



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Methodist Chapel, Broomhaugh, on Monday 11th November 2021.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Brian Singer (Chair)
Cllr. Pam Bridges
Cllr. David Irwin
Cllr. David McKenzie

Cllr. Jill Mills (until Minute 21/105)
Cllr. Stephen Lightley
Cllr. Eileen Carew
Cllr. Andy Dunhill

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 21/105)
Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk
4 members of the public were present.

Cllr. Singer opened the meeting at 7.30 pm.

21/95 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Howe

21/96 Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Singer declared an interest in Item 9 – the Allotment Association lease
Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in items 7 and 17 – the Sports Club

21/97 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 13th September 2021

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. Bridges).

21/98 Matters Arising

- (i) *Minute 21/81(vi) – FACTCO – Community Broadband.*
Cllr. Dale noted that the original ultrafast broadband government procurement process had been withdrawn and details of a new scheme would hopefully be announced within the next few weeks following which she would update residents;
- (ii) *Minute 21/85 – Local Transport Plan Programme 22-23.*
The Clerk confirmed that the following priorities had been submitted to the County Council for consideration in next year's LTP programme:
 1. Cycleway along the A695 to Stocksfield;
 2. Cycleway/footpath from the top of Whiteside Bank alongside the A68 to the High Plains road;
 3. Resurfacing of a number of estate roads including Sandy Bank, Meadow Park, section of Station Close and The Street at Broomhaugh.
- (iii) *Minute 21/87(iii) – VAT advice.*
The Clerk reported that an enquiry relating to reclaiming VAT for the pavilion development had been submitted to a specialist VAT accountant and further advice was awaited.
- (iv) *Minute 21/88 – Tennis Club entrance / Japanese Knotweed.*
Advice from a specialist company which treated Japanese Knotweed was noted and a discussion was held about the need for such a project especially now it was known that any waste would have

to be treated as contaminated and there was a potential risk if rhizomes were disturbed. After further consideration, the Parish Council unanimously agreed that it could no longer consent to a new pathway for the following reason:

- *Any disturbance of contaminated land brings with it too great a financial risk to the Parish Council especially as the project is perceived as aesthetic rather than essential.*

(Proposed Cllr. Lightley, seconded Cllr. Carew)

The Clerk was asked to write to the Tennis Club to notify them of the decision.

ACTION: CLERK

- (v) *Minute 21/90(v) – Litter bin by Broomhaugh roundabout.*

The Clerk reported that the County Council did not support the installation of a bin in the layby near the roundabout as they believed it might cause more incidents of fly-tipping. The offer to install a bin was therefore withdrawn and Cllr. Dale agreed to inform the resident;

ACTION: ADa

- (vi) *Minute 21/90(vi) – Hedge by football field.*

The Clerk reported that she had written to residents living in the chalets asking for their views on the possible planting of a hedge alongside the football field. Three had responded favourably (one of the responses was on behalf of a number of chalet owners). Cllr. Singer reported that he had spoken to one of the owners whose home overlooked the field and they didn't favour the hedge. As the majority of residents supported the installation of a hedge, the Clerk was asked to proceed subject to free hedging packs being still available from the Woodland Trust (proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Lightley).

ACTION: CLERK

21/99 **County Councillor Report**

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- Signage and car parking on the highway:* Cllr. Dale had referred these matters to the relevant officers at the County Council;
- Smart meters:* Cllr. Dale had been informed by a number of residents that their smart meters did not work and it appeared that there was a problem with the WAN (Wide Area Network) signal in the village. She had referred the problem to the County Council and to the local MP for further investigation;
- Flooding:* Cllr. Dale noted that the County Council had cleaned out a number of gullies in the village but it was recognised that there was a problem with the gully infrastructure and this was to be investigated;
- Pedestrian Crossing:* Cllr. Dale was disappointed to report that the work on the pedestrian crossing had been due to start that day but had been delayed because of the emergency water main repair nearby. She hoped it would be rescheduled and that work would begin shortly;
- Manor House development:* Cllr. Dale was aware that the Building Conservation officers had raised issues with the proposals and discussions were ongoing;
- Fold House development:* Cllr. Dale reported that the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for this development would be heard at a Hearing early next year;
- NCC plans to combat climate change:* Cllr. Dale had attended a meeting of the East Tynedale Forum at which NCC representatives had discussed its Climate Change Action Plan.

