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**Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 13th November 2017 in Church Cottage, Church Lane, Riding Mill.

**Councillors present:**

Cllr. Andy Dunhill (Chairman) Cllr. Eileen Carew

Cllr. Brian Singer Cllr. Peter Howe

Cllr. Jill Mills Cllr. Malcolm Reid

Cllr. David McKenzie

**In attendance:**

Mrs Anne Dale – County Councillor

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

2 members of the public were present

Cllr. Dunhill opened the meeting at 7.50 pm.

# 17/92 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Pam Pryor, Chair of the Village Hall Trust.

17/93 **Declaration of Interests**

Cllr. Dunhill declared an interest in Items 4(v) and 9(i) – Sports Club redevelopment/Award of Grant, as his team used the ground.

17/94 **Approval of the minutes of the meetings of 11th September 2017**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th September were a true record and duly signed off by Cllr. Dunhill (Proposed: Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Mills).

17/95 **Matters arising**

1. *Minute 17/75(ii) – Bus shelters*

The Clerk reported that the leak on the new shelter by the Slaley Road junction had been fixed. A request for the bus stop sign to be moved to the new shelter location had been made to the County Council some time ago and Cllr. Dale offered to follow this up.

**ACTION: ADa**

1. *Minute 17/75(iii) – Safety mirror the Nick.* Update from the Clerk;

 The new safety mirror had been installed to aid drivers exiting The Nick. Some bushes near the junction of Riding Grange needed to be cut back to further improve the visibility and the tree surgeon had been asked to do this.

**ACTION: CH**

1. *Minute 17/75(vi) – Invasive Plants.*

 It was noted that the Mare’s Tail plants in Marchburn Lane had been treated again in September.

1. *Minute 17/75(x)- Interpretation Board, The Spinney.*

 Item deferred to a future meeting.

1. *Minute 17/78 – Play Park.*

A copy of the accounts showing funds that had been raised for the Play Park redevelopment was received. Sufficient money had been raised to commence the installation of the new equipment (work started 13th November). A further £4000 was required to cover the cost of new paths linking the equipment so the Play Park group was still actively fundraising.

1. *Minute 17/79 – Sports Club.*

 Cllr. Singer reported that the football field had been recently rolled and the play surface was much improved. There were now a number of girls’ teams from Wylam – the Wylam Rockettes – using the pitch in addition to children’s coaching on a Sunday morning. It was also likely that a men’s Sunday league team would start using the pitch next season.

 Fundraising for the new pavilion was ongoing and the Club needed to obtain accurate building quotes for the development before grant applications could be processed further.

1. *Minute 17/84(ii) – Internal Auditor.*

It was confirmed that Mrs Weatherley had accepted the offer to become the Internal Auditor for the Council. The term was for one year in the first instance.

1. *Minute 17/88(i) – Defibrillator Training.*

The Clerk confirmed that the Stephen Carey Fund had agreed to run a refresher training course next year, probably in April.

**ACTION: CH**

17/96 **County Councillor Report**

 Cllr. Dale updated councillors on the following issues:-

1. Street lighting. Outstanding lighting issues were being dealt with and Cllr. Dale was working closely with the lighting team to monitor progress;
2. Highways: the pavement had been widened outside St James’ Terrace and residents were very satisfied with the improvements;
3. 20 mph scheme. The County Council had decided not to impose permanent 20 mph speed limits on strategic routes. This would require a redesign of the proposal for Riding Mill but the 20 mph limit would definitely be introduced outside the school and on minor roads and on the A695 at key times. Cllr. Dale was still hopeful that the work would be undertaken this financial year;
4. Core Strategy. It was likely that the re-submission of the Core Strategy would not happen until 2020. Councillors again expressed their frustration that, having spent time responding to earlier consultations, all the effort had been in vain.

