



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in Church Cottage, Church Lane, on Monday 11th September 2023.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Christine Howe (Chair)

Cllr. David Irwin

Cllr. Brian Singer

Cllr. David McKenzie

Cllr. Jill Mills

Cllr. Stephen Lightley

Cllr. Eileen Carew

In attendance:

County Councillor Anne Dale (until Minute 23/119)

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

2 members of the public were present

Cllr. Howe opened the meeting at 7.37 pm.

23/111 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Andy Dunhill

23/112 Declaration of Interests

Cllrs. Irwin and Lightley declared an interest in item 8 – the Tennis Club, as they were both members.

23/113 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 10th July 2023

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

23/114 Matters Arising

- (i) *23/97(i) – Defibrillator Provision within the Parish.* The Clerk confirmed that the new defibrillator at the sports pavilion had been fitted and she was in the process of registering it although she still needed the electrician to issue the formal electrical certificate;
- (ii) *23/97(v) – New access points on road to Riding Hills.* The Clerk supplied additional information and this matter was closed;
- (iii) *23/105(ii) – Dene Terrace Project.* There was nothing further to report other than that the plants were growing well and the area looked much improved;
- (iv) *23/108(v) – Grit bin for Slaley Road.* The Clerk confirmed that the Sandy Bank Residents' Association had requested an additional grit bin in order to grit the Slaley Road/A695 junction. Cllr. Dale had established that the request did not meet the criteria set by the County Council and she had therefore asked the Parish Council if it would pay for the additional bin. Councillors noted the problems with ice at this junction last winter and unanimously agreed that an additional grit bin would be helpful which the Parish Council would fund (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Lightley)

ACTION: CLERK

23/115 County Councillor Report

Cllr. Dale reported on the following issues:

- (i) *Ultrafast full fibre broadband:* Cllr. Dale noted that the procurement process for ultrafast full fibre broadband for the whole of Northumberland would be announced shortly;

- (ii) *Overgrown hedges/Road repairs*: Cllr. Dale reported that these issues should be reported either to her directly or via Fix My Street – a new online reporting method. She did however caution that residents must be aware of the limits of the system and that just by reporting a problem would not guarantee that it would be dealt with immediately. She explained how all issues were assessed against certain criteria e.g. a pothole on an A-road would be dealt with much sooner than one on an estate road leading to a cul-de-sac;
- (iii) *Ash tree dieback*: Cllr. Dale reported that the County Council was inundated with requests to assess ash tree dieback and would assess and deal with priority trees as soon as they could;
- (iv) *No cold caller zones*: After a spate of cold calling instances which had upset some residents, Cllr. Dale had looked into establishing a No Cold Caller zone. Unfortunately, the County Council did not currently support this initiative. Councillor Dale had been issued with signs that residents could display by their front door indicating that the door would not be opened to cold callers and she would supply these to any resident who requested one.

ACTION: ADa

23/116 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Howe confirmed that the date for the referendum had been set for Thursday 5th October. All the documents and supporting papers could be downloaded from the County Council's website and could be accessed via links from the ridingmill.org website. Paper copies were available for inspection from various locations in the village and an article had been prepared for the Parish Council's own newsletter which would be distributed shortly. It was noted that the Parish Council could not encourage voters to vote to adopt the plan instead it could only encourage residents to take part in the vote. If more than 50% of those who took part in the vote were in favour of adopting the plan, then it would become a statutory part of the local plan and have full weight in relevant planning decisions.

Cllr. Howe also highlighted the community actions element of the plan, in particular, the idea of improving certain areas of the village and noted that a request had been made in the newsletter for ideas of how to improve the area by the MUGA court.

