



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the AGM of the Parish Council held in the Supper Room, Parish Hall, Millfield Road, on Monday 9th May 2022.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Christine Howe (Chair)
Cllr. Brian Singer
Cllr. David Irwin
Cllr. Andy Dunhill

Cllr. Jill Mills
Cllr. Stephen Lightley
Cllr. David McKenzie

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 22/52(b))
Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk
2 members of the public were present.

Cllr. Howe opened the meeting at 7.45 pm.

22/42 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs. Pam Bridges and Eileen Carew

22/43 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2022/23 were sought. Cllr. Singer proposed that Cllr. Howe should remain as Chair and Cllr. Dunhill proposed that Cllr. Singer should remain as Vice-Chair. These proposals were seconded by Cllrs. McKenzie and Mills respectively and agreed unanimously. Cllr. Howe was duly elected as Chair and Cllr. Singer as Vice-Chair. Cllr. Howe signed an Acceptance of Office Form for the position of Chair.

22/44 Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Singer declared an interest in item 7(ii) – The Allotment Association lease, as he was Chair of the Association;

Cllr. McKenzie declared an interest in item 10(d)–The award of a grant to the Village Hall Trust, as he served on the VHT's management committee.

22/45 Delegation of responsibilities

It had previously been agreed that the Chair could delegate to councillors the Chair's authority to take decisions in specific areas, subject to approval at future PC meetings and working in conjunction with the Clerk. 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 – Cllrs. Mills + Dunhill
- Appraisals – Cllrs. Carew & Singer
- VHT representatives – **no longer required**
- Website monitoring/development – Cllr. Dunhill
- Handyman/ Amenity matters/ Play park inspection – Cllrs. Howe & Dunhill
- Accounts – Cllr. Lightley

- Sport & Recreation – Cllrs. Singer and Lightley (**Cllr. Howe would act as a reserve**)
- 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. Bridges – to be confirmed**
- Footpaths Group – Councillor Dunhill
- Children/Youth issues – Cllr. McKenzie and Singer
- Village maintenance sub-group – Cllrs. Dunhill, Carew and Howe
- Neighbourhood Plan – Cllrs. Howe and Irwin

22/46 **Standing Orders/Financial Regulations/Code of Conduct**

It was unanimously agreed to re-adopt the following documents without amendment:

- *Standing Orders* (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill);
As required by Standing Orders, councillors ratified an earlier decision and agreed to hold monthly parish council meetings (excluding August). Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Irwin.
- *Financial Regulations* (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill);
Noted: NALC had issued an updated version of this document which the Clerk would review and report on at a future meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

- *Code of Conduct* (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill).
It was agreed to write to NALC to express the Council's concern that whilst parish councillors agree to follow the Nolan Principles for those in public life, current senior government figures appear not to follow them especially in relation to the matter of Honesty - "Honesty - Holders of public office should be truthful". The Parish Council believed that this was a matter that NALC at a national level should take up with the appropriate authorities in central Government (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Singer)

ACTION: AD/CLERK

22/47 **Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 14th March 2022**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting were a true record subject to two minor amendments. and were duly signed off by Cllr. Howe (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill) (Amendments: it should be clarified that the solicitor referred to was representing the Parish Council (Minute 22/30 and 22/31).

22/48 **Matters Arising**

- (i) *Minute 22/26(iii) – PC withdrawal as Custodian Trustee, Millennium Hall*
The Clerk reported that she had been in contact with the Parish Council's solicitor and they would be happy to act for the Council on this matter. The Clerk would liaise with the VHT to agree how to proceed;

ACTION: CLERK

- (ii) *Minute 22/31: Allotment Association – new lease*
A draft of the Allotment Lease had been received from the Parish Council's solicitor. A few alterations had been suggested and once the draft had been updated, the Clerk would forward it to the Allotment Association for review. Cllr. Mills noted a query regarding the Association's Constitution which she would like to investigate further and would contact the Association if necessary;

ACTION: CLERK/JM

- (iii) *Minute 22/32 – Queen's Platinum Jubilee events*
The Clerk reported that plans were well underway for the jubilee events although it was proving hard work as a number of participants had withdrawn and alternatives were now being sought. A grant of £500 from the County Council had been secured to support the weekend of events.

