

CLAXTON AND SAND HUTTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

.....

DATE OF MEETING: **Monday 14th February 2011**

.....

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Mrs V Tidball (Chair), Mrs H Wood, Mr P Stott, Mr M Wheldon

PARISH CLERK: Mrs Laura E J Edwards

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Dr C Hall (Vice Chair), Mrs T Calpin

.....

ITEM 1: EXEMPT ITEM – Parish Council pre-meeting and briefing on current village issues.

CHAIRMANS INTRODUCTION (Once public had joined meeting at 7:50pm):

VT welcomed the Parish Councillors and the parishioners to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

ITEM 2: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 5th January 2011 had been circulated previously amongst the Councillors and published on the notice-boards and the parish website. The Councillors accepted them as correct and they were duly signed by the Chairman. Apologies were accepted from Dr C Hall and Mrs T Calpin (Mrs Calpin hoping to join later in the meeting).

NB Proposed actions are highlighted in Blue.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman invited parishioners to raise any issues of interest or concern to the Parish Council. No items were raised.

LE explained that the meeting had a revised format this time and so planning matters would be discussed earlier in the meeting.

ITEM 4: GENERAL BUSINESS SECTION

RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING MATTERS:

Planning applications and tree felling notice received since the previous meeting:-

- Notice to Fell Trees – The Dovecot, Upper Hemsley Road, Sand Hutton – No objection.
- Notice to Fell Trees – Claxton House, Main Street, Claxton – Large poplar – No objection
- Notice to Fell Trees – The Lodge, 6 Sand Hutton – Reduction in height of yew tree – No objection
- Professor and Mrs Garner, **Sand Hutton Walled Garden, Stamford Bridge Road, Sand Hutton** - Erection of 2 four bed dwellings and 1 five bed dwelling with attached double garages and amenity areas, alteration to access and parking. There was a wide ranging debate about this complex planning application with various observations and comments made by both Councillors and Parishioners. Key issues included:-
 - **Heritage preservation vs Development** – The latest plans involve construction of 3 modern family homes on one side of the walled garden which will generate funds to repair the walled garden. The application is focused on the walled garden being a Heritage Asset due to its links with Sand Hutton Hall but the Parish Council understands that it is not on the Historic Environmental Record as a designated asset.

The new plans show the 3 houses straddling the wall and so sections of the wall will be within private houses and gardens. Since the greenhouses and bothies (which are in a state of disrepair) will have to be removed before building, how much accessible heritage will remain at the end of the project?

- **Design and Appearance** – The 3 houses reflect some of the features of the greenhouses and bothies translated into a modern design which was viewed positively by Councillors.
- **Access and Traffic Safety** – The access track and the turning at the entrance to the access road continue to cause concern for both local residents and Councillors. The access track is not owned by the applicants and the current plans do not seem to resolve local concerns over the increased use of the track or the safety of the turning onto the Stamford Bridge road.
- **Decision level** – **VH** expressed concern that the decision was a delegated decision rather than being heard by the Planning Committee for what was a complex and unusual planning application.

LE to capture the key arguments and respond to RDC by 16th Feb 2011. If you wish to read the complete response from the Parish Council and comments from other consultees, please view application 10/01468/FUL on the Planning Section of the Ryedale website http://www.ryedale.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning.aspx

VT requested that the final vote on the Parish Council response should be delayed to later in the meeting to allow time for Tracey Calpin to join the meeting.

Ryedale District Council correspondence: Contained in recent binder – none to discuss.

NYCC correspondence: None to discuss.

OTHER correspondence: **LE** reported highlights from the YLCA Ryedale Branch meeting held on Tuesday 8th February.

