



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th March 2020 at Church Cottage, Church Lane, Riding Mill.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Brian Singer
Cllr. Pam Bridges
Cllr. Jill Mills

Cllr. David McKenzie
Cllr. Christine Howe

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 20/25)

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

3 members of the public were present for the whole meeting

(4 members of the public left after the pre-meeting question time or during the meeting)

Cllr. Singer opened the meeting at 7.48 pm.

20/17 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Andy Dunhill, Eileen Carew, Janet Padgett and Pauline Mulholland.

20/18 Declaration of Interests

None.

20/19 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 10th February 2020

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

20/20 Matters Arising

- (i) *Minute 20/06 – Tennis Club.* It was noted that the PC had written to the Tennis Club outlining residents' concerns. No response had, as yet, been received:
- (ii) *Minute 20/08 – Play Park replacement equipment.* The Clerk reported that she had received two quotes from play equipment companies to replace the older items of play equipment (it had been suggested that the PC replace an item at a time to spread the cost). The quotes received were extremely high with one company suggesting an approximate replacement cost of £70,000 for the four pieces of equipment. However, it was noted that there were savings to be made if two or three items could be replaced at the same time. It was agreed to ask the Riding Mill Play & Regeneration Group to take this forward and to commence fundraising activities again.

ACTION: CH

20/21 County Councillor Report

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- (i) *Pedestrian Crossing Signs by High Shilford* - Cllr. Dale had met with the Highways Officer who was to investigate whether pedestrian crossing signs were suitable for this location. She would communicate the outcome of these discussions to the resident at High Shilford;
- (ii) *20 mph scheme / pedestrian crossing* – Cllr. Dale continued to monitor the progress of these schemes. Extra funding had been allocated but there was a backlog of work for the County Council to process. She had informed the County Council of the necessity of managing

residents' expectations – telling residents something would be installed within a financial year and then failing to deliver the improvements was not good practice and more accurate information was required;

- (iii) *Signage* – Cllr. Dale was taking advice from the Planning Officers regarding highway signage;
- (iv) *Flooding* – Cllr. Dale continued to deal with issues of flooding/blocked drains etc.

In the pre-meeting discussion, the following issues were raised by residents:

- (v) *The number of Thompson lorries passing through the village* – Cllr. Dale reminded everyone that the A695 was a strategic route and therefore the lorries had every right to use this road. She would contact the operator to establish why there were so many lorries currently passing through the village and if there were examples of speeding she would raise this but she would need further details i.e. date and time;

ACTION: ADa

- (vi) *State of footpath from Riding Grange to the bus stop* – Cllr. Dale would investigate whether the problem was due to poor workmanship following the installation of the cable last year and if so would pass the concern to the relevant person;

ACTION: ADa

- (vii) *Foul smell near Riding Grange* – Cllr. Dale reported that there had been issues with the drains near Riding Farm but these had hopefully been resolved although she would continue to monitor;

- (viii) *Grassed area by Broomhaugh bus shelter* – the area beside the bus shelter had been dug up during recent electricity installation work and recently reseeded. Residents felt that the work had been done poorly and Cllr. Dale agreed to monitor the area and to ask the contractor to reseed again if necessary.

ACTION: ADa

20/22 **Tree Survey**

A quote from Tyne Valley Woodlands for the interim tree inspection and for a survey of three additional areas of land was received and accepted (Proposed Cllr. Bridges, seconded Cllr. McKenzie).

ACTION: CH

A discussion was also held concerning the replanting of trees behind the tennis clubhouse. The tree surgeon had recommended fast growing trees such as birch and spruce in order to stabilise the bank. A few slower growing trees such as oak could also be incorporated. The tree surgeon would be able to source these trees from woodlands he manages so there would be no cost for the actual trees only for his time. The Clerk was asked to inform him to proceed.

ACTION: CH

20/23 **Climate Change**

- (i) Annual Parish Meeting – Cllr. McKenzie outlined plans for this year's annual Parish Meeting. After receiving the formal reports from various organisations, the meeting would focus on green initiatives in the village – what's happening already and what could happen. The presentation would involve a number of members of the community.
- (ii) Vehicle charging points – the Clerk reported that she had contacted a local company which installed EV charging points for councils. They had agreed to visit the village to offer advice. The Clerk would circulate details of the visit to councillors.

ACTION: CH

20/24 **General Village Maintenance/Handyman**

- (i) Handyman. It was noted that the handyman had swept footpaths, cleaned road signs and cut back foliage around the signs. This accounted for his February payment.
- (ii) Asset Survey – Cllr. Howe reported that she and Cllr. Dunhill had conducted a survey of all the PC's assets. There were a few items which needed minor repairs and the Clerk would inform the handyman.

ACTION: CH

20/25 **Review of Policy Documents**

The following documents were reviewed and re-adopted subject to minor amendments/additions outlined below:

- Financial Risk Assessment - the Clerk would include mention of Japanese Knotweed and the Council's management plan (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. McKenzie);
- Asset Register – it was agreed to remove the Cricket Club's mower from the list as this was no longer in working order. The sign at the weir did not appear on the list and the Clerk was asked to add this (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Bridges);

It was noted that the PC's insurance policy was due for renewal this year and a meeting was scheduled with the insurers. Previously, the insurers had raised with the Council the number of small items it had insured. A discussion was held as to whether the PC would make a claim if, for example, a seat was damaged. It was agreed that this was unlikely due to the excess on the policy and it was therefore agreed to review all small value items currently insured. The Council also had to decide whether to insure the War Memorial. A request to remove the nearby tree adjacent to the War Memorial had been submitted to the Church as this was perceived as the biggest risk to the Memorial. The process of applying to the Diocese for the tree to be removed was complex and would take some time to resolve. Cllr. McKenzie offered to follow this up with the church wardens.