21/100 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Irwin reported that the working groups had been meeting to develop ideas and policies and their suggestions had been combined into a number of posters which were to be displayed at an exhibition on Saturday 13th November in the Millennium Hall. It was very important that residents responded to the consultation and details of the exhibition would be publicised widely. It was noted that there would be further consultations in the new year. Cllr. Lightley recorded his thanks to Cllr. Irwin for all the work he had done creating the exhibition posters and this was endorsed by all those present.

21/101 **Sports Club**

Sports Pavilion extension: A written report from Cllr. Howe was received including a summary of the final costs. The internal work at the pavilion was complete although a few minor external jobs still needed to be undertaken including the installation of a gate by the disabled entrance path. The project did show an overspend as detailed below and further minor costs could still be incurred:

Account summary:

Anticipated costs: £53,570 (£49,030 for the building contract for both phases, £500 for skip hire, £3,600 architect fees and £440 for Building Control fees).

Final costs: £56,915

Overspend

Additional building control fees - £140.00

Skip hire – 4 extra skips - £1000.00

Heat detector for kitchen - £489.00

New manhole for septic tank / extension to pipework £380.00

(Cleaning and inspection of septic tank was charged to maintenance budget)

New WC and fittings for portaloo - £100.00 (unable to retain existing)

Hire of portaloo during All Star events (8 weeks) - £357.00

Installation of path from disabled ramp to road - £840.00 (required by building inspector)

Emergency locksmith call out - £109.00

Remedial work to old changing rooms - £350.00

Sub-total - £3,765

(less £600 VAT which could be reclaimed (architect's fee was £3,000 rather than £3,600 as listed above)

TOTAL - £3,165.00

The Clerk noted that, during the building phase, a crate of asbestos insulation board had been dumped by the builder's skip. A specialist firm had been sought to remove it and this would likely cost £750. Osbit had agreed to meet some of the costs.

Application for a Club certificate to serve alcohol: it was noted that the Club had been successful in its application for a Club certificate although the hours had been slightly reduced;

Reinstatement valuation: the Clerk reported that she had arranged for a reinstatement valuation of the pavilion which had been forwarded to the Council's insurer (new figure £200,000 increased from £82,000). The change to the insurance cover would result in an increase in the yearly premium of approximately £291 which councillors approved.

ACTION: CLERK

21/102 **Climate Change**

The Neighbourhood Plan exhibition included a proposal to become a zero carbon village by 2035 and outlined measures of how this could be achieved.

(<https://ridingmill.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/poster3.pdf>)

21/103 **Allotment Association**

As Cllr. Singer was chair of the Allotment Association, Cllr. Dunhill chaired the meeting for this item.

It was noted that the lease for the allotments would expire at the end of September 2022. The Association had written to request a new lease and it was agreed that Cllrs. Mills and Dunhill would draft an outline of the terms for the new lease which should include a simplified method of calculating the yearly rent. This would be done in liaison with the Allotment Association Secretary.

ACTION: JM/AD

21/104 **Review of current Policy Documents**

The following policies were reapproved without amendment (proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. McKenzie)

- *Freedom of Information Policy*
- *Publication Scheme*

The Grant Award Policy was approved with minor amendments (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Dunhill):

- 2.1 Clarification that an organisation receiving funds from the PC must have a proven direct benefit to parishioners
- 2.6 Amended to read: For **all** grant applications, applicants are required to demonstrate....
Supplementary notes: to remind councillors that they must declare an interest in the matter if they are a member of the group or organisation receiving funds.

During further discussions, Cllr. Irwin felt uneasy that funds were being awarded to some organisations which hadn't made an application and were simply given a donation on a historical basis. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate a list of organisations in advance of the meeting which had submitted a grant request to the Council. Councillors could also nominate further organisations they would like to support but they would need to provide written justification.

ACTION: CLERK

Note: Cllr. Mills withdrew from the meeting

21/105 Finance

(a) *Yearly Accounts*

It was noted that Mrs Margaret Weatherley had agreed to act as Internal Auditor again next financial year and her appointment was approved.

(b) *Monthly accounts:*

Cllr. Lightley reported that he had reviewed the bank accounts and bank reconciliation and confirmed that the records were being maintained satisfactorily.

(i) *Payments/Receipts*

The following payments were then authorised (Proposed Cllr. Lightley, seconded Cllr. Singer):

Stephen Rutherford – bus shelter cleaning	£40.00
Unity Trust Bank- quarterly bank charges	£18.00
Jo-Anne Garrick Ltd – planning consultant fees	£660.00
T Bell Horticultural services – parish grass cutting	£445.00
T Bell Horticultural services – Football field grass cutting	£380.00
G Moore – vermin control	£50.00
ME Stewart / Neetfleet – play park inspection	£70.00
Robson Print – newsletter and NP supplement	£458.00
Nicholson Construction– sports pavilion extension	£12,720.00 (inc. VAT £2,120)
P M Robinson – work to pavilion changing rooms	£350.00
Royal British Legion – yearly donation	£60.00
Crawford Higgins Associates – valuation of pavilion	£330.00 (inc. VAT £55.00)
Town & Parish Council websites – hosting fees + email storage	£384.00
ME Stewart/Neetfleet – additional hedge cutting	£50.00
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (A4 paper – 5 reams £18.22, Archive boxes £4.44, Title Plan £3, NALC training course fee £5, Zoom subscription x 2 £28.78, plants £12.50)	£71.94 (inc. VAT £8.58)

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (Oct)	£160.00
Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (Nov)	£160.00

The following receipts were noted:

Triodos bank – quarterly interest	£1.30
Northumberland CC – reimbursement for footpath maintenance	£300.00
RM Allotment Association – quarterly rent	£52.13

- (ii) *Budget report*
The budget reports together with a supplementary paper explaining the capital expenditure overspend were received and approved.

- (c) *Yearly Budget*
It was noted that the yearly budget would be set at next month's meeting and that ideas for capital expenditure projects should be notified to the Clerk. A preliminary discussion meeting would be arranged in advance of the December meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

- (d) *S137 Grants*
- (i) A donation to the Royal British Legion for £60 was approved (proposed Cllr. McKenzie, seconded Cllr. Bridges).
- (ii) It was noted that funding requests from other bodies would be considered at the December meeting.

21/106 **General Village Maintenance**

- (i) *Handyman*: The Clerk reported that the handyman as part of his monthly contract had swept and strimmed various footpaths, trimmed hedges in the Play Park and by the MUGA court, re-stained the flower planters and cleaned a drain on Millfield Road.

- (ii) Handyman contract: It was noted that the Handyman's contract would be up for renewal from 1st April 2022. Any additional tasks for inclusion in the contract should be notified to the Clerk who would begin drawing up the documents for the tendering process;

ACTION: CLERK

- (iii) *Natural Ability Handyman Services (NAHS)*: The Clerk reported that the group had tidied the edible garden and the area by the MUGA court. The work had been done to a satisfactory standard although each session cost considerably more than the Council had paid the gardener last year. The group supported young people with learning disabilities and was the only group in the area that paid their workers an hourly wage. The group was looking for tasks to do over the winter months and the Clerk suggested that the area by the MUGA court was difficult to weed as the membrane beneath the stones was rotten. If it could be replaced and the area properly weeded, it would be easier to maintain in the future. It was agreed to ask NAHS to provide a quote for this work as councillors felt it was a worthy cause to support.

ACTION: CLERK

- (iv) Planters on the station platform: It had been reported that one of the planters had collapsed. The Clerk was asked to contact Malcolm Chainey, Chair of the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership, to see if there were any plans for it to be replaced.

ACTION: CLERK

21/107 **Planning**

(a) *Planning applications*

- (i) It was reported that the following planning applications were under consideration by the County Council:
- 21/03552/FUL – Witches Wood, Main Road. Rear extension, Garage conversion and front porch. PC – concerns about removal of garage and implication for parking. Also, surface water drainage issues to be considered;
 - 21/03883/FUL – Fir Trees, Sandy Bank. Single storey extension and link to garage. PC – no objection;
 - 21/03919/FUL – Fairleads, Long Rigg. Single storey extension. PC – no objection although would like best practice energy efficiency measures incorporated into the design;
 - 21/04215/FUL – 1 Mill View, Mill Close. Double storey side extension and demolition of existing garage. PC – no objection although would like best practice energy efficiency measures incorporated into the design.

- (ii) it was reported that the following planning applications had been approved by the County Council:
- 21/01502/FUL – West Lodge, Millfield Road;
 - 21/01496/FUL – White Wood, Sandy Bank;
 - 20/02950/FUL – The Lodge, Shepherds Dene;
 - 21/02165/FUL – Heritage Trail Signs;
 - 21/01688/LBC – 8 Hollin Hill Terrace.
 - 21/01362/FUL – Land east of East Rigg, Long Rigg. Detached dwelling.

(b) *Planning Appeal Notification – Land south of Church Lane (Fold House – 20/01932/FUL)*

It was reported that the Parish Council had been notified that an appeal had been made against the decision of Northumberland County Council to refuse permission for the above planning application. The appeal would be determined on the basis of a Hearing. The Parish Council could make a representation to the Planning Inspectorate for which the deadline was 26th November.

It was agreed that in view of the short timescale, the planning sub-group plus any other interested councillors should consider a response after reviewing the appeal documentation. If it was deemed appropriate to make a representation, then the statement would be circulated via email to all councillors for approval before submitting to the Planning Inspectorate. This would be done under delegated powers and ratified at the December meeting.

ACTION: CH

21/108 Correspondence

- (i) Letter from Mr Baird concerning sports field usage rules. It was noted that the Clerk had responded informing him that a sign outlining various rules had been discussed but never agreed with the Sports Club;
- (ii) Letter from Mrs Downs re the footpath connecting Sandy Bank to Marchburn Lane. This was referred to Cllr. Dale for response;
- (iii) Letter from a resident to the Tennis Club to which the PC was copied in concerning road safety issues caused by club members parking on Millfield Road. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to the Tennis Club to ask members to park elsewhere (Proposed Cllr. Lightley, seconded Cllr. Irwin).

ACTION: CLERK

21/109 Minor Matters

- (i) *Remembrance Sunday*
It was noted that Cllr. Howe would lay the wreath at the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday;

- (ii) *Christmas Tree*
The Clerk reported that she had been asked to investigate planting a real Christmas tree rather than buying a cut tree each year. Pot grown trees over 10 ft tall were extremely expensive – over £1000 - and could easily fail when transplanted from the pot. She therefore suggested continuing to buy a cut tree for the next few years together with buying a much smaller tree costing around £45 which could be planted and would eventually grow to the size required. This suggestion was approved;

ACTION: CLERK

- (iii) *Mill Pond – volunteer session - Wednesday 15th December*
It was noted that the Tyne Rivers Trust would be holding the second volunteer session on Wednesday 15th December during which the volunteers would dig out the snowberry bushes from around the pond area and replant with native hedging. The Clerk would advertise the session, should any village volunteers wish to attend.

ACTION: CLERK

- (iv) *Memorial Tree*

Cllr. Bridges reported that she had met with a resident who had asked to plant a memorial tree. The preferred location was on Marchburn Lane and the Clerk was asked to write to the Marchburn Lane Residents' Association to canvass their views.

ACTION: CLERK

21/110 Date of Future Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 13th December 2021 in the Supper Room of the Parish Hall.

21/111 Confidential Matters: Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item

1. Sports Club – Consideration of a new lease and the operation of the sports club and management of the field.

Note: Cllr. Mills returned to the meeting for the confidential item and Cllr. Dunhill withdrew as he had declared an interest.

Public meeting closed at 9.00 pm.