17/97 **Marchburn Lane bridge and weir footbridge**

1. Recent repairs

 Cllr. Howe gave a report on the repair work to the bridges. A summary of the costs was received. The total cost of the work including the surveys and the project management fees amounted to £24,584.87 (excluding VAT). The Bokul covenant release fee had been set aside for this work and a further £8584.87 was taken from the Council’s Reserves.

 A comment was made regarding the spacing of the planks on the wooden footbridge and it was agreed to raise the query with BT Bell.

**ACTION: PH/CH**

 Planters: A quote from a local garden centre was received for plants. It was agreed to appoint a local gardener to oversee the planting and to take their advice on suitable plants.

**ACTION: CH**

1. *Future bridge inspections*

 It was unanimously agreed that both road bridges should be inspected every 5-years. Millfield Road bridge was therefore due to be re-inspected and the Clerk was asked to seek quotes. Thereafter, both bridges would be inspected at the same time (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Howe).

 **ACTION: CH**

1. *Practicalities of establishing a sinking fund*

 Councillors discussed whether a sinking fund should be established for the replacement of both vehicle bridges. Some felt that the replacement of Millfield Road Bridge as a vehicle bridge was unnecessary; there would always be a need for a footbridge but vehicles could make use of the other route via Church Lane. As part of the re-inspection it was agreed to ask for a current estimate of the replacement cost (the replacement cost of Marchburn Lane bridge had been included in the recent survey). The Clerk was also asked to contact NALC to seek advice about establishing a sinking fund and information/ guidance on investing money. Once this information was obtained a further discussion would be held.

**ACTION: CH**

 17/98 **War Memorial Panel**

 It was reported that the panel had been installed in the foyer area of the Parish Hall. Thanks were recorded to Mrs Pryor and the Parish Hall handyman. A light would be installed to illuminate the panel and this was being arranged by the Village Hall Trust. A summary of the costs for the project was received showing that the total cost of the restoration had been £4651 of which the PC had contributed £705 (the Parish Council had agreed to underwrite any shortfall after grants and donations had been received).

17/99 **General Village Maintenance**

 (i) *General maintenance issues to consider:*

(a) Trees - Cllr. Dunhill and the Clerk had undertaken an inspection of the Council’s woodlands with the tree surgeon on 6th November 2017 and, using the earlier survey, had indentified additional trees to fell or dead wood. A price for this work was awaited and would be undertaken in the next financial year. The tree surgeon still needed to complete work on the Main Road opposite Whiteside Bank and by the school.

**ACTION: CH**

 (b) Pavement – a discussion was held about the state of the pavement along the Main Road from Riding Grange to Station Close. Cllr. Dale had asked representatives of the County Council to inspect this area and they had indicated that repairs were not necessary. Cllr. Carew also highlighted the problem of foliage overgrowing on the opposite side of the road that needed to be cut back. It was agreed to ask Cllr. Dale to contact the relevant officers again but if necessary a quote should be sought from a local farmer with hedge cutting equipment.

**ACTION: ADa/CH**

 (c) Safety Mirror to aid drivers exiting Dene Terrace

 It was unanimously agreed to replace the safety mirror opposite Dene Terrace subject to permission for the Village Hall Trust (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Singer).

**ACTION: CH**

 (ii) *Grass cutting arrangements for 2018-2020*.

 It was agreed that the village grass cutting contract would be put out for tender.

**ACTION: CH**

(iii) Speed Sign – Maintenance contract

 It was agreed to renew the maintenance contract with Swarco for the two speed activated signs.

**ACTION: CH**

17/100 **Yearly grants / S137 donations**

1. *Sports Club grant*

It was noted that the PC wished to award the Sports Club an annual grant rather than pay invoices piecemeal each year. A paper was received showing costs met by the PC in previous years and a calculation of a possible grant. This was approved in principle subject to minor amendments and additional conditions, namely:

* The Sports Club must provide a copy of their accounts for the previous year which had been independently examined. This information would be required by 1st March each year;
* The grant would be paid in instalments to ensure that conditions stipulated were being met;
* The football pitch would need to be maintained as a year round village amenity and must be kept cut and playable throughout the summer with the markings maintained to a minimum agreed level.

 (Proposed Cllr. Singer, seconded Cllr. Howe).

(ii) *Donation to the Royal British Legion – S137 donation*

 It was unanimously agreed to make a £60 donation to the Royal British Legion (Proposed Cllr. Mills, seconded Cllr. McKenzie).

**ACTION: CH**

(iii) *Allotment Association - insurance*

 A request from the Allotment Association to reimburse their insurance costs was received and unanimously approved (Proposed Cllr. Dunhill, seconded Cllr. Mills).

**ACTION: CH**

(iv) *S137 donations*

 It was noted that funding requests from local clubs and charities would be considered at the December meeting.

17/101 **Monthly Accounts**

1. *Monthly accounts*

*The following payments were authorised* [Proposed Cllr. McKenzie/Seconded Cllr. Howe]:

Ward Hadaway – Tennis Club lease – work to date £888 (inc. VAT £148)

 Gleam Team – power washing Play Park £298.00

 Barriers Direct – new safety sign for Nick £792.46 (inc. VAT £132.08)

 Playdale Playgrounds – deposit for new equipment £13887.06 (inc. VAT £2314.51)

 Bank Charges £18.00

 Catherine Harrison –Sept. salary + home allowance + back pay £513.56

 Office Depot – ink cartridges + paper £93.65 (inc. VAT £15.61)

 St James PCC – room hire £35.00

 BT Bell - professional fees re bridges £5160.00 (inc. VAT £860)

 Dodwell Bros. – repair of bridges £22121.84 (inc. VAT £3686.97)

 NRC Electrical Solutions – installation of memorial panel £184.99

 Trevor Bell – grass cutting village and football field £1330.00

 – grass cutting cricket club £1146.60

 Royal British Legion donation £60.00

 Allotment Association – refund of insurance £82.33

 RM Village Hall Trust – contribution to water costs £40.00

 SWARCO Traffic Ltd – maintenance of speed activated signs £687.46 (inc. VAT £114.58)

 (Stocksfield PC to reimburse half)

 Andy Dunhill – reimbursement (collection of memorial panel) £45.00

 Catherine Harrison – October salary + home allowance £446.16

 Catherine Harrison – reimbursement (strimmer protectors,

 Defib light bulbs, reflectors for planters, fittings for memorial panel) £54.22

 Homevend (October Invoice 85) £80.00

 Homevend (November Invoice 86) £80.00

 *The following receipts were noted:*

 Triodos - interest reserve account £5.10

 HMRC – VAT refund £4203.71

 Northumberland CC – 2nd instalment Precept £17,750.00

 War Memorials Trust – grant for restoration of panel £3270.00

 Allotment Association – quarterly rent £47.50

1. *Budget report*

 The budget reports were received and reviewed. It was noted that expenditure had exceeded budget levels but that it was not unexpected. The cost of the repairs to the bridges had been met from the Reserves and the Play Park expenditure was mostly financed by grants. The maintenance budget was overspent due to the repairs to the riverbank.

17/102 **Handyman**

It was reported that the handyman had cleared and cut foliage around the Old Playground and the Spinney. He had also weeded moss from Millfield Road bridge, Marchburn Lane bridge and the weir footbridge and cut back foliage in these same areas. This accounted for his October and November payments.