- (iv) *Minutes 22/41 – Arboricultural Services.*

The Clerk reported that the arborist had commenced his survey of the woods and would submit his report shortly.

22/49 **County Councillor Report**

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- (i) *Climate Change.* Cllr. Dale noted that she had now been informed that the County Council would assist with charging points on land which they didn't own, a change in position from previous discussions. The Clerk was asked to resend her earlier email to Cllr. Dale which Cllr. Dale would follow up with the appropriate officer;
- (ii) *Litter pick:* Cllr. Dale welcomed the involvement of so many residents. She noted that a resident of Mickley had decided to regularly litter pick along the A695 from the Broomhaugh roundabout to Stocksfield and she thanked them for their efforts which had improved this stretch of road;
- (iii) *Neighbourhood Plan:* Cllr. Dale was pleased to report that the government had extended the funding for Neighbourhood Plans;
- (iv) *Rights of Way:* Cllr. Dale continued to receive a number of reports about footpath issues and she worked with the Footpaths Officer to address them;
- (v) *Pedestrian Crossing:* Cllr. Dale was delighted that the Pedestrian Crossing was now operational;
- (vi) *Network Rail:* Cllr Dale reported that the proposed works by Network Rail would be undertaken imminently and she would ensure the highway issues were monitored closely;
- (vii) *Broomhaugh parking:* Cllr. Dale noted that residents who had previously raised concerns about the parking at Broomhaugh no longer wished her to pursue this matter;
- (viii) *Tyne Valley Cycleway:* Cllr. Dale encouraged the Parish Council to sign up to this initiative which hoped to promote a traffic free cycle route in the Tyne Valley. The Clerk reported that she had already registered the Parish Council's interest.
- (ix) *Northern Gas Network – works at Broomhaugh:* In the pre-meeting discussion, a resident had raised issues about the work, in particular, the safety of the barriers stacked at the junction and the failure to provide a safe stopping point for buses. Cllr. Dale agreed to raise the issues with the relevant department at the County Council so that enforcement action could be taken if necessary.

ACTION: ADa/CLERK

ACTION: ADa

22/50 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Howe reported that the draft plan and supporting papers had been completed and were ready to send to the County Council for screening once ratified by the Parish Council. She noted that this was not the end result and there would be further opportunities for input from residents and other consultees over the coming months. Cllr. Howe proposed to discuss the Housing Paper at the annual Parish Meeting later in the week and hoped to display the relevant documents on the website shortly. It was unanimously agreed to approve the following three documents and to submit them to the County Council (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Lightley):

- The Neighbourhood Plan – Pre-Submission Draft
- The Local Green Space Background Paper
- The Housing Background Paper

Councillors recorded their thanks to Cllr. Howe for the enormous amount of work she had done on preparing the housing paper.

22/51 **Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2021/22**

- (i) It was noted that the Internal Auditor, Mrs Margaret Weatherley, had raised no issues of concern after auditing the accounts.

The following documents were received in advance of the meeting and were unanimously approved (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Irwin):

- (ii) the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22
- (iii) the draft annual accounts for 2021/22
- (iv) the Accounting Statement for 2021/22

- (v) the Explanation of Variances [the Clerk was asked to explain the overall deficit figure for the year and informed the Councillors that grants had been received in the previous financial year but spent in 2021/22 on the pavilion project].
- (vi) It was noted that the dates for the Exercise of Electors' Rights to view the accounts would be from Monday 6th June until Friday 15th July.

22/52 Finance

(a) Monthly accounts:

(i) Payments/Receipts

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

GeoXphere – Parish Online yearly subscription	£54.00 (inc. VAT £9.00)
David Ballantyne – tree work	£790.00
Jo-Anne Garrick Ltd – planning consultancy fee	£1140.00
Hereford Map Centre – OS data for tree survey	£108.40 (inc. VAT £18.07)
Groundwork UK – refund of unspent NP grant	£4,874.00
Unity Trust Bank – quarterly bank charges	£18.00
NEST Pension – March pension	£30.19
Northumberland County Council – salary payment March (includes pay award back dated to 1 st April 2021)	£1001.34 (inc. VAT £2.50)
Jackson's Timber – new disabled entrance gate at sports	£525.19 (inc. VAT £87.53)
RM Village Hall Trust – room hire	£30.00
Running Imp – jubilee event medals	£240.16 (inc. VAT £40.03)
Box-it North – retrieval of archive box from storage	£6.00 (inc. VAT £1.00)
Northwood Agri – conditioning of football field	£396.00 (inc. VAT £66.00)
NALC – yearly subscription	£229.22
NEST Pension – April pension	£24.93
Northumberland County Council – salary payment April	£917.42 (inc. VAT £2.50)
RM VHT – room hire	£30.00
Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – yearly subscription	£10.00
Martin Stewart/Neetfleet – installation of gate, repairs, play park inspection	£417.00
Sandy Bank Residents' Association – contribution to Nick Insurance	£153.83
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (Box of A4 paper £34.99, Zoom subscription x 2 £28.78, Travel costs £9.00, Car park signs £33.42, 12x bollards £129.87, Membrane £36.99, Nails £17.68, Events Licence £21.00. Banners £25.08, Flyers £32.73)	£369.54 (inc. VAT £50.50)
Margaret Weatherley – internal auditor fee	£100.00
Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (paid in arrears to cover March)	£160.00
Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (paid in arrears to cover April)	£240.00

The following receipts were noted:

Nationwide – yearly interest	£11.29
Triodos -quarterly interest	£0.75
Unity Trust (Bridge fund) – yearly interest	£15.78
Osbit Ltd – donation towards removal of asbestos	£150.00
NCC – 1 st instalment of Precept	£22,500.00
RM Allotment Association – 1 st quarter rent	£55.13

(ii) Budget reports

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

(b) Bank signatories

The bank signatories were reviewed and it was agreed that the following five councillors would act as signatories for the accounts: Cllr. Howe, Cllr. Dunhill, Cllr. Carew, Cllr. McKenzie and Cllr. Lightley. The

Clerk was authorised to make the necessary changes with the three banks used by the Parish Council (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill).

ACTION: CLERK

(c) *Annual grant to the VHT*

Councillors agreed to make an award of £2,500 to the Village Hall Trust. [This amount had previously been agreed when setting the budget in December 2021]. (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Dunhill).

ACTION: CLERK

(d) *Insurance*

The Clerk reported that she had yet to be notified of the insurance premium for 2022/23 although it would be due by 1st June. It was therefore agreed that approval would be given via email once the quote had been received. Councillors noted that this was the second year of a three-year agreement.

ACTION: CLERK

22/53 **Local Plan**

It was noted that Northumberland County Council had now formally adopted the Northumberland Local Plan 2016 to 2036. The plan could be viewed on their website:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan>

22/54 **Update reports from various meetings**

- (i) **Marchburn Lane Residents' Association:** It was noted that Cllr. Bridges had attended this meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. There were three main issues of concern for the residents:
- the planting of the hedge by the mill pond. Councillors did not agree that this was a problem and had given an undertaking to maintain the hedge in the future – no further action necessary;
 - the land slippage near Cartref. The resident would like to see the tree stump removed from the Burn as soon as possible. Councillors felt that expert advice had been received and shared with the resident and that the stump would be removed as soon as practicable once excess soil had been washed away. A tree arborist would be assessing the site shortly and would recommend any further actions necessary with regard to the trees higher up the slope;
 - possible subsidence on the road in front of the semi-detached houses. The Clerk would ask BT Bell to give an opinion and would take photos so that a record of the surface could be maintained.

ACTION: CLERK

- (ii) **East Tynedale Forum:** Cllr. McKenzie reported that he had attended the meeting and the main item of business had been a review of the Charter. The Charter defined the relationship between the County Council and town and parish councils and some local councils felt that it was not being observed. The Forum would be requesting a senior member of the management team at the County Council to attend a future meeting to discuss the issues. A discussion was also held on green issues and a request was made to the County Council Climate Change group to provide further advice about ways to reduce energy bills for public buildings and to clarify the policy for EV charging points.

- (iii) **RM Play & Regeneration Group:** The Clerk reported that the group had met and although there were no projects currently active the Group hoped to pursue further development of the mill pond in due course and remained ready to help with funding for some of the community action ideas proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan.

22/55 **Climate Change**

- (i) **EV Charging Points:** The Clerk was asked to write to Cllr. Dale again now that it had been established that the County Council would assist with EV charging points on private land. Councillors believed that a charging point at the station would be useful and the Clerk was asked to contact the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership to see if this was under discussion.

