****

**Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council**

Minutes of the AGM held on Monday 9th May 2016 in Church Cottage, Church Lane, Riding Mill.

**Councillors present:**

Cllr. Andy Dunhill (Chairman) Cllr. Malcolm Reid

Cllr. Brian Singer Cllr. Eileen Carew

Cllr. Jill Mills

**In attendance:**

Mrs Anne Dale – County Councillor

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

Public (4): Mr C Page, Mrs P Pryor, Mrs J Rowntree and Mrs L Stephenson.

Cllr. Dunhill opened the meeting at 7.42 pm.

16/35 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr. McKenzie.

16/36 **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Cllr. Dunhill as Chair of Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council in 2015/16 called for nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2016/17. Cllr. Reid proposed that Cllr. Dunhill remained as Chair and Cllr. Singer as Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Carew and agreed unanimously. Cllr Dunhill was duly elected as Chair and Cllr. Singer as Vice-Chair.

16/37 **Declaration of Interests**

Cllr. Singer declared an interest in Item 11 – Allotment Association – yearly rent review, as he was an allotment holder.

Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in the development of the cricket club should it be raised by a member of the public.

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

16/38 **Delegation of Responsibilities**

The Chairman proposed to delegate to councillors the Chairman’s authority to take decisions subject to approval at future PC meetings and working in conjunction with the Clerk in specific areas. This was agreed as follows:

*Planning Sub-Committee – Cllrs. Dunhill, Singer & Mills*

*Neighbourhood Plan – No plans to pursue this so group disbanded.*

*Legal/FOI matters – Cllr. Mills*

*Appraisals – Cllrs. Carew & Singer*

*VHT representatives – Cllr. Carew (Reserve Cllr. McKenzie)*

*Website monitoring – Cllr. Dunhill*

*Handyman/ Amenity matters/ Play park inspection – Cllr. Dunhill*

*Accounts – Cllr. Reid*

*Sport & Recreation – Cllrs. Singer & McKenzie*

*Edible Riding Mill/Spinney/Environmental issues – Cllr. Reid (Cllr. Carew – Spinney only)*

*East Tynedale Forum representative – Cllr. McKenzie*

*RM Play & Regeneration Group – Cllrs. Dunhill and Carew*

16/39 **Standing Orders/Financial Regulations/Code of Conduct**

It was unanimously agreed to re-adopt the following documents without amendment:

* Standing Orders
* Financial Regulations
* NALC Code of Conduct

(Proposed Cllr. Singer, Seconded Cllr. Mills).

16/40 **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 14th March 2016**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th March 2016 were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Dunhill.

16/41 **Matters arising**

1. *Minute 16/22 – Landscaping by the ramp/Edible Riding Mill.*

Cllr. Reid reported that the second working group had met on 19th April and had cleared further ground before planting the fruit trees and laying the turf. A further treatment would be applied to the weeds before mulch would be used to cover the area. Residents would be encouraged to add any plants they wished after first seeking approval from the PC. Plants would be clearly labelled and a sign erected to encourage residents to pick the fruit when ready.

As the Handyman didn’t wish to take on any further hours, it was proposed that the services of Brian Thompson be retained to oversee the tending of this area on an ad hoc basis together with any additional gardening tasks in the village as might be required. This was proposed by Cllr. Dunhill, seconded by Cllr. Reid and unanimously agreed.

**ACTION: CH/AD**

1. *Minute 16/22(iv) – The Spinney*

Cllr. Reid reported that he was unhappy with the proposals offered by the County Council Highways Officer and again asked if the officer could visit which Cllr. Dale offered to arrange. As Cllr. Reid would be away in July he asked for this item to be included on the September agenda.

**ACTION: ADa/CH**

1. *Minute 16/23 – Play Park*

Cllr. Dunhill reported that the problem with moles had hopefully been dealt with for now but there continued to be an issue of the ground subsiding as tunnels collapsed below. The grass cutting contractor proposed to rotavate small sections to see if the surface could be improved.

The RM Play & Regeneration Group had recently received notification that their application for a bank account was successful which meant that fundraising could now begin for new pieces of play equipment.

1. *Minute 16/26 – Station Close*

Cllr. Dale reported that she had consulted with residents in Station Close and that there was a majority in favour of her proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit in the Close. This would be funded by Cllr. Dale from her Members’ Local Improvement Scheme allowance and should hopefully be introduced later this year.

Cllr. Dale also reported on discussions she was holding with Jen Stephenson, the Head teacher of Broomhaugh School, on safe walking/cycling initiatives. The County proposed to introduce a 20mph speed limit outside every school – in Riding Mill this would be effective from Whiteside Bank through to Meadow Park. In addition, a time-specific speed limit of 20mph would be introduced on the A695 to help children cross the road to school or to catch the school bus.

Following further requests for a pedestrian crossing, the County Council had agreed to undertake a review of traffic flow on the A695.

