



## Planning Issues in our Parish

1) **Claxton Grange Cottages** – This application is under consideration at present. The applicants are maintaining that affordable houses are not viable in this location. There have been no affordable houses in our area since 1995. Debates are continuing and should be resolved in the next few months.

2) **Sand Hutton Walled Garden** – This application is in the process of being resubmitted. The site is semi-derelict and the applicant seeks to repair and renew the walled garden and build houses on the site. 2 key issues to resolve are the access to the site from the Stamford Bridge Road and the arrangements for future maintenance of the walls.

## Ryedale District Council Finances

The reduction in government grant to Ryedale District Council was 15.8%. This equates to just over £950K. The Council had been planning for many of these cuts over recent months and £850k of cuts have been identified and should have minimal impact on frontline services. The final £100k will be harder to achieve and will affect service provision. An area of cuts that might affect us would be the IT support and hosting of our parish website. It is likely that there will be a reduction in the staffing and budget for such IT support and so the Parish council need to consider planning for that change.

## Key areas for the Parish Council to consider

Keith Knaggs highlighted 3 key areas which he believes the Parish Council should be focusing on:-

1) **Winter resilience** – another very cold winter has put strain on communities and resources. Bin collections etc did happen but does the Parish Council have plans in place to help the community cope in bad weather?

2) **Yorkshire Water** – The very cold weather before Christmas has produced a huge number of burst pipes and emergency situations for Yorkshire Water to tackle. Their response has been poor in some areas and Keith encouraged anyone who had a poor response to report that but also appreciate that there is a large backlog of incidents for Yorkshire Water to resolve.

3) **Localism Bill** – Keith highlighted to Councillors that if the Localism Bill becomes law, there will be significant changes to the way local government operates and changing powers for Parish Councils. Keith outlined a couple of examples such as:-

1. **Community Right to Build** – development within communities if there is a 50% referendum
2. **Standards Committee abolished** – reduction in paperwork and numerous committees
3. **Right to challenge** – a community could have rights to run a specific service instead of a regional body
4. **Community Right to Buy** – eg a community post office / shop or pub

Keith closed by emphasising that this is quite a significant shift towards a ‘bottom up’ approach to local government and required lots of enthusiasm and communication with local people.

VT thanked Keith Knaggs for his thoughts and then invited Clare Wood to give the County Hall perspective.

Clare Wood echoed Keith’s thoughts on the importance of working together in a fresh approach to government. NYCC, RDC and the parish councils need to work closely and obtain ‘buy in’ from parishioners to support community projects.

## NYCC Finances

Clare Wood explained to the meeting that NYCC had the daunting total of £69M to save. There was a requirement for much of the savings to be front loaded in 2011/12. This would involve stopping all ‘non-essential’ services. Some areas such as education are currently quite protected from cuts but this may change. Other areas such as bus and transport services, adult care, highways, libraries are

all under scrutiny and services will be affected.

An area of cuts which could impact on our parish is the £5M cut in Highways budget. Maintenance will continue but there will be no road improvement programmes. The winter maintenance budget however, will not be touched since the gritting and snow clearance is so important for the region to operate. Salt stocks have already been depleted because of the extreme winter weather and so the priority system of gritting will continue.

It is also likely that the mobile library service to our villages will stop. Although this service is valued by people in rural areas, it is very expensive to run and is under threat from cuts.

### **Highways Issues for our Parish**

Clare Wood had asked Richard Marr, Area Manager for an update on our outstanding issues:-

- 1) Salt bin for Greenhills – Clare Wood was delighted to hear that the salt bin was in place. Parishioners and Councillors wanted to thank Clare Wood for her supportive role in securing the salt bin.
- 2) Consultation on 30mph zone – Richard Marr has finally obtained the drawing from his designer and promised Clare Wood that the consultation papers would be going out by the end of the week (ie first week in Jan).
- 3) The Single Track signs for Whinny Lane should have been put up in December but were delayed by the weather but now should go up in January.
- 4) Flooding problems on Main Street – Richard Marr again suggested that the Parish Council should be contacting Yorkshire Water about the overall maintenance of the surface water and drainage system.

Clare Wood invited Councillors or Parishioners to ask any questions.

A parishioner queried whether the move towards Localism would include allowing new methods for Parish Councils to raise finances. An example might be generating income from renewal energy such as photovoltaic cells on community buildings.