- **Library closure** – Councillors across Ryedale were concerned about the future of our libraries and there was a debate about their diverse uses and importance within communities. Our mobile library service is unlikely to survive the spending cuts. There is more information on the library consultation at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries>
- **Localism Bill** – There are many aspects of the Localism Bill that may affect Parish Councils but one that was generating concern at branch level was linked to the abolition of Standards Committees. Although removing committees may have appeal, it does expose Parish Councils if they have to deal with an employment dispute or other legal issue – the Parish Council would have to find its own expert advice and could be faced with very large legal fees. Also, the Register of Interests which Councillors complete on joining a Council will become more important and the government is proposing that it becomes a criminal offence to omit interests!
- **YNYPFA** – The Playing Fields Association in North Yorkshire is under threat of closure. The resources available to the association have been reducing over time and now there are funding cuts for Play in general, the Association needs to refresh its services to remain viable.

ITEM 5: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

LE introduced the discussion on the following outstanding matters:

NYCC HIGHWAYS ISSUES:

Signage, 30mph zone and other Richard Marr issues – **LE** reported that after chasing news of the signs and consultation once more, the Single track warning sign is now in place at the bottom of Whinny Lane near the A64.

30mph Zone - Councillors reviewed the consultation drawing of the proposed extension of the 30mph zone at the entrance to Sand Hutton and were happy that the proposals shown should improve the safety of the turning into Sand Hutton. The 30mph signs will be moved further towards the war memorial and there will be painted 'count down' bar markings on the road surface. LE to respond to Richard Marr on the 30mph zone within the 28 day consultation period.

Road Safety Questionnaire outcomes – LE reported that the triangular warning sign was now in Greenhills, stored behind the salt bin. This is intended to be used when the resident children are playing by the street to warn drivers as they approach Greenhills and then stored when not required. ALL Councillors to be alert to feedback on this traffic safety measure.

Surface Water and Drainage Problems – Flooding of Main Street, Claxton – No news from Yorkshire Water to report. LE to pursue report on surface water drainage with Yorkshire Water.

Road Surface Repairs – Neil Jefferson, Highways Inspector for our area is still focusing on repairing damage caused by the severe winter weather and especially potholes. A large pothole half way down Whinny Lane has just been repaired. Various parishioners alerted the meeting to the large pothole at the bottom of Whinny Lane and the potholes near the A64 close to FERA. LE to report these potholes – they are outside our normal Highways area and under the A64 maintenance company. LE also reminded parishioners that they can report potholes via a form on the NYCC website <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk>

OTHER VILLAGE ISSUES:

Community Police Officer and Ryedale Policing – LE reported that the Parish Council was waiting to hear from Safer Neighbourhood Team about how our area would be covered by the police after the redeployment of PC Goodwill. A parishioner suggested that Sgt Paul Stephenson was a useful source of information.

- **Claxton village green – Use of the village green as play area.** LE reminded the meeting that at recent meetings there has been considerable debates about children playing on the green and the Parish Council had been investigating various options and obtaining expert advice from RDC, NYCC etc including from the District Solicitor. The Parish Council is still waiting for answers from some of the requests for information but at this meeting, the aim was to summarise the current situation and decide which options to focus on. The current situation – The green in Claxton is a small, triangular village green which is bounded on two sides by roads. The piece of land used to have a pond which is now filled in but there continue to be drainage problems. The land is registered Common Land. In recent months, the green has been used more frequently as a play area for local children – mainly because we have no official play area in the village and there has been an increase in the number of children of primary school age. The most common activities are football and mountain biking. The Parish Council has been receiving letters of complaint from local residents about various aspects of the children playing and stating that the children are at risk because they tend to run out onto the road to rescue a football or rush across the road on bikes without checking first. When the Parish Council suggested that low fencing might make the green safer for children, there were more complaints from parishioners.