ACTION: CLERK

- (ii) **Tree Planting:** Cllr. Howe reported that there were grants available from the County Council to help with tree planting and suggestions for possible areas where trees could be planted were sought.

- (iii) *Insulation:* Councillors thought it would be helpful if the County Council could provide information and funding advice about insulation for homeowners.

22/56 General Village Maintenance

- (i) *Handyman:* The Clerk reported that the handyman had swept paths, re-stained seats, swept bus shelters, watered plants and performed a safety inspection of the playground. In addition, he had installed an access gate for the disabled entrance to the sports pavilion, repaired the leaflet dispenser on the Heritage trail and repaired sections of wetpour at the Play Park.

The Clerk was asked to remind the handyman to remove the protruding wire in the Spinney;

ACTION: CLERK

- (ii) *Bridge surveys:* it was agreed that Standing Orders should be suspended so that only one quote was considered when awarding the contract for inspecting the bridges in Marchburn Lane and Millfield Road and the weir footbridge and consequently it was unanimously agreed that BT Bell should be appointed to undertake this work. This decision was reached because BT Bell had acquired considerable knowledge of the structures from undertaking previous surveys (Proposed Cllr. Irwin, seconded Cllr. Dunhill);

ACTION: CLERK

- (iii) *Area by MUGA court:* Natural Ability had begun its work to tidy this area by replacing the membrane and cleaning the pebbles. After commencing the work, they advised that it would prove extremely difficult to clean the pebbles and suggested that the membrane be laid and covered with either bark chippings or new limestone chippings. As the bark chippings would quickly decompose it was agreed that new limestone chippings should be used;

ACTION: CLERK

- (iv) *Permissive path alongside the railway track at Broomhaugh:* It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Trevor Bell to strim this as required.

ACTION: CLERK

22/57 Planning

(a) Planning applications

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

- 22/00945/FUL – Grey Court. Installation of fence by A695 to provide sound barrier. PC comment – would not wish to see removal of established hedge;
- 22/01117/FUL – Grovefield, Sandy Bank. Installation of boundary fence. PC – no objection;
- 22/01398/FUL – Belmont, 5 Field Bungalow, Broomhaugh. Replacement of chalet. PC – no objection.

- (ii) It was reported that the following planning applications had been approved by the County Council:

- 21/03919/FUL – Fairleads, Long Rigg;
- 21/03552/FUL – Witches Wood, Main Road
- 21/04464/VARYCO – Land east of East Rigg, Long Rigg
- 22/00608/FUL – Manor House Cottage, Main Road.

22/58 Correspondence

Various items of correspondence had been received:

- Two items had been referred to Councillor Dale as they were County Council matters – footpath to Riding Hills and noise of bird scarer.
- Email from Mr Latham re improvements to footpaths: comments noted and would be actioned if possible after discussions with the County Council (ref. Minute 22/36(vi));

- Email from resident regarding excessive aircraft noise. Contents noted but councillors were unable to suggest improvements as changes to the flight paths were made following extensive consultations in 2018.

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22/59 **Minor Matters**

- (i) *Litter Pick*: Councillors recorded their thanks to the many residents who took part in this year's litter pick;
- (ii) *Defibrillator*: The Clerk reported that the Sandy Bank Residents' Association was keen to install a defibrillator on Sandy Bank and were currently exploring fundraising options. If successful, they would write formally to the Parish Council as they would wish to donate the funds to the PC so that it could purchase the defibrillator and it would become a PC asset;
- (iii) *South Close Field*: It had been suggested that an approach be made to Northumberland Wildlife Trust to discuss installation of stepping stones from Parish Council land, crossing the Burn to South Close Field. Cllr. Irwin confirmed that he was already in discussion with NWT and noted there were various issues to overcome. He would update the Council as discussions progressed. Generally, councillors were very supportive of the idea;
- (iv) *Ukrainian Families*: Cllr. McKenzie reported that two Ukrainian families were being hosted in the village with possibly more to come and he welcomed them to our community. Councillors discussed whether a welcome pack should be put together for any new resident moving into the village. This was considered a good suggestion which the Clerk should explore.

ACTION: CLERK

22/60 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 13th June (Venue to be confirmed).

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm