



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Supper Room, Parish Hall, Millfield Road, on Monday 14th March 2022.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Christine Howe (Chair)
Cllr. Brian Singer
Cllr. David Irwin
Cllr. Pam Bridges

Cllr. Jill Mills
Cllr. Stephen Lightley
Cllr. Eileen Carew
Cllr. Andy Dunhill

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 22/31)
Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk
1 member of the public was present.

Cllr. Howe opened the meeting at 7.30 pm.

22/23 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. David McKenzie

22/24 Declaration of Interests

- Cllrs. Irwin and Lightley declared an interest in item 6 – the Tennis Club, as both were members.
- Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in item 8 – the Sports Club.
- Cllr. Singer declared an interest in item 9 - the Allotment Association lease and rent, as he was the chair of the Allotment Association.

22/25 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 14th February 2022

Cllr. Dale asked for Minute 22/06(vi) to be altered to record that it was the County Council which had commissioned a review of its own governance procedures. It was agreed that the Minute should read: "She also noted that the County Council had commissioned an external person to review the governance of the County Council".

Cllr. Singer objected to Minute 22/07 and the use of the word 'intention' as he did not feel it accurately reflected what had been agreed. This was disputed by other councillors and a vote was taken to decide whether the Minute should be changed. A majority of councillors agreed that the Minute should not be changed [No change: Cllrs. Howe, Lightley, Irwin, Carew and Mills, Change: Cllr. Singer. Cllrs. Dunhill and Bridges abstained].

It was agreed by majority decision that the minutes subject to the amendment above were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Howe (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Carew).

22/26 Matters Arising

- (i) *Minute 22/04 – Defibrillator at High Plains.* Deferred to a future meeting;
- (ii) *Minute 22/11 – Landslip at Cartref.*

The Clerk reported that she had received advice from Brian Bell of BT Bell Consulting Engineers and from David Green who worked for the Lead Local Flood Authority Team at the County Council

with regard to the land slippage resulting in a tree root ball in the March Burn. BT Bell confirmed that the collapsed ground was not a landslip but a shallow surface slide caused by natural erosion of the surface soils. They felt it was not practical to use hard engineering solutions to limit the rate of denudation of the slope but suggested that large trees at the top of the slope should be assessed by an arboriculturist and if necessary pollarded to reduce the weight and leverage during windy periods. They noted that with all natural erosion processes, future slides could be expected and could not be eliminated but with some management the impacts could be reduced.

David Green noted that Section 25 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 states that where any ordinary watercourse is in such a condition that the proper flow of water is impeded then the Lead Local Flood Authority may serve notice to require that the condition is remedied. He noted that although the flow of water was altered it was not impeded from progressing downstream and the flood risk had not been altered. He therefore concluded that the Parish Council did not have a legal requirement to remove the tree stump and other material from the Burn.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the nearby residents to update them and would arrange for an arboriculturist to assess the trees on the upper part of the slope.

ACTION: CLERK

- (iii) *Minute 22/12 – Village Hall Trust – withdrawal as custodian trustee of the Millennium Hall*
The Clerk noted that a letter had been sent to the Charity Commission and a response was awaited.

22/27 **County Councillor Report**

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- (i) *Pedestrian Crossing*: Cllr. Dale understood that all works had been completed and the crossing would be activated once final safety checks had been made;
- (ii) *Network Rail*: Cllr. Dale noted that there were ongoing discussions between residents and Network Rail regarding the proposed new fencing;
- (iii) *Heritage Trail*: Cllr. Dale had been pleased to receive a letter from a local resident who had enjoyed the heritage trail;
- (iv) *Parking at Broomhaugh*: Cllr. Dale hoped to consult with residents shortly but first she needed information from the relevant highways officer;
- (v) *Local Transport Plan*: Cllr. Dale reported that she believed that none of the three priorities submitted to the County Council had been selected.

22/28 **Tennis Club development plans**

It was reported that the Parish Council had written to the Club as agreed at the last meeting and a response had been received. Since the last meeting, 19 letters supporting the proposals had been received of which a number were from tennis club members rather than residents of the parish. An additional 3 letters of objection had been received which brought the total objections to 76 plus two responses which were neutral. The Parish Council had yet to be notified of a planning application and Councillors agreed not to make any further comment until the planning consultation when full details of the proposals would be known.

22/29 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Howe reported that the first draft of the Plan was nearing completion and would be sent to the Planning Consultant shortly. The Local Authority would then need to review it and decide if a Strategic Environmental Assessment was needed. There would be a formal consultation process later before the referendum but the Steering Group was considering holding an informal village consultation at this stage to share some of the proposals and gauge the reaction. Cllr. Howe noted that unfortunately a number of volunteers had withdrawn from the sub-groups which was disappointing. She also noted that future funding of neighbourhood plans from April 2022 had still to be agreed by the government.

22/30 **Sports Club**

- (i) *New management structure*: The Clerk reported that advice had been received from the solicitor and it would appear possible to issue a licence rather than a lease to individual clubs. Queries had been raised

about the Club certificate for serving alcohol but after discussing these with the Licensing Officer these had been resolved too. It was hoped that a meeting with the Club could be arranged shortly.

(ii) Extension to decked area: despite a number of requests, the Cricket Club had yet to provide confirmation that the extension to the decked area did not require planning permission therefore the matter could not be considered at this meeting. It was noted that a resident had written to express concerns about the proposals especially in relation to the outdoor consumption of alcohol with the increased capacity of the veranda.

(iii) Football field: it was noted that the surface of the football field remained poor despite being rolled and aerated. Mark Robinson, the manager of the football team was seeking advice and further work might be required.

22/31 **RM Allotment Association**

The Heads of Terms for the proposed new lease were received and the following points noted:

- The rent would be simplified. The Association currently pays £224/year rent but then the Parish Council reimburses their insurance costs. Instead, a simple peppercorn rent of £1 would be charged and the Association would pay its own insurance;
- The Parish Council would continue to be responsible for the maintenance of the boundaries although the Association would maintain the gate area;
- In future, allotment holders would be able to install greenhouses provided they were fixed down to a removable base;
- The previous lease was granted to the Allotment Association but this time it would be granted to named Trustees.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the Heads of Terms and to forward it to the solicitor to action (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Howe).

ACTION: CLERK

It was noted that the gas sub-station next to the allotments needed repairs undertaken to the roof and gate and the Clerk would write to Northern Gas Networks.

ACTION: CLERK

22/32 **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

The Clerk reported that plans were well under way for the jubilee weekend celebrations in June with various organisations running different events. A sports day/jubilee picnic would be held at the sports field on Sunday 5th June. This needed to be organised through a sub-group of the Parish Council to ensure the event was covered for insurance purposes. The Clerk would also need to be responsible for undertaking risk assessments and for ensuring health and safety procedures were in place. The Clerk confirmed that she had applied for a grant of £500 from the County Council to help support various activities planned for the jubilee weekend and she suggested that the Parish Council might make a donation of £200 towards the event too. This was unanimously approved (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill).

ACTION: CLERK

22/33 **Climate Change**

The Clerk reported that she had been advised via Cllr. Dale that the County Council would only fund EV charging points on their own land and as there was no NCC carpark in Riding Mill this was no longer an option. It was agreed to recontact private companies for advice about installing an EV charging point in the Old Playground.

ACTION: CLERK

22/34 **Review of Policy Documents**

The following policy documents were reviewed and accepted subject to minor updates:

- Financial Risk Assessment. Add further update to: Grants – receivable. Review/Assess/Revise: Monitor and seek to reduce risk by *transferring liability to 3rd party*. (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr Dunhill)
- Asset Register. The following assets were added to the register: pavilion extension, clerk’s laptop, heritage trail signs (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill)
- B&RPC Continuity Plan (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Lightley)

22/35 **Finance**

Monthly accounts:

(i) Payments/Receipts

The following payments were authorised (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Irwin):

NEST Pension – February pension	£23.85
Northumberland County Council – salary payment February	£902.06 (inc. VAT £2.50)
Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – installation of heritage trail noticeboard	£300.00
Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – fence repair/install bug boxes/ replace seat	£95.00
RM Village Hall Trust – room hire	£48.00
CommuniCorp – subscription to Clerks & Councils Direct	£12.00
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (Zoom subscription, Card)	£17.87 (inc. VAT £2.98)
Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (March)	£160.00
Stephen Rutherford – bus shelter cleaning	£40.00

The following receipt was noted:

HMRC – VAT reimbursement	£5,841.32
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(ii) Budget report

The budget reports were received and approved (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Irwin). No new issues were identified.

