



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th September 2019 at Church Cottage, Church Lane, Riding Mill.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Andy Dunhill (Chair)

Cllr. Brian Singer

Cllr. Eileen Carew

Cllr. Janet Padgett

Cllr. David McKenzie

Cllr. Pam Bridges

Cllr. Christine Howe

Cllr. Pauline Mulholland

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 19/81)

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

Two members of the public were present

Cllr. Dunhill opened the meeting at 7.40 pm.

19/72 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Jill Mills.

19/73 Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in Item 6: Sports Club;

Cllr. Padgett declared an interest in Item 9: Toilet at the Parish Hall;

Cllr. Mulholland declared an interest in Item 11: The Green Agenda and Climate Change.

19/74 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 8th July 2019

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Singer (proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Padgett).

19/75 Matters Arising

(i) *Minute 19/58(i) – Repairs to Millfield Road bridge.* The Clerk reported that the work had been undertaken the previous week after a short delay due to high water levels. All welding work had been completed but there was still painting to do and the Clerk would check with BT Bell, the consulting engineers overseeing the project, as to when the contractor was likely to complete this work.

ACTION: CH

(ii) *Minute 19/61 – Play & Regeneration Group.* It was reported that Marion Cooke's village history book had been reprinted and that a launch event would be held shortly for residents. The local history sub-group had had an interesting visit to the County Records Office. Of particular note was the 'scrapbook' prepared by Riding Mill WI in 1965 giving a snapshot of families and lifestyles at that time. The group had received a quote to have the book scanned and were looking at ways to fund this. With regard to the Mill Pond project, the feasibility report from the Tyne Rivers Trust was due imminently and it was hoped that a meeting for interested residents would be held in October.

(iii) *Minute 19/62 – Safety mirror, Sandy Bank.* The Clerk confirmed that the mirror had been fitted and residents of Sandy Bank were very pleased with the improved visibility at the junction;

- (iv) Minute 19/70(i) – Newsletter. The Clerk confirmed that the newsletter had been distributed to all homes in the village and that positive feedback had been received from a number of residents;
- (v) *Minute 19/59(iv) - water leak on A695.* Cllr. Dale reported that she had raised the water leak on the Main Road with NWL and would contact them again as the problem had not been resolved;
- (vi) *Minute 19/65(iv) – fencing adjacent to the footpath from Broomhaugh to the station.* Cllr. Dale reported that she had asked the Footpaths officer from the County Council to inspect the fencing who had concluded that the path did not warrant repairs at the current time.

ACTION: ADa

19/76 Toilet at the Parish Hall

Cllr. Dunhill summarised the previous discussion re an externally accessible toilet at the Parish Hall: the previous VHT committee had approached the PC and had asked if it would fund the installation of a toilet at the rear of the hall whilst offering for the VHT to maintain the toilet and arrange for its daily opening and closure. The PC had welcomed the idea and included the costs in the current year's budget. He now noted that the new VHT committee did not want to proceed with the idea due to the size limitation of the room identified, the difficulty in moving utility meters and the likely high running costs. These concerns had been put to a meeting of the Trustees of the halls. Generally, the Trustees were not in favour of the idea but had deferred a decision until the PC had had a chance to debate the issue in an open meeting. It was clear that parents had welcomed the idea and would be disappointed if toilet facilities cannot be provided. There were other toilets available in the village and it was suggested that approaches should be made to ask if these facilities could be made available for play park users. Cllr. Mulholland agreed to investigate further and the position confirmed at a future meeting when the earmarked funds would be reallocated if appropriate.

ACTION: PM

19/77 County Councillor Report

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issue:

- (i) *Local Transport Plan – priorities for 2020/21.* Cllr. Dale noted that she had not received any particular requests from residents in the last year. She suggested that the PC consider requesting improvements to the footpath between Riding Mill and Stocksfield – currently there was a small section with no pavement and it would be helpful if this could be rectified particularly for those using a wheelchair. She also suggested that the PC continue to request that the Right of Way to Corbridge be re-established. She reminded councillors that LTP funding could only be used for capital projects not maintenance work.
- (ii) Pre-meeting discussion: In the pre-meeting discussion the following issues were raised which Cllr. Dale offered to investigate:
 - a) *New electricity sub-station near Underwood Road.* No information had been received by residents or the Parish Council prior to the work commencing. Further information would be helpful;
 - b) *LED lights* – the County Council seemed to be checking all the recently installed lights but there were some that had still not been altered;
 - c) *Building site opposite the Old Tavern.* It was noted that the fencing was not particularly secure and Cllr. Dale would ask the Highways Team to inspect;
 - d) *Pedestrian Crossing*– this was delayed and Cllr. Dale continued to chase for an installation date;
 - e) *Rights of Way* – the RoW on the riverside path adjacent to the Farnley Estate was overgrown and very difficult to access. There was also a discussion about broken stiles elsewhere in the parish. Cllr. Dale would notify the Footpaths officer.