1. *Minute 16/27 - Display of councillors’ addresses*

It was noted that councillors’ addresses had been removed from the notice board and website. Email addresses and telephone numbers were displayed.

1. *Minute 16/33(ii) – Shop*

Cllr. Dunhill reported that unfortunately the people who first indicated that they would like to run a shop had now withdrawn their application and no other interest had been received. Disappointment was expressed by all and the PC confirmed its readiness to help with any initiatives in the future should they be forthcoming.

1. *Minute 16/33(iii) – Defibrillator refresher training*

The Clerk reported that the Stephen Carey Fund planned to undertake refresher CPR training shortly and would be in touch to arrange a convenient date.

16/42 **Flood Management**

Cllr. Dunhill and Cllr. Dale had attended meetings with the Environment Agency, NWL, the County Council and recent flood victims. To better respond to future flooding incidents, it was proposed that a Flood Management Plan be drawn up with the help of the Environment Agency. Cllr. Dunhill offered to chair a working group and it was proposed that an article should be submitted to the Parish News asking for volunteers to serve on the working group and also to ask if anyone was prepared to become a flood warden. Once responses from this article had been received a meeting would be convened.

**ACTION: CH**

16/43 **Covenant Release**

It was reported that the PC had agreed to release the restrictive covenant attached to Bokul, Marchburn Lane, to allow for the redevelopment of the original house and one additional dwelling. A fee for the release had been received.

16/44 **Accounts**

a) *Annual Accounts*

The following documents were received in advance of the meeting and were unanimously approved [proposed Cllr Reid, seconded Cllr. Carew]:

* The Annual Governance Statement 2015/16
* The 2015/16 accounts
* Budget Summary
* Annual Return

It was noted that the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors’ Rights to view the accounts would be posted on the notice board from Friday 27th May. The dates for inspection were from Monday 13th June until Friday 22nd July and the notice would advise of the available times.

The Internal Auditor, Peter Basnett’s report was received. He had raised no issues that required attention. It was noted that Peter planned to retire after reviewing next year’s set of accounts and a new auditor would need to be sought for 2017/18.

*b)* *Current Account*

It was reported that the provider of the current account, Unity Trust Bank, had informed the PC that it planned to withdraw interest payments on the account and would also introduce a monthly fee of £6. The Clerk had researched various other current accounts and had found that all banks considered ethical charge a fee for a business account. It was agreed that the Council would stay with Unity Trust Bank for now but if better alternatives were found it would reconsider the matter.

c) *Monthly expenditure*

(i) The following payments were authorised:

Swarco Traffic Maintenance – yearly maintenance of speed signs £540.00(VAT £90)

£180 to be reimbursed by Stocksfield PC to cover their 2 signs

Office Depot – ink and printer cartridges £71.78(VAT £11.96)

St James PCC – hire of Church Cottage £20.00

Catherine Harrison – March salary + £10 home allowance £403.01

Jeff Mills – Maintenance of cricket field £125.00

(£62.50 to be reimbursed by Cricket Club)

Brian Thompson – landscaping work by new ramp (turf and labour) £224.00

Sandy Bank Residents’ Association – contribution towards insurance £303.00

Jeff Mills – maintenance, Play Park £80.00

RM VHT – water charges reimbursement £20.00

Peter Basnett – internal auditor fees £112.30

Jewsons – Handyman supplies £7.97 (VAT £1.33)

Came & Company – PC’s yearly insurance £2441.04

Ward Hadaway – disbursements (Land Registry fees) £49.00

Riding Mill Play & Regeneration Group – S137 grant £100.00

Malcolm Reid – expenses (fruit trees for landscaping by ramp) £48.85

Brian Singer – expenses (disposal of rubble – landscaping by ramp) £10.00

Catherine Harrison – April salary + £10 home allowance £403.01

Catherine Harrison – reimbursement (Travel costs to Land Registry Offices

£21.60, Postage £16.65) £38.25

M Stewart/Neetfleet – quarterly play park inspections £70.00

**Standing Orders**

Homevend (April 16 Invoice 67) £80.00

Homevend (May 16 Invoice 68) £80.00

(ii) The following receipts were noted:

Yearly interest Nationwide: £206.39

Quarterly interest Triodos: £22.53

Quarterly Interest Unity Trust Bank £4.18

Broomley & Stocksfield PC – reimbursement (see above) £180.00

Northumberland County Council – 1st instalment Precept £17,500.00

Northumberland County Council – Old Playground rent £50.00

Covenant Release £16,000.00

1. Budget report

A report showing overall spending for the financial year was received. There were no issues to note.

*d) Annual Grant to the VHT*

A letter from Mrs Pryor, the Chair of the VHT, was received requesting that the Trust be considered for an S137 grant again this year. Last year, the Council award the VHT a grant of £2,500 and it was proposed by Cllr. Dunhill that the same figure be awarded this year. This was seconded by Cllr. Singer and unanimously agreed.