**CW** to try and answer that question by referring to experts at County Hall and responding directly to Mike Young.

**VT** then thanked Clare Wood and Keith Knaggs for their contribution and **CW** left the meeting.

### **ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**LE** introduced the discussion on the following outstanding matters:

#### **NYCC HIGHWAYS ISSUES:**

**Drainage / 30mph zone and other Richard Marr issues** – **LE** referred to the update from Clare Wood in Item 2 as being the most up-to-date information we have on Highways issues. **LE** to continue to follow up outstanding actions with Richard Marr.

**Roadside Saplings** – At the previous meeting, a parishioner queried whether the Parish Council would be willing and /or able to organise management of the roadside saplings along the road between the FERA lab and the entrance to Sand Hutton village. **LE** reported discussing this issue with Neil Jefferson, Highways Inspector. The position of the saplings in the verge is key – if the saplings are next to the road then Highways would be responsible for their maintenance but if the saplings are beyond the drainage ditch, closer to the woodland then they are responsibility of the landowner. Neil emphasised that this kind of non-essential work would have low priority at present given the level of winter repairs. **LE and Councillors** to note the position of the saplings in the verge on the stretch of road approaching Sand Hutton.

**Road Safety Questionnaire outcomes** – **LE** reported that the triangular warning sign had been ordered.

**Road Surface and Drainage Problems – Flooding of Main Street, Claxton** – Since the previous meeting, VT had prepared a list of the properties on Main Street which have been most affected by surface water flooding. LE to pursue report on surface water drainage with Yorkshire Water.

#### **OTHER VILLAGE ISSUES:**

- **Community Police Officer and Ryedale Policing** – LE was sorry to report that PC Glenn Goodwill has been redeployed to the Response unit and so will no longer be our Safer Neighbourhood officer. Over the past 4 years, Glenn has always been an extremely sensible and reliable source of advice and information and will be missed. It is not yet clear whether Glenn's role will be replaced in the Safer Neighbourhood team.
- **Claxton village green – Use of the village green as play area.** Due to time constraints in the meeting, there was a very brief discussion on the latest news concerning the village green. Two further complaint letters have been received from parishioners since the last meeting. The first letter focused on opposition to the idea of low fencing around the green and concern that this would not be a constructive use of parish funds. The second letter was anonymous and expressed worries over the 2 cycle ramps that are used by local children when playing on their bikes on the green. LE explained that due to the very bad winter weather in December, the fencing contractor had not been able to quote but was planning to visit the site next week. The idea of a public meeting was debated but it was decided that before that was planned, the Parish Council needed to conclude its research on the financial and legal implications. LE to obtain quotes for fencing 2 sides of the green and report to the next meeting. ALL to consider how to gauge wider Claxton opinion, if the fencing proposal is feasible.
- **Emergency Planning** – The Councillors discussed the proposal to refresh the community emergency plan or 'resilience' plan. LE appealed for help in compiling a new version of the plan since there was a considerable amount of information to collect. ALL COUNCILLORS to review the latest template Resilience Plan (within latest Binder) and consider which sections are relevant for our community.
- **Salt bin request for Greenhills** – A salt bin is now in-situ near the entrance to Greenhills (please see item 2).

#### **PARISH PLAN UPDATE**

- **School playing field** – Since the last meeting, the Parish Council had written to the Head Teacher at Sand Hutton School and explained that we were exploring using volunteers to inspect the playing field. Clare Wood had discussed this idea with the Head Teacher and Clare Wood is still very positive about community access. LE had also been in contact with Brian Jennings at NYCC and he had sent through a check list for field inspection. The check list appears to be something that the Parish Council could easily adopt for volunteers to use, subject to approval by the insurers. Brian Jennings now plans to ask the school to clarify how they would like to progress the idea of community access at weekends and/or holidays. LE to chase Brian Jennings if no response received by 14<sup>th</sup> Jan.
- **Development of village website** – MW provided an update to the Council on the latest progress on the website and the meeting with David Henderson from Ryedale. MW and Pete Tidball felt that they had a positive meeting with David Henderson about the new methods of uploading information. MW to continue to work with Pete Tidball on the website improvements and report any progress to the next meeting. ALL to consider implications of possible cuts in IT support from Ryedale District Council.
- **Footpath** – Discussion deferred to future meeting. A parishioner suggested that a compromise might be to increase the frequency of grass cutting on one verge of the road over the summer months. ALL COUNCILLORS arrange to walk between the villages and assess the verges and routes. LE and VT to approach the owners at Pasture Farm and also the Fawcett family who manage some of the roadside land to understand their opinion on

footpath. **LE** to contact Smiths Gore again once Gravel Pit Farm sale is complete. **ALL** to consider funding alternatives to raise sufficient amounts to cover costs of over £1,000.