ACTION: CH/DM

- B&RPC Continuity Plan – no amendments (Proposed Cllr. McKenzie, seconded Cllr. Bridges).

20/26 **Finance**

(a) Monthly accounts

(i) *The following payments were authorised* (Proposed Cllr. Bridges, seconded Cllr. Mills):

Seymour Gardens & Trees – cutting back of shrubs by MUGA court	£179.50
Clerks & Councils Direct – yearly subscription	£12.00
Catherine Harrison – February salary + home allowance	£491.89
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (hazard tape for Flood wardens £16.32, signs for Play park £59.57)	£75.89 (inc. VAT £9.93)

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (March)	£160.00
---	---------

The following receipts were noted:

None

(ii) *Budget report*

The budget report was received and approved (proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Bridges). The PC noted funds which remained unspent: £3000 for the installation of an externally accessible toilet at the VHT (project cancelled); £2000 enhanced village services (problems with delivery by the County Council); £5000 for Millfield Road bridge repairs. The bridge repairs had been completed and the Clerk was asked to remind the contractor to submit the invoice before the year end. It had been anticipated that funds for this year's

budget would need to be topped up from the Reserves. This had not been necessary and surplus funds would instead be transferred to the Reserves.

ACTION: CH

b) *Bank Mandate*

It was agreed that Cllr. Mills would be removed from the bank mandate and Cllr. Howe added. The five signatories would be as follows: Cllrs. Dunhill, Singer, Carew, McKenzie and Howe.

ACTION: CH

20/27 **Planning**

It was reported:

- (i) that the following planning application was under consideration by NCC:
20/00460/FUL – Land north of the Old Tavern. Proposed 2-storey domestic dwelling.
(Subsequent to the PC meeting, the application was deemed invalid and withdrawn).
- (ii) that the following planning application had been approved by NCC:
 - 19/04960/FUL – Westril House, Long Rigg. 2-storey and single storey rear extension.

20/28 **Correspondence**

- (i) It was reported that the Clerk had responded to a number of letters relating to issues regarding the tennis club's proposals. Councillors had been consulted and had previously agreed the responses.

Two further emails needed response – Mr Stephenson had asked that the PC agree to publish a link to the County Council planning portal should the tennis club apply to install floodlights. Councillors agreed to his request and the Clerk would respond accordingly.

ACTION: CH

Mr Mitchell of Cartref, Marchburn Lane, had raised concerns about the riverbank opposite his house which he believed belonged to the PC. It was agreed that Cllr. Singer and the Clerk would visit him and inspect the area.

ACTION: CH/BS

- (ii) It was agreed to defer the review into the practice of listing residents' correspondence on the agenda until Cllr. Padgett could be present.

ACTION: CH

20/29 **Minor Matters**

- (i) *Dementia Friendly Initiative* – in the pre-meeting discussion, Jan Walmsley had spoken about the Tuesday drop-in event at the Parish Hall which encouraged residents to come together for a chat, play board games, table tennis or simply have a drink and biscuit. The sessions had commenced in October 2019 and allowed those with limited social contact to meet up with others in a friendly, relaxed way. One of the objectives was to raise awareness of dementia and the team running the drop-in event had pledged to work towards a wider Dementia Friendly Community whose aims were to:

- Develop a community where people with dementia feel able to remain active, engaged and valued members
- Raise awareness levels about dementia within the community and create a community in which those living with dementia continue to feel able to access our services, cafes etc.
- Encourage organisations and businesses to be more accessible for people living with dementia

Mrs Walmsley suggested that the drop-in team, which was already working with the Alzheimer's Society and other groups, could help develop a Riding Mill community-wide programme which would raise awareness and work to answer the needs of those living with

dementia, both now and into the future. The team was in a position to initiate the programme and work with other groups in order to be recognised as a Dementia Friendly Village Community.

The PC welcomed the initiative and were happy to support in principle. It was suggested that Mrs Walmsley might like to write an article for the PC's yearly newsletter and could also give a short presentation at the annual Parish Meeting, should she wish, to highlight her plans to other residents. Councillors asked the Clerk to write to Mrs Walmsley to thank her for attending the PC meeting.

ACTION: CH

- (ii) *Sports Club* - In the pre-meeting discussion, the new treasurer of the Sports Club, Steve Kent, introduced himself to the Council. The Club was keen to become more integrated with the community and encourage residents to attend their matches (NB: this would link well with Mrs Walmsley's dementia friendly initiative). He reported that the cricket team had done well last year and narrowly missed out on promotion. The poor facilities might have hindered any promotion so it was a priority to improve the pavilion. The Club was keen to start women's and children's teams and was looking to become self-sufficient.

Councillors welcomed Mr Kent's appointment and Cllr. Howe offered to write to him to thank him for attending the meeting.

ACTION: CHo

20/30 Date of Future Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 11th May 2020. Venue: Church Cottage.

Meeting closed at 9.09 pm