Options for the Parish Councillors to consider:-

1. Do nothing – the numbers of children in the village fluctuates, only a few are playing on the green and there is a degree of community policing.
2. Continue to pursue fencing the green. Following the original positive response from Ryedale Planning about low fencing, we now have legal advice on fencing Common Land. It appears that fencing Common Land would require Section 38 consent from the Secretary of State and a full public consultation process. The quote from the fencing contractor for low birdmouth, post and rail fencing with posts concreted in is £16.80 per metre before VAT. So 50m of fencing which would be two roadside 'strips' would be £840. Not impossible to

- raise but not from our current budget.
3. Think of other ideas to make it safer for the children to play eg portable goals so that at least the football is captured some of the time. Have requested ideas from Road Safety Awareness Officer, Susan Gallagher at NYCC and have consulted Chris Chatten, Sports Officer at RDC. As usual, options will be limited by availability of funds.
 4. Pursue alternative play area for children. There has been no success with Smiths Gore and local landowners so far. We are still working on the plans to gain access to the school playing field in Sand Hutton at weekends and holidays.
 5. Direct consultation with local children and parents. Do the parents think it is unsafe to play on green? What do the children want? Can the bike ramps be stored elsewhere?
 6. Annual Parish Meeting in May – have this subject as topic again and seek views and ideas from parishioners.
 7. Ban children from playing on village green – The legal advice so far suggests that this is not possible even if thought desirable – access is absolutely key to all the legislation surrounding Common Land. Extremely hard to enforce, would cause conflict and goes against the principle of a green being a place for ‘ad hoc games’ and sporting pastimes.

The Councillors debated the above options and decided to focus on options 2. Feasibility of low fencing, 3. Alternative ideas to improve safety 5. Consultation with parents and children 6. Annual Parish Meeting on play areas. **LE** to continue to research and chase the outstanding answers eg Road Safety ideas. A parishioner made a key point that whilst the Parish Council is trying to be responsible, there is a risk that if the Parish Council gets too involved in the ‘management’ of behaviour on the green, then there could be an assumption of liability if something goes wrong / a child is injured. **LE** to try to clarify further the legal responsibilities of a Parish Council in relation to persons on the green.

Emergency Planning – Councillors had reviewed the latest NYCC template for a Resilience Plan following a request from **LE** for assistance in compiling the information required. **VH and LE** to meet to review the template and compare to original Emergency Plan and identify gaps in our current information. Linked to Emergency Plans, **LE** reported that following a query from a parishioner, the Parish Council had made some inquiries about obtaining a defibrillator. It appears that defibrillator equipment is expensive (£2,000 plus) and you do need trained operatives. **HW** reported that a separate community group is looking into this topic and that we should await their findings.

Snow Clearance. **LE** reported that there had been a very positive response to the request for snow clearing volunteers and wanted to thank all those who had supplied their details. There is now a small team in each village and **PS** and **MW** volunteered to be added to the list as well. Hopefully, we may not need to deploy the teams until next winter but the method will involve a simple phone tree system to alert volunteers.

PARISH PLAN UPDATE

Action Plan Review – **HW** led the discussion to review the Action Plan within the Parish Plan. The Parish Plan was published in 2008 and since then various individuals and groups have been pursuing actions. Whilst there has only been slow progress in some areas, **HW** felt that there were very positive developments which should be acknowledged. Also, there is a remainder balance of Parish Plan funds which should be used to communicate results and also boost areas of the plan which made need help. The Parish Plan team is meeting separately to debate how best to use these remaining funds.

1. Highways and drainage – actions concerning Highways have made some progress but it has been painfully slow. It is good news that the 30 mph consultation is now happening.
2. FERA – There is some very positive news that the new FERA car park is opening on 1st April and there will be cycle racks available for local people and also 10 car park spaces at weekends. The mechanism for allocating passes has yet to be finalised with FERA but it

should be a good chance for local people to utilise the Coastline bus service. There will be an official pass handover ceremony in March and more details of the pass system will be communicated soon.

3. Path between villages – This is still a key goal for the Parish Plan but there have been considerable barriers to achieving this so far. Options are still being explored and so this project can be considered ‘on-going’.
4. Village Hall Use – The Village Hall committee has been working on attracting more local groups to use the hall and there are some new activities occurring eg film nights.
5. Play Area for Children – Another topic where there seem to be many hurdles to overcome but as you will know from Parish Council meetings, there are glimmers of hope for using the school playing field.
6. Heritage Group – This has been a real success story with a small group of enthusiastic local people taking this idea forward and producing the Heritage Trail and holding excellent heritage events.
7. Website – Although **HW** does not believe the current website fulfils its original brief as per the Parish Plan, we do have a website (many parishes do not) and it is being developed and improved over time.

LE then updated the meeting on the regular Parish Plan items.

- **School playing field** – Since the last meeting, Brian Jennings at NYCC did ask the school to clarify how they would like to progress the idea of community access at weekends and/or holidays. The Head Teacher has been in contact and requested that the Parish Council should write to the school detailing the volunteer checking scheme and our aspirations for access at weekends and holidays. **LE** to write to Head Teacher with our proposals.
- **Development of village website** – **MW and Pete Tidball** had a very positive meeting with David Henderson of Ryedale and he has approved Martin’s method for uploading information to the site. **MW** is planning to produce templates for uploading information which should make the process much simpler. Pete Tidball said that once the uploading method was improved, much more information eg. pictures, maps, complex documents could be added and that there was a chance to relaunch the website with better navigation as well. **MW** to continue to work with Pete Tidball on the website improvements / relaunch and report any progress to the next meeting.
- **Footpath** – The Parish plan group is investigating the feasibility of increasing 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.

Sand Hutton Walled Garden – **VH** requested a vote on the final opinion of the Parish Council on this application – this had been deferred from item 4. Although, **CH and TC** were absent, **LE** read out their written comments from the application review process. The Councillors then concluded that although there were positive and negative observations the overall opinion of the current plans was an objection with the key concerns being the heritage preservation and access.

ITEM 6: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

LE delivered an overview of the finances. A copy of the accounts spreadsheet had been supplied to each Councillor prior to the meeting.

Cash Position as at 8th February 2011 (including cheques issued):-

Current Account	£769.10	
Deposit Account	£1,519.65	Includes Parish Plan funds of £536.95
TOTAL	£2,288.75	Including Parish Plan funds as above

- Invoices paid /receipts received since previous meeting:
 - Expense £483.21 = Qtr 3 salary for Clerk

- Expense £29.47 = Administration expenses of printer ink and paper
- Expense £12.50 = Charitable donation to RDC Chairman's Charity
- Expense £12.50 = Charitable donation to Ryedale Citizens Advice Bureau
- Expense £58.80 = Warning sign from Jetscreen

LE emphasised that the cash balance was reducing as we approached year end but that the spending was tracking the forecast.

- The grass cutting contract needs to be renewed and be in place before the grass cutting season. Councillors resolved to accept the quote from J Rycroft for £1350 plus VAT but to review the specification and consider a full tendering exercise in the next financial year. LE to collate recommended grass cutting contractors from other Parish clerks.
- **Npower dispute over historic invoices** – LE reported that the battle to close the accounts with Npower continues but is still unresolved. Various parishioners suggested raising this with a high level management / directors of Npower to attempt to accelerate the resolution. LE to report any progress to the next meeting.

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 reported that there had been no response from Smiths Gore yet. LE to follow up the query with Smiths Gore.
- LE reminded the meeting that Census forms would be received shortly and needed to be completed on 27th March.

Items for future agendas Internal Audit requirements – report on latest advice following LE attending training course

- 5th May elections for Parish Councillors

ITEM 7: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 28th March 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>

=====
 Questions to: Laura E J Edwards
 Chairman: Viv Tidball
 Clerk to the Parish Council

Email: laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme – please contact Clerk, or in her absence the Chairman, if you want to know any information about this Council and its workings.