



# Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

As permitted by the \*Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No. 392, this meeting was conducted both "online" and at the Parish Hall, Millfield Road, Riding Mill.

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## **Councillors present:**

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cllr. Andy Dunhill (in person) | Cllr. Jill Mills (in person)     |
| Cllr. Brian Singer (via Zoom)  | Cllr. David McKenzie (in person) |
| Cllr. Pam Bridges (in person)  | Cllr. Christine Howe (in person) |
| Cllr. Eileen Carew (in person) |                                  |

## **In attendance:**

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 20/55)

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

4 members of the public attended the meeting (2 attended the pre-meeting questions only)

3 members of the public observed the meeting via Zoom

Cllr. Dunhill opened the meeting at 7.49 pm.

## **20/46 Apologies for Absence**

None.

## **20/47 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in the Sports Club item;

Cllr. Bridges declared an interest in the Fold House item as access to her house was via the lane in question;

County Cllr. Dale declared an interest in Fold House matters as she was a member of the County Council planning committee.

## **20/48 Notice of Resignations**

Cllr. Dunhill reported that both Janet Padgett and Pauline Mulholland had decided to resign from the Parish Council for personal reasons. He recorded his appreciation of the hard work of both councillors. The Clerk would write a letter of thanks from the Council.

**ACTION: CLERK**

A notice of vacancy had been displayed in relation to Janet Padgett's resignation and no election had been requested by parishioners so the vacancy could be filled by co-option. A similar notice would be displayed following Pauline Mulholland's resignation and the Clerk would advise councillors of the outcome in due course.

## **20/49 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

- (i) Cllr. Dunhill outlined his intention to step down as Chair of Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council and called for nominations for the position. Cllr. Carew proposed Cllr. Howe as the new Chair and this was seconded by Cllr. Mills. This was agreed unanimously and she was duly elected.

Cllr. Howe took over as Chair.

- (ii) Cllr. Howe asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Parish Council. Cllr. Howe proposed, and Cllr. Bridges seconded, Cllr. Singer as Vice-Chair. This was agreed unanimously and Cllr. Singer was duly elected.

It was noted that there were no further nominations for either position.

#### 20/50 **Delegation of Responsibilities**

It had previously been agreed that the Chair could delegate to councillors the Chair's authority to take decisions, subject to approval at future PC meetings and working in conjunction with the Clerk, in specific areas. The areas of responsibility were reviewed and the following highlighted changes were agreed:

- Planning Sub-Committee – Cllrs. Dunhill, Howe, Singer & Mills (3 from 4 would review each planning application)
- Legal/FOI/GDPR matters – Cllr. Mills + [vacancy](#)
- Appraisals – Cllrs. Carew & Singer
- VHT representatives – Cllr. Bridges (the PC reserved the right to appoint a second representative, as was its right, if it felt it appropriate in the future)
- Website monitoring/development – [Cllr. Dunhill](#)
- Handyman/ Amenity matters/ Play park inspection – [Cllrs. Howe & Dunhill](#)
- Accounts – Cllrs. Mills and Howe
- Sport & Recreation – Cllrs. Singer and Howe
- Edible Riding Mill/Spinney – Cllrs. McKenzie and Dunhill
- East Tynedale Forum representative – Cllrs. McKenzie & [Singer](#)
- RM Play & Regeneration Group – Cllr. McKenzie + [vacancy](#)
- Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership representative – Cllr. Dunhill
- Marchburn Lane Residents' Association representative – [Cllr. Howe](#)
- Footpaths Group – Councillor Dunhill
- Children/Youth issues – Cllr. McKenzie + [vacancy](#)
- Village maintenance sub-group – Cllrs. Dunhill, Carew and Howe

#### 20/51 **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting, and of the Confidential Council meeting, were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Howe (Main meeting - proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Carew, Confidential meeting – proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Bridges).

#### 20/52 **Matters Arising**

- (i) *Minute 20/35(i) – Village response to Coronavirus – future assistance.* The Clerk reported that the VHT was currently liaising with the caterer to decide whether to continue the meal service and residents would be informed. The plan was to continue collecting and distributing prescriptions and the emergency phone line would remain active for now. Many of the volunteers had returned to work so it was becoming harder to find people to help with lifts to hospitals appointments etc. The Clerk would find out if other organisations could assist. Councillors expressed their thanks to all the volunteers who had offered to help and special mention of this would be made in the forthcoming newsletter.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- (ii) *Minute 20/39 – Annual Accounts.* It was noted that the Dates for the Exercise of Electors' Rights to view the accounts were from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June until Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020;
- (iii) *Minute 20/43 - Maintenance of the Nick.* It was noted that this work had been undertaken by the handyman. The Sandy Bank Residents' Association had agreed to meet half the costs;

- (iv) *Minute 20/43(iii) – Styford Estate Woodland Management plan.* It was noted that the Clerk had responded to the consultation and had raised the issue of invasive species and the need to maintain fence boundaries.

#### 20/53 **County Councillor Report**

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- (i) The work on the Spinney together with the guardrail and cobbles on the road were all being packaged up into one job to be sent out for construction and Cllr. Dale would notify the Council of the starting date. The delays on the LTP programme had been an issue. Following a meeting she had held with the Management of the Highways division at the end of last year, a further £500,000 had been invested in an attempt to get rid of the backlog;
- (ii) Pedestrian crossing. This was currently undergoing its Stage 2 road safety audit. The audit could result in a few changes to the design but these would be minor. The bill of quantities had also been submitted. Once these were complete the scheme could be issued for construction;
- (iii) Broomhaugh. A longstanding water leak at the bottom end of Broomhaugh had been repaired and the road had been resurfaced in that area;
- (iv) A695 blocked gullies. A main drain which runs through private land at Riding Farm had now been cleared. The drainage system on the A695 in this area should hopefully have no further problems;
- (v) Slaley Road. Grips will be dug into the shoulder of the road. The Council apologised for the delay but they thought the work had been done. The issue of the road surface had also been taken up with the Council;
- (vi) Parking at Broomhaugh. Over the last few months three residents had contacted Cllr. Dale raising concerns about the parking on the street which caused problems with access. She would be working with the residents over the next few weeks to find a solution without the use of double yellow lines or traffic enforcement;
- (vii) Ragwort. The ragwort on the A695 and in particular on the roundabout with the A68 is out of control. Cllr. Dale had taken this issue up with the County Council, they were clear that the work needed to be undertaken by officers because of its locality;
- (viii) Utilities. Over the next year, more work was required to be undertaken by the utility companies. At the present time, the Council had deferred this work because of the impact it would have during the construction work taking place on the A69 at Hexham;
- (ix) Meetings: At the present time some Council meetings had been cancelled and those that were taking place were televised on You Tube. The Area Council meetings were cancelled in April which included the Area Planning Committee meetings. The Strategic Planning Committee (the Council's central committee) were dealing with any planning applications which were contentious including those which would have previously gone to the Tynedale Area Planning Committee;
- (x) Local Plan: The County Council would be consulting with the public about the issues that had been raised by the Local Plan Inspector during the Public Hearing. It was important that the Parish Council also responded to this;
- (xi) Thank you: Cllr. Dale concluded with thanking everyone who continued to support those in need in the village during these changing times. She also thanked Cllr. Dunhill for all his hard work as Chair of the Parish Council, stating that lots had been achieved under his Chairmanship and that she had enjoyed working with him over this period of time.

#### 20/54 **Play Park**

- (i) *Reopening of the play park*

It was reported that the government had eased restrictions and playgrounds could reopen. The Clerk had undertaken a risk assessment following the guidelines issued by the government and in conjunction with the guidance given by the Association of Play Industries. A number of measures were suggested including a maximum number of children who should use the park at any one time, signage advising of the need for social-distancing and for users to use hand sanitiser frequently. Councillors reviewed and accepted the risk assessment and possible signage and unanimously agreed to reopen the play park as soon as the Clerk had

prepared the signage and the handyman had undertaken a safety assessment (Proposed: Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill).

**ACTION: CLERK**

(ii) *Weekly inspections of the play park*

Cllr. Howe offered to take over the weekly inspections of the play park from Cllr. Dunhill. Quarterly inspections would still be undertaken by the handyman.

**20/55 Mill Pond Restoration**

The feasibility report from the Tyne Rivers Trust was received and accepted. Councillors recorded their thanks to the Trust and found the report very informative. A number of scenarios were outlined but the Trust recommended a simple modular approach to begin with – a tidy up of the area and monitoring of how the pond behaved naturally, fed only by rain and pluvial run-off. The Trust noted that concerns had been raised about whether the area had been previously used to discard diesel/oil which would have contaminated the soil. If the soil was contaminated this would greatly increase the cost of the project making it unviable and they therefore suggested that the parish council arrange for a number of soil samples to be analysed. A quote had been obtained for 10 samples although the Trust thought that five might be sufficient. It was unanimously agreed that 5 samples should be analysed in order to help determine the future viability of the project (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill). It was noted that funding sources identified previously may no longer be available as many organisations were redirecting funding to Covid-19 projects.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**20/56 Website**

It was noted that the website had been updated thoroughly with new pages added for Climate Change issues and Local History. A review of documents posted on the site had been undertaken to ensure that they met accessibility standards. The website was now considered to meet the new Accessibility Regulations which would come into force in September 2020.

**20/57 Sports Club**

Cllr. Howe noted that the Club had not submitted either an update report or their accounts from 2019/20 and it was therefore still impossible to determine the grant for the current year. Cricket had been given permission to restart, as had football. The earlier proposals for the parish council to cover the grass cutting costs in the interim were now invalid and it was imperative that the accounts were received so that the grant could be agreed.

**ACTION: SPORTS CLUB**

**20/58 Review of current Policy Documents**

The following policy documents were received and unanimously approved. One amendment was made to the Complaints Policy as detailed below:

- Complaints Policy (B5: The complainant, if not then satisfied, may seek redress elsewhere, e.g. the County Council Standards Committee) (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Mills);

**ACTION: CLERK**

- Vexatious Communications Policy (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Bridges).

**20/59 General Village Maintenance**

- (i) Handyman: it was noted that the handyman had strimmed vegetation along footpaths (both on behalf of the parish council and for the County Council (costs would be refunded to the parish council)). He had also cut back overhanging bushes at the Spinney and swept footpaths.

Councillors noted that many roadside footpaths had overgrowing shrubs and brambles and residents should be encouraged to cut them back.

- (ii) Footpaths/Rights of Way: Cllr. Dunhill noted that a number of stiles were in poor repair and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the County Council to record which ones so that they could take the appropriate action.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**20/60 Finance**

(a) *Monthly accounts*

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

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Stephen Rutherford – bus shelter cleaning  | £40.00              |
| Seymour Gardens & Trees – invasive species inspection/scout garden   | £20.00              |
| Unity Trust Bank- quarterly bank charges   | £18.00              |
| Martin Stewart – footpath maintenance on behalf of County Council (£300) which we reclaim, maintenance of The Nick £130 (SBRA to refund £65)               | £430.00             |
| The Play Park Inspection Company – yearly inspection   | £81.00 (VAT £13.50) |
| Catherine Harrison – June salary + home allowance  | £491.89             |
| Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (Zoom monthly fee £14.39, Plants and compost £42.66, Conference microphone £34.99 (VAT £5.83), Photo £7.49) | £99.53 (VAT £5.83)  |
| David Ballantyne – tree works sports field   | £1200.00            |

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (July) | £160.00 |
| RM VHT – emergency payment to help during Covid 19 (July)  | £500.00 |

The following receipts were noted:

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| RM Allotment Association – quarterly rent      | £51.63 |
| Triodos (reserve account) – quarterly interest | £8.82  |

(b) *Budget report*

The budget report was received and accepted (proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill). There were no issues to note.

**20/61 Planning**

There were no planning applications or decisions to note.

**20/62 Fold House**

- (i) *Notice under Article 13 of Application for Planning Permission:* It was reported that a Notice under Article 13 of Application for Planning Permission in relation to the proposed Fold House development had appeared in the Hexham Courant. A decision on whether to respond had had to be made via email as the deadline was prior to this meeting. Councillors agreed that they would register the PC's legal interest in Church Lane from its junction with Millfield Road, the track leading up to the applicant's land south of Church Lane and the footpath along the western boundary of the applicant's land. The earlier decision was unanimously ratified (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Mills).

- (ii) *Statement on behalf of Long Rigg Property Owners Association (LRPOA):* In the pre-meeting discussion, Mr Richard Walker, Chairman of LRPOA, made a statement in relation to the imminent planning application. He explained that the Association had coordinated responses to Cundall's consultation – he believed that there had been in the region of 100 objections. He then explained the main objections to the development which councillors noted. He requested that the parish council object to the application once it was submitted. He also asked the parish council to request an extended period for public consultation (normally a three-week period for consultation would be given which could coincide with the main holiday period in August).

Cllr. Howe explained that once the application was received it would be reviewed fully by the planning sub-committee. The committee would also consider the information it had received from LRPOA and other residents in the village before making a recommendation which would be considered at a full council meeting. Cllr. Dunhill noted that any comments submitted by the parish council carried no more weight with the planning committee than those submitted by parishioners and that they should be aware that it was up to them to submit any comments they may have. The Clerk reported that she has asked Cundall to provide paper copies of the application for those who were unable to view it online.

**20/63 Climate Change**

This agenda item was deferred to a future meeting.

**20/64 Correspondence**

- (i) Concerns had been raised by a resident over parking at Broomhaugh – this had been referred to Cllr. Dale.
- (ii) Notification of Giant Hogweed at Broomhaugh: The Clerk had reported the issue of invasive species to the Styford Estate. A resident had removed the plant before it flowered.
- (iii) Himalayan Balsam: In the pre-meeting question time, Mrs Linden Stephenson outlined the work that was being done in the village to eradicate Himalayan Balsam. Her neighbour, Rob Jones, had personally removed over 8000 plants and had written to explain the areas he was most concerned about including large areas on the Healey Estate which he had been given permission to access. Mrs Stephenson asked that the parish council liaise with the Tyne Rivers Trust to see what help it could offer and the Clerk reported that she was in contact with their new volunteer coordinator. Cllr. Dunhill offered to liaise with Mr Jones to see what assistance he could offer and it was also agreed that Mr Jones should be sent a letter of thanks from the Council commending him for his efforts.

**ACTION: AD/CLERK**

**20/65 Minor Matters**

- (i) *Newsletter:* The Clerk reported that she was shortly to begin drafting the next newsletter. If Councillors had ideas for any articles they should let her know.

**ACTION: ALL**

- (ii) *Local Plan:* it was noted that the County Council would be consulting on the additional evidence requested by the Local Plan Inspector. This consultation would be held from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July until Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

**20/66 Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Venue to be confirmed.

*Before closing the meeting, Cllr. Howe recorded her thanks to Cllr. Dunhill for his work as Chair of the Parish Council and this was endorsed by everyone present.*

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.