**ACTION: CH**

*e) Insurance*

It was reported that the insurance premium for 2016/17 was £2441.04. This was a slight reduction on last year’s premium. It was noted that the PC had signed up to a 3-year agreement through Came & Company and this would be the final year of the agreement. The arrangement had worked well and it was suggested that a similar 3-year tie-in be agreed in future years.

16/45 **Allotment Association – Yearly Rent**

The Clerk, following the last meeting, had reviewed previous Minutes and established that the agreement to pay the Allotment Association’s insurance had been passed as a resolution in April 2007 (it followed a similar agreement made with the Sandy Bank Residents’ Association regarding the Nick in February 2007). It was agreed that the PC should continue to reimburse the Association and that the rent should be calculated following the method laid out in the lease agreement. It was therefore proposed that the yearly rent be increased to £187, meaning a quarterly payment of £46.75 [proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Carew – agreed unanimously. Cllr. Singer abstained.

**ACTION: CH**

16/46 **Handyman**

It was reported that the Handyman had cut back shrubs in the play park and cleared the drain in the Nick. He had also swept the Old Playground, weeded the lower wall and scraped moss off the car park. In addition, he had cut back bushes at both ends of the village and swept the bus shelters. This accounted for his April and May invoices.

16/47 **Planning**

It was reported:

1. that the following planning applications were under consideration by NCC:

16/00940/FUL – 3 Burnside, Mill Close – two storey side extension. PC – no objection

1. that the following planning applications had been approved by NCC:

16/00169/FUL – Burnside, Riding Mill. Erection of greenhouse in front garden.

16/00056/FUL – 16 Station Close. Extension.

1. That the following planning application had been withdrawn by the applicant:

16/00603/FUL – Land NW of Grove Field, Sandy Bank. Construction of 2-storey dwelling and separate garage.

16/48 **Correspondence**

There were no issues of correspondence to address.

16/49 **Minor Matters**

1. *Roadside selling – A68. Road safety concerns*

It was reported that the agricultural building on the east side of the A68 south of the Broomhaugh roundabout was now selling more and more items. When this building was first erected the PC had objected on the grounds of road safety and it was noted that some cars were now crossing a solid double white line to access the goods on sale. Cllr. Dale was requested to take the matter up with the County’s Enforcement team and to establish if the premises had planning permission for use as a retail outlet. The PC considers that this use constitutes a significant hazard to traffic on the A68 at this point. The sign advertising Wentworth Grange was also raised and the PC wished to know if the County had granted permission for it to be displayed on the roadside. The Clerk would write formally to Cllr. Dale highlighting these issues.

**ACTION: CH**

1. *Village Festival*

It was reported that David McKenzie was exploring the possibility of holding a village festival in June/July 2017 (this was something he was pursuing in a personal capacity rather than as a parish councillor). The festival might combine the garden walkabout together with other events staged by clubs and societies in the village. He planned to hold an open meeting for residents to come forward with their ideas.

1. *Sandy Bank Residents’ Association – issues raised at recent AGM*

At a recent meeting of the Sandy Bank Residents’ Association a number of issues had been raised about safety concerns with the Nick. The group planned to install additional signs prohibiting commercial vehicles using the Nick. They would also like to see a road safety mirror installed although the County Council had refused this on the highway as it was not their policy to install such pieces of equipment. Cllr. Dale would be meeting with the County to discuss if further safety measures were possible.

The Association had also requested a dog waste bin be installed by the footpath leading to Marchburn Lane. The PC had also received a request for a dog waste bin in Broomhaugh by the footpath to the river. Both bins had been approved by the County Council and the Clerk was asked to establish the costs so that the PC could approve their installation at its next meeting.

**ACTION: CH**

1. *Life Buoy by the Weir*

Cllr. Dunhill raised the question of whether a life buoy should be installed by the weir. Some residents could remember one being there before but that it had been stolen or misused regularly. The Clerk had written to the Tyne Rivers Trust for their advice and would report back to a future meeting.

**ACTION: CH**

1. *Cricket Club*

Mr Page, Chair of the Cricket Club, asked the PC for its help. The Club would like to install a new pavilion and he had established that there was funding available from the Football Association and the English Cricket Board. The current pavilion had no power nor toilets and showers. The Club was hosting children’s teams and ladies teams now via its association with Corbridge Cricket Club and the facilities needed to be improved. To apply for funding a feasibility study was needed to establish costs and the best site for the new pavilion. He therefore requested that the PC fund this study from the grant it set aside some time ago to help redevelop the ground. As Mr Page was still in the process of obtaining quotes the PC agreed it would formally consider the matter at its July meeting but that in principle it was happy to support his proposal.

16/50 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 4th July 2016

(NB: this was one week earlier than the date previously proposed).

Meeting closed at 9.46 pm