(iii) Standing orders and direct debits

A paper detailing the yearly standing orders and direct debits was received and noted.

22/36 **General Village Maintenance**

(i) *Handyman:* The Clerk reported that the handyman had undertaken his usual duties: sweeping the pavements along the main road and other areas, cleared leaves and cut back ivy along a footpath. He had also installed the heritage trail noticeboards and the bird boxes and bug hotels in the Spinney. He had also reinstalled the vandalised seat and repaired a broken fence.

(ii) *Spinney:* Cllr. Dunhill suggested that the Spinney would be improved if more bulbs were planted. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask residents via the Parish News if they had any bulbs which could be split and donated to the Spinney;

ACTION: CLERK

(iii) *Bus shelter repairs:* It was reported that the westbound bus shelter at Broomhaugh was leaking and the handyman had been instructed to replace the roof.

(iv) *Fencing at Sandy Bank:* Cllr. Dunhill noted that some additional fence posts appeared rotten and the Clerk would ask the handyman to review.

ACTION: CLERK

(v) *Fencing by the railway bridge:* Cllr. Singer reported that there was a loose rail near to the railway bridge and the Clerk was asked to inform Network Rail.

ACTION: CLERK

(vi) *Improvements to footpaths:* The Clerk reported on the poor state of some of the Rights of Way in the parish due to mud making them unusable for some residents. She suggested that

improvements might be possible with the installation of land drains or addition of ballast. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek advice from the Footpaths Officer and would cost the proposals for councillors to consider at a future meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

22/37 **Planning**

(a) *Planning applications*

(i) It was reported that the following planning applications were under consideration by the County Council:

- 21/00438/FUL – High Shilford. Construction of new stone built detached stables. PC – no objection;
- 22/00608/FUL – Manor House Cottage. Single storey porch. PC – no objection but comment about moving wall to increase width of pavement;
- 22/00596/LBC – Amendment to plaque on War Memorial. PC was the applicant;
- 22.00774/FUL – Ford Bungalow, Broomhaugh. Side extension for en-suite bathroom and erection of new garage. PC – no objection;
- 21/02077/FUL – Land south east of the Manor House. 13 dwellings including 2 affordable homes. It was noted that the entrance had not been moved in the revised scheme which was disappointing. There appeared to be some dispute as to whether the wall was part of the original curtilage of the Manor House and whether or not it was listed. Councillors would prefer a different scheme entirely with more affordable housing as detailed in the Housing Needs Assessment. They would also prefer to see a different access point. It was agreed that Cllr. Howe would draft a response to the new proposals which would be circulated via email for approval.

ACTION: CH

(ii) It was reported that the following planning applications had been approved by the County Council:
None to note.

22/38 **Correspondence**

No additional letters to note.

22/39 **Minor Matters**

- (i) *Annual Parish Meeting*. It was confirmed that the APM would be held on Thursday 12th May. There would not be an external speaker and instead an update would be given on the Neighbourhood Plan including a discussion on community actions and housing.
- (ii) *Litter Pick*. The Clerk reminded councillors that the community litter pick would be held on Saturday 26th March.
- (iii) *Scout Camp*. Councillors were happy to approve a request from the Scouts to hold an overnight camp on the land by the double tennis courts on the weekend of 2nd/3rd April.

22/40 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 9th May 2022 (Venue to be confirmed).

22/41 **Arboricultural Services**

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: the award of the contract for providing arboricultural surveys.

After reviewing quotes, it was unanimously agreed to appoint Northumberland Tree Surveys Ltd. to undertake arboricultural surveys on behalf of the Parish Council. This appointment would be subject to satisfactory references (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill)

ACTION: CLERK

Public meeting closed at 9.20 pm