23/117 **Weir Footbridge**

It was reported that the new bridge had been installed and generally it was considered to be a great improvement. It was wider and made the area more accessible and, being made from recycled plastic, it should be virtually maintenance free for a considerable time. There had been some comments from residents about the lack of a handrail on one section of the bridge. This section was made from a boardwalk kit. The fall height from either side did not require a handrail to be fitted although it had been decided to add a handrail to one side to give some reassurance should someone feel the need to hold on. After consideration, a majority of councillors felt that an additional handrail was unnecessary. However, the Clerk was asked to explore the cost of planting hedging to one side which might make it visually more appealing. She was also asked to contact the Footpaths Officer at the County Council to seek his views.

ACTION: CLERK

23/118 **Tennis Club**

Cllr. Lightley reported that he had been contacted by a parent in the village asking if the MUGA court could be made more accessible for local children. He had contacted the Club had had been told that their insurance was fairly restrictive and governed what activities were allowed. They did agree to discuss this further and in subsequent meetings with the parent, the Club agreed to allow the use of the court for 2 nights a week. There would be no charge during the trial period and there would be only one requirement, each session must have adult supervision at all times. The Parish Council welcomed this decision which was felt to have been one of the requirements of the Sport England grant. Cllr. Lightley would continue to liaise with the Club and would update the Parish Council at the end of the trial.

23/119 Sports Club

It had been agreed that the pavilion would be inspected twice a year – once at the end of the football season and then again at the end of the cricket season. The Clerk was asked to arrange the next inspection and it was agreed that Cllrs. Singer and Lightley would attend. If work which had been identified at the previous inspection had still not been completed then it was agreed that it might be necessary to issue a warning letter to the club as they would be in breach of their lease.

Councillors also discussed a request from a resident to install netting to protect the chalets from stray footballs. The length of the field was approximately 90 metres and although a possible netting system had been identified by the resident it was considered too flimsy for regular use and would be difficult to put up and down due to its excessive length. A more substantial permanent fence might be an option although there would be a considerable cost and not all nearby residents would be happy with a fence obscuring their view. A suggestion had been made that the Sports Club and Parish Council should enquire if it was possible to lease an adjacent field and the football pitch moved to this new location which would be further from the chalets. It was agreed that this would be explored further.

A resident had also written to complain about an event held at the pavilion which had lasted until 2 am and had seen guests camping on the sports field. The lease did not allow for such actions without Parish Council permission and again, this breach would be highlighted to the Club.

ACTION: CLERK

23/120 Climate Change

The Clerk confirmed that two locations had been deemed suitable for EV charging points – the bottom of Whiteside Bank and the Old Playground. The area opposite the school couldn't be assessed until the outcome of the LTP request was known i.e. if additional parking spaces could be created in the wide verge on Church Lane. Residents had some concerns about the installation of EV charging points in the Old Playground and the officer from the County Council had offered to bring a charging point to show what it might look like installed in that location. Having identified two suitable locations in Riding Mill, the County Council would include them on the list of sites for the next funding bid.

ACTION: CLERK

23/121 Finance

(a) *Monthly Accounts*

(i) Payments/Receipts

The following payments were agreed (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. McKenzie)

Natural Ability – garden services	£66.00
Secure-a-Bridge – part payment of bridge kits	£9,282.17 (inc. VAT £1,547.03)
HAGS – play equipment	£6,392.69 (inc. VAT £1,065.45)
Northumberland County Council – reimbursement of Clerk's salary	£1,084.85 (inc. VAT £2,50)
Nest Pensions – July pension contribution	£35.70
Tyne Valley Nurseries – plants for new area by Dene Terrace	£207.95 (inc. VAT £21.83)
ME Stewart / Neetfleet – play park repairs / bus shelter – rusted areas treated / materials	£500.00
T Bell Horticultural services – parish and football field grass cutting	£720.00
Information Commission – data protection fee	£35.00
4Nature Ltd – Installation of bridge	£4,080 (inc. VAT £680.00)
Northumberland County Council – reimbursement of Clerk's salary	£1,025.99 (inc. VAT £2,50)
Nest Pensions – August pension contribution	£31.94
Secure-a-field – final payment for bridge kits (50%)	£9,282.17 (inc. VAT £1,547.03)
Northumbria in Bloom	£40.00
Natural Ability – gardening services	£108.00
ME Stewart / Neetfleet – play park inspection / refit seat	£136.00
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses	£22.38 (inc. VAT £2.37)

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (paid in arrears to cover July) £240.00
Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment (paid in arrears to cover August) £240.00

The following receipts were noted:

RM Sports Club – yearly rent	£25.00
Northern Powergrid – Wayleaves	£61.05
Northumberland County Council – 2 nd instalment of Precept	£23,625.00
Triodos – quarterly interest	£39.18

(ii) *Budget reports*

The Clerk provided an overview of budget spending including an explanation of the spending from the Reserves following the play park repairs and the installation of the weir bridge. No issues were identified with the current budget spending and the reports were received and approved (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Lightley).

23/122 Meetings to attend

Town and Parish Council Conference – 5th October. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the agenda and anyone wishing to attend should notify her.

ACTION: ALL

East Tynedale Forum – 24th October. Cllr. McKenzie offered to attend the next meeting.

23/123 General Village Maintenance

- (i) *Handyman* - The Clerk confirmed that the handyman had swept footpaths, strimmed ROWs, cut hedges and re-stained a number of seats. In addition, he had reinstalled the seat near Dene Terrace, completed the Play Park repairs, removed unwanted signage from the MUGA court and had treated the rusted areas on the bus shelters before repainting them. He had also undertaking a quarterly play park inspection.
- (ii) *Play Park* – The Clerk had obtained a quote from Playdale to establish how much it might cost to replace one of the main upright timbers on the large climber because of a split in the wood. The cost was quite considerable so it was agreed that the timber would be monitored and when the Play Park was next independently inspected in June 2024, advice would be sought from the inspector.

ACTION: CLERK

- (iii) *Free Tree offer from County Council* – The offer was noted but no new areas for tree planting had been identified.

23/124 Planning

Planning applications - it was reported that:

- (i) the following planning applications were under consideration:
 - 23/02585/FUL – Land north of the Old Tavern House. New build – 2 storey house with undercroft parking. PC – no objection/ support development of land;
 - 23/02308/FUL – Lea Grange, Beauclerc. Timber conservatory to replace existing conservatory. PC – no objection.
- (ii) the following planning applications had been granted permission:
 - 23/0713/FUL – Mossfennan, Sandy Bank. Single storey side extension
- (iii) the Appeal against the decision to refuse planning permission for the Manor House site would be heard at a Hearing held in Hexham starting on Tuesday 12th September.

23/125 Correspondence

Most issues raised had been covered elsewhere on the agenda and a number of the items had been referred to Cllr. Dale for further investigation.

A resident had written to express concerns about the state of the stone wall at the allotments which she felt to be unstable. It was agreed that the Parish Council should undertake preventive maintenance and would seek

quotes from builders for the lime mortar to be replaced in certain sections. The ownership of the wall by the gas sub-station needed to be established and the Clerk was asked to check the relevant agreements.

ACTION: CLERK

23/126 Minor Matters

- (i) *It's Your Neighbourhood Award* – the Clerk reported that the Garden Invaders had hosted a successful visit by the It's Your Neighbourhood assessor and had been invited to an awards ceremony later in the month at which they would get feedback about the Parish Hall garden.
- (ii) *Newsletter* – It was noted that the newsletter would be ready within the next week and councillors were asked if they would help with its distribution.

ACTION: ALL

- (iii) *Declaration of Interest Forms* – the Clerk had been asked by the County Council to remind all councillors to check and update if necessary their Declaration of Interest form (current forms available to view on the County Council website).

ACTION: ALL

- (iv) *Osbit Open Day* – It was noted that an invitation had been delivered to all households in the village inviting residents to an open day, to be held on Thursday 21st September. Osbit planned to show residents their work and to outline future expansion plans.

23/127 Date of Future Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council should be held on Monday 9th October 2023.

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm