

Minutes of Slaley Parish Council on  
Monday 11th November 2013 7.30 p.m. in Slaley Commemoration Hall.

**1. Apologies.** Cllr. D. Allsop & County Councillor CW Horncastle.

**Present:** Councillor C.A. Brooks in the Chair. Councillors D.M. Bell, I.E. Milburn, C.E.M. Goldring, N. Green, & Clerk Mrs P. Wilson.

Public: None. Northumbria Police: None. Courant Reporter: None. Community Trust: None. Slaley Notes: None. Healey Parish Council: Monica Gibb for agenda item 11.

**2. Declaration of Interests and Hospitality Record.**

None.

**3. Minutes of October Parish Council Meeting (circulated pages 901 – 906 + appendix 1, page 907, appendix 2, page 908, appendix 3, page 909, appendix 4 page 910 & appendix 5, page 911).**

The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. E. Milburn and seconded by Cllr. D. Bell. The minutes were dated and signed.

**4. Matters Arising.**

a) 4b 14/10/13; 4c 2/9/13: Uplift and relay rubber matting at various piece of play equipment: A reply has been received from Play Inspections in answer to the question of how the PC can test the impact absorbing properties on the overgrown Grass Matrix Tiles - Basically the tiles can test differently on different days according to the weather and soil conditions. Although the tiles have sunk in places it was agreed to leave for now. Cllr Green reported that at his place of work they had a ruling that if the mat splits then it should be re-laid. This was generally accepted as a good principle to follow.

b) 4d 14/10/13; 4e 2/9/13; 4d 12/8/13; 19c 8/7/13: Overhanging branches at Slaley House have not received any action from highways. Cllr Milburn reported that the leaf-less branches are now hitting people in the face. Clerk to remind Highways.

c) 4f 14/10/13; 4g 2/9/13; 6c 12/8/13: The Lloyds TSB Signatory Form was returned for a fifth time because they needed one of the five signatories being removed to sign section 9. Clerk got John K Robson to sign and the form was returned again.

d) 8 ai) 14/10/13 West Area NCC/parish meeting Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup> **Cllr. Brooks reported** each round table, grouping consisted of County Council staff, County Councillors, Parish Councillors and invited guests like Isos Housing representatives. Cllr Brooks had met Highways staff, Lousie Haywood and Amanda Cryer