ACTION: ADa

19/78 Sports Club

- (i) *Loan.* It was reported that the recent loan to the Sports Club for £12,000 had been repaid. A further smaller loan might be required at a later stage when the final installation work was undertaken as again the Club needed to pay for the work before they were able to claim the S106 grant.
- (ii) *New pavilion.* Cllr. Howe circulated a written report of discussions between herself, the Sports Club, Kathie Keady of Active Northumberland and Cllr. Dale. She outlined the proposed design for the new pavilion and recommended that it should be constructed in two phases depending upon need and available funding. There were some basic features which needed to be included and Kathie Keady was advising on these so that the plans met Sport England or FA funding requirements. Work was being undertaken to ensure that the club was financially sustainable and they were busy preparing a 10-year business plan. Cllr. Dunhill recorded his thanks to Cllrs. Howe and Dale for their efforts to progress this matter.
- (iii) *Barrier installation at Osbit Power.* Cllr. Singer reported that he had signed the agreement with Osbit Power to allow for the installation of an access barrier as previously agreed. He asked that the Clerk send the Sports Club a copy of the agreement. He also suggested the PC purchase a combination lock for the bottom gate of the sports field. There had been some dispute over the gate being locked but he felt a combination lock would resolve this.

ACTION: CH

19/79 Play Park

A quotation received from Play Dale for items needed to repair various pieces of equipment was received and considered. Although expressing astonishment at some of the figures being charged, it was felt appropriate that the Parish Council use the proper supplier to ensure the quality of the items being replaced. It was therefore unanimously agreed to accept the quotation and the Clerk was asked to place the order (proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Bridges)

ACTION: CH

19/80 Enhanced Services

Cllr. Dunhill outlined a meeting he and the Clerk had had with David Hunt, West Area Manager at the County Council, to discuss if the Council were able to supply enhanced services such as additional street cleaning and moss removal from pavements. Mr Hunt had offered to check the suitability of current equipment and would provide a quote if appropriate. Cllr. Dunhill also indicated that there would be a meeting with Tim Fish, the Footpaths officer, to look at ways the PC could support the work of the County Council when maintaining the network of footpaths. Cllr. Dale expressed her opinion that there needed to be a clean delineation of who was responsible for what so as not to cause confusion.

19/81 The Green Agenda and Climate Change

Cllr. McKenzie reported that a number of residents had held a meeting to consider green issues and how the village could play its part in tackling climate change. To begin with, an open village meeting would be held on Thursday 17th October. It was agreed that the parish council welcomed the initiative and that Cllrs. McKenzie and Padgett should represent the council at future meetings.

Cllr. Singer suggested declaring a climate emergency and was tasked with finding out more about this proposal so that it could be considered at the next meeting.

ACTION: BS

19/82 General Village Maintenance

- (i) *Work undertaken by the handyman*
The handyman had cut back shrubs edging the play park, by bus shelters and footpaths. He had watered flower containers, swept various footpaths and cleaned out the drain on the Nick. He had also undertaken various repair work in the play park, conducted the quarterly play park inspection and fitted the safety mirror which were to be invoiced for separately.

(ii) *Maintenance of Rights of Way*

The upkeep of some of the Rights of Way was discussed. The County Council had a programme of maintenance but this sometimes didn't coincide with foliage growth which meant the paths became difficult to use. These issues would be discussed with the Footpaths officer;

ACTION: AD/CH

(iii) *Litter bins*

A resident had suggested more litter bins in lay-bys on the A69/A68. These areas were outside of the parish but it was thought that a litter bin at the A68 roundabout by the seat might prove helpful. The Clerk was asked to check if the County Council would be prepared to empty it if the PC purchased the bin.

ACTION: CH

(iv) *Removal of Himalayan Balsam*

A letter had been received from Mrs Linden Stephenson with regard to the efforts made by her and other volunteers to remove Himalayan Balsam plants from along the March Burn. Cllr. Dunhill recorded his thanks to Mrs Stephenson and the other volunteers for their assistance with this matter and he welcomed her suggestion that the Parish Council organise and coordinate the sessions in future years.

ACTION: CH

19/83 **Tyne Rivers Trust**

It was reported that the Tyne Rivers Trust was applying for funding from the NWL Branch Out Fund to target invasive species on the River Tyne over the next three years. Some match funding was required and TRT had asked if all parishes along the Tyne could make a small contribution to the costs (likely to be £150/year for three years). Councillors unanimously agreed to support the suggestion (proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Bridges).

19/84 **Local Transport Plan Programme 2020-21**

It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate by email a list of possible suggestions of projects for inclusion in next year's LTP programme and councillors would be asked to rank them in their preferred order. The deadline for submission was Friday 4th October.

ACTION: CH

19/85 **Northumberland Local Plan**

It was noted that Mrs Susan Heywood had been appointed to carry out an examination of the Northumberland Local Plan. Hearing sessions which form part of the examination would commence on Tuesday 8th October until Thursday 31st October at Morpeth Town Hall. Further details could be found at

<https://northumberland-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/localplan/lp-exam>

19/86 Finance

a) *Yearly Audited Accounts*

(i) It was reported that the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP had completed their review of the accounts and had raised no issues with them. The final audited accounts were therefore received and approved (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Singer).

(ii) It was noted that Mrs Margaret Weatherley was happy to continue as Internal Auditor for the PC and her reappointment was unanimously confirmed (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Singer).

(b) *Monthly accounts*

(i) The following payments were authorised (Proposed Cllr. McKenzie, seconded Cllr. Dunhill):

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|---|---------------------------|
| Seymour Gardens & Trees – garden maintenance/weed treatment | £154.00 |
| Catherine Harrison – July salary | £482.56 |
| PKF Littlejohn LLP – external audit fees | £240.00 (inc. VAT £40.00) |

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Stephen Rutherford – bus shelter cleaning | £40.00 |
| T Bell Horticultural Services – grass cutting | £500.00 |
| ME Stewart/Neetfleet – repairs to play park | £160.00 |
| Riding Mill Village Hall Trust – water reimbursement | £50.00 |
| Reece Safety Products – safety mirror and pole | £446.88 (inc. VAT £74.48) |
| Information Commissioner's Office – data protection fee direct debit | £35.00 |
| Seymour Gardens & Trees – garden maintenance/weed treatment | £69.00 |
| Robson Print – newsletter | £388.00 |
| ME Stewart/Neetfleet – installation of safety mirror/play park repairs | £355.00 |
| Catherine Harrison – August salary | £482.56 |
| RM Sports Club – 2 nd instalment of yearly grant | 1250.00 |
| David Ballantyne – tree works | £1350.00 |
| Office Depot – stationery | £110.65 (inc. VAT £18.44) |

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

| | |
|---|---------|
| Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (August) | £160.00 |
| Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (September) | £160.00 |

The following receipts were noted:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Triodos - quarterly interest | £10.24 |
| Riding Mill Sports Club – yearly rent | £25.00 |
| Riding Mill Allotments' Association – quarterly rent | £50.11 |
| Northern Powergrid – Yearly wayleaves | £56.45 |
| Riding Mill Sports Club – loan repayment | £12,000.00 |

(ii) *Budget report*

The budget report was received and accepted. No issues were identified.

19/87 **Clerk's Appraisal**

It was agreed to approve the Clerk's yearly pay award following the outcome of her appraisal undertaken in July (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Carew).

ACTION: CH

19/88 **Policy Document**

The following new policy documents were received and unanimously approved subject to minor amendments as indicated in parentheses (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Padgett):

- Co-option Policy and Procedure (voting should be by a secret ballot rather than by a show of hands/ Clerk to check the eligibility rules with regard to refugees/ forms to be submitted by either paper or email)
- Financial Reserves Policy
- Internal Control Procedure (online payments will be made following approval at a PC meeting)
- Internal Audit Policy
- Members' Allowance Policy (the councillor authorising the payment must not be the one making the claim).

19/89 **Planning**

It was reported:

- (i) that the following planning applications were under consideration by NCC:
- 19/02392/VARYCO. Osbit, Broomhaugh House. Amendments to earlier plans. PC – no objection;
 - 19/02821/FUL – Woodside, Sandy Bank. Construction of new garages. PC – no objection.
- (ii) that the following planning application had been considered by NCC and granted permission:

- 19/01730/FUL – Pumping Station. Various works

19/90 **Meetings to attend**

It was noted that councillor representation was welcomed at the following meetings. If anyone could attend he/she was asked to notify the Clerk:

- Annual Town & Parish Council Conference – Thursday 3rd October, 4-6 pm, County Hall;
- Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – AGM. 4pm, Tuesday 15th October, Haltwhistle.
- NALC AGM – 10.15 am, Saturday 28th September, Morpeth
- East Tynedale Forum – 7 pm, Wednesday 16th October, Newton. Rob Murfin, Director of Planning at NCC would be attending.

19/91 **Correspondence**

The following correspondence was noted:

- (i) Emails from Mr M Baird and Mrs L Furness re the building works at Osbit. The correspondence had been referred to the planning sub-group.
- (ii) Email from Mr C Reid re footpaths. Correspondence had been referred to the County Council.

19/92 **Minor Matters**

(i) *Tennis Club Lease*

Cllr. Dunhill reported that the new Tennis Club lease was now finalised and confirmation of its registration with the Land Registry had been received.

(ii) *Signage*

Issues with excessive signage around the village were noted and referred to Cllr. Dale.

ACTION: CH

(iii) *The “Ross Seat”*

The Clerk reported that she had received a letter from Mr Ross asking if volunteers could be found to help look after the Ross Seat (on the old road to Broomley) as he was 78 and his brother 80 and they were beginning to find it difficult to maintain the seat on their yearly visit. It was proposed that the PC should include maintenance of this seat within the handyman’s contract and this was unanimously agreed.

ACTION: CH

(iv) *Resignation of Reverend Lesley Chapman*

The parish council noted with regret the resignation of Reverend Chapman because of ill-health and it was agreed to send her a letter of thanks.

ACTION: CH

19/93 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 11th November 2019.
Venue: Church Cottage.

Meeting closed at 9.52 pm