarily the restoration of the pond. Marchburn Lane residents would be asked for their views and it was suggested that a discussion on this topic be held again in a couple of months.

13. **Memorial for Bobby Turner**

Mrs Stephenson highlighted just how many seats the PC currently maintained and encouraged councillors not to purchase a memorial seat for Bobby. Having discussed ideas with Frank, Bobby’s brother, she suggested the PC consider buying a bird bath in his memory to be placed in the grounds of the Parish Hall. In principle the PC would support this idea although would like an idea of costs. Cllr. Carew and Cllr. Cairns were asked to raise this idea at the next meeting of the VHT.

**ACTION: EC/BC**

14. **WW1 Anniversary**

Cllr. Carew reported that a commemoration service was being planned for 3rd August under the organisation of Churches Together and she felt that there was no need for any additional involvement by the PC unless requested.

15. **Website**

The Clerk asked for ideas on possible changes to the website. Most councillors felt happy with the website although suggested that the photographs be changed more often.

A discussion was also held on whether councillors’ personal email addresses should be displayed on the website but it was decided that they should not as all mail should go via the Clerk.

16. **Planning**

a) It was reported that the following planning applications were under consideration by NCC:

13/03874/FUL boundary around Freshfield, Sandy Bank – PC response: queried the position of the boundary;

13/03133/FUL Retrospective planning permission for work to the railway bridge, Underwood Road. PC response – queried drainage and suggested structure be painted.

It was reported that the following planning applications had been considered by NCC and granted permission:

13/03370/FELTPO Tree work at St James Church;

13/03263/FUL Extension to Long Rigg, Long Rigg;

13/00151/OUT Application for single storey dwelling, land south of Tudor Mount, Church Lane.

b) A suggestion to require all controversial planning applications to be considered at a full council meeting rather than by the Planning sub-committee was rejected because there is not always sufficient time to bring an issue to a formal PC meeting. If the sub-committee had concerns about an application they would speak with the other councillors as necessary. However it was suggested that the PC should produce a policy on low cost housing which would give clear guidance to the Planning sub-committee. **See also item 22.**

17. **Request for Funding**

A request for funding from the Pre-School was received to enable them to restore their garden by the single tennis court. This was agreed unanimously by the councillors and an award of £150 was made.

**ACTION: CH**

18. **Handyman Report**

A report was received. Work had been completed on cleaning and treating numerous wooden benches, a bus stop painted and various areas tidied of leaf debris.

19. **Finance**

(i) The following payments were authorised:

C Harrison – December salary + home working allowance £345.82

NALC – various training courses £20

***S137 Donations:***

Gymnastics Club £194

Marchburn Lane Residents’ Association £50

Citizens Advice Bureau £50

AGE UK £50

Tynedale Hospice £50

Great North Air Ambulance £50

CAN £50

RM Village Hall Trust – room bookings £36

Catherine Harrison – January salary + home working allowance £345.82

Catherine Harrison - Expenses

Car parking £1.30

Petrol £26.10

Postage £20.40 Total £47.80

Northumberland County Council – grass cutting £860.02

Allotments’ Association (Insurance for 2014) £73.90

Aon UK ltd – additional premium for new bus shelter £12.52

**Standing Orders:**

Homevend – January £75

Homevend – February £75

(ii) The Clerk presented a report showing the financial year spending to date by budget categories. The report was generated by the new accounting package and she sought councillors’ views on the new format.

**ACTION: ALL**

20**. Correspondence**

A resident who lived on the main road (close to the speed camera) had raised concerns about parking problems outside her home. In the public pre-meeting, Cllr. Dale had reported that she hoped to remove a section of double yellow lines west of the speed camera where there was a footpath and grass verge which would hopefully alleviate this problem.

21. **Minor Matters**

(i) *Damage to the verge and footpath in Millfield Road*

Cllr. Reid reported that Northern Powergrid had laid turf to repair damage to the verge. He had recently met with Debmat and they had agreed to repair sections of the footpath.

(ii) *Garden Party*

Cllr. Reid indicated that he would like his name to go forward to be entered into the ballot to attend one of the Queen’s Garden parties. This was unanimously approved by the councillors.

**ACTION: CH**

(iii) *Garden Share Scheme*

Cllr. Ewen outlined her proposal to promote a garden share scheme and it was agreed that she would write a piece for the April edition of the Parish News to gauge villagers’ interest.

**ACTION: EE**

(iv) *Parish News*

It was agreed that the Clerk would submit any news items for the March edition of the Parish News.

**ACTION: CH**

(v) *Banking Proposals*

It was decided that it would be inappropriate to hold a current account and a reserve account at the same bank as at times the current account held large sums of money. It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman and Clerk should review all possible accounts and present a final recommendation at the next meeting.

**ACTION: AD/CH**

22. **Date of the Annual Parish Meeting**

After discussion, it was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 28th April. It was suggested that the issue of affordable, low cost housing should be discussed at the meeting and a speaker sought from the Planning Department at NCC. The Clerk should in the first instance contact Karen Ledger at NCC and copy the letter to Cllr. Dale.

**ACTION: CH**

23.  **Date of the next meeting**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Monday 10th March 2014.

With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.58pm.