#### **ITEM 4: FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**LE** delivered an overview of the finances. A copy of the accounts spreadsheet and also a draft budget had been supplied to each Councillor prior to the meeting.

Cash Position as at 30<sup>th</sup> December 2010 (including cheques issued):-

Current Account	£1,365.58	
Deposit Account	£1,519.65	Includes Parish Plan funds of £536.95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,885.23</b>	Including Parish Plan funds as above

- Invoices paid /receipts received since previous meeting:
  - Expense = £47.01 – Tarmac street lighting maintenance, call out and new parts
  - Expense = £1,586.25 – Grass Cutting Contract fee from 2010 from J Rycroft

**LE** highlighted that the cash balance had reduced since the last meeting due to paying the large Grass Cutting fee.

- **Financial year end 2011/12** – **LE** circulated additional Budget documents to the Councillors including spreadsheets. **LE** explained how the draft budget of next year had been developed by taking the year end forecast position and adding in known changes such change in VAT %, price changes, salary rates. **LE** then highlighted the key considerations for deciding the Precept level for next year in order to cover the core service requirements and maintain reserves of at least £1,200. The Councillors asked questions on certain aspects of the budget and debated Precept levels. The Councillors voted to submit a request for a precept of £4,200, an increase on just over 6%. This will cover the core services eg grass cutting, administration and street lighting but does not allow scope for additional one-off projects eg footpath, fencing. **LE** to submit Precept request of £4,200 to Ryedale by the 7<sup>th</sup> Jan and to produce final budget before the next meeting.
- **Npower dispute over historic invoices** – **LE** reported that the battle to close the accounts with Npower continues but is still unresolved. **LE** to continue to liaise with the Complaints team and report any progress to the next meeting.

#### **ITEM 5: GENERAL BUSINESS SECTION**

##### **RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING MATTERS:**

Update on planning applications discussed at previous meetings:-

- Mrs T Mc Nellis, **Claxton Grange Farm, Malton Road, Claxton**. Change of use with alterations of 13 holiday cottages to form 13 dwellings with parking, amenity areas and communal facilities. Still pending consideration.
- DEFRA – **FERA site entrance, car park and gatehouse development, Sand Hutton**. Approved on 16<sup>th</sup> November with 5 conditions and 1 informative (concerning section106). **LE** to ask contact at FERA building facilities for an update on project and to establish whether parking spaces for local people were included in the final design.

##### **RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Winter Maintenance** - **LE** reported that since the last meeting in November, there had been a few weeks of cold, winter weather with snow and ice. The Snow code had been circulated but was there a need for a more co-ordinated community approach to snow clearance in key areas? Councillors debated winter resilience, the links to broader Emergency planning, and concluded that the Parish Council could not commit to organised snow clearance unless there was a team of volunteers to help support the activities. **LE** to circulate an appeal for volunteers who would be willing to clear snow at key sites eg paths leading to bus stops / school. **ALL** to consider which key areas in the

parish should be cleared during heavy snow.

**NYCC CORRESPONDENCE:** None to discuss.

**OTHER CORRESPONDENCE:** City of York Council – The consultation on Redevelopment of British Sugar and Manor School sites was noted.

**ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS or ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

**PS** queried whether there was a conclusion on the position of the bench in Sand Hutton. **LE** explained that the Parish Council had received a letter from Smiths Gore about the bench. **LE** to follow up the query with Smiths Gore in January.

**Items for future agendas** to include evaluation of Parish Plan objectives and achievements so far and debate on how to utilise the remainder of the Parish Plan budget.

**ITEM 7: DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2011 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall, Sand Hutton.**

**Please note that minutes, agendas and other information can now be found on the Parish website:-**

**<http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk>**

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Questions to: Laura E J Edwards  
Chairman: Viv Tidball

Email:laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk

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