17/103 **Planning**

 It was reported that:

1. the following planning applications were under consideration by NCC:
* 17/03218/FUL: Osbit Power, Broomhaugh House. Extension to offices and retention of mobile offices. PC – no objection;
* 17/03473/VARYCO – 4 St James’ Close. Variation of conditions. PC – No objection;
* 17/02952/FUL – St Cloud, Church Lane. Garden terracing. PC –no objection;
* 17/03800/FUL – 5 Dene Terrace. 2-storey extension to rear and side. Resubmission; PC – no objection;
* 17/03917/FUL – White Hemmels. Re-submission of earlier application with application for change of use; PC – no objection;
* 17/04002/FUL – Riding Cottage. Single storey side and double storey rear extension. PC – no objection:
* 17/03479/PRUTPO – Removal of limbs from oak trees opposite Broomhaugh First School. Application submitted by PC.
1. the following planning applications had been considered by NCC and granted permission:
* 17/02636/FUL: White Hemmels – redevelopment of barn, extension and conversion of outbuilding to gym;
* 17/02710/FUL: Land south of Tudor Mount, Church Lane. Construction of single, 4 bedroomed detached dwelling with detached double garage;
* 17/02800/FUL: Land east of South Close, Sandy Bank. Construction of two-storey house and detached double garage;
* 17/03195/FELTPO – 8 Hollin Hill Terrace. Fell tree/work to 8 others;
* 17/03219/FUL – 2 Mill View, Mill Close. Extension to side and rear,
1. that the following planning application had been considered by NCC and refused permission:
* 17/02799/FUL: Land west of the Beeches, Sandy Bank. Construction of two-storey house and detached double garage. Appeal submitted.

17/104 **Consultations**

 Northumberland County Council was currently undertaking the following consultation, Special Educational Needs School Place Planning Strategy. The closing date for responses was 8th December 2017 and Cllr. Reid was asked to review the document and suggest a response from the Parish Council, if appropriate. **ACTION: MR**

17/105 **Correspondence**

1. Mr & Mrs Stephenson re turning point in Millfield Road

 In the pre-meeting questions, and in the meeting, issues were raised about the number of large vehicles inadvertently using Millfield Road despite warning signs of the weight and width restrictions on the bridge. This necessitated them turning outside Mrs Stephenson’s house which had caused damage to her property on a number of occasions. Mrs Stephenson asked the PC to allow a turning point to be reinstated on land adjacent to the path leading to the tennis courts. This land had been enclosed due to problems with Japanese Knotweed but she argued that the area she suggested had not seen any re-growth of these plants.

 The Councillors agreed to contact the specialist contractor who treated the plants and ask for his advice.

**ACTION: CH**

 A discussion was also held about creating a proper parking area but the advice the PC had received was that the ground should not be disturbed as this could re-invigorate dormant rhizomes.

 In addition, it was suggested that the sign at the junction of Millfield Road/Church Lane should be relocated as it was unclear as to which street it was referring to. An additional sign close to the junction with Marchburn Lane might be helpful to stop vehicles turning left from Marchburn Lane. Cllr. Dale offered to obtain advice from the relevant officer at the County Council.

**ACTION: ADa**

 The Clerk was also asked to investigate if Google maps/sat nav. providers could be asked to direct traffic via Church Lane to avoid the bridge.

**ACTION: CH**

 Cllr. Dale also offered to investigate whether a street light could be installed near Millfield Road bridge – something which was first raised in February 2011.

**ACTION: ADa**

1. Letter from Mrs Downs on behalf of the Marchburn Lane Residents’ Association. A draft letter had been prepared and it was agreed that it should be sent.

**ACTION: CH**

17/106 **Minor Matters**

1. *Stepping Stones, Broomhaugh woods*

Councillors again expressed their concern regarding the state of the landing stages of the stepping stones. The County Council was well aware of the problem and had indicated that the repairs would be undertaken in early summer. No reason for the delay had been forthcoming. Cllr. Dale had been in contact with the relevant officer recently but was again asked to highlight the problem.

**ACTION: ADa**

1. *Churchyard*

It was noted that a number of gravestones had been laid flat because they were possibly dangerous and could fall. The Parish Council asked to be kept informed of progress to reinstate the gravestones and to be notified if the Parochial Church Council decided to launch a fundraising campaign to meet the repair costs.

**ACTION: CH**

17/107 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Monday 11th December 2017. Venue: Church Cottage.

Meeting closed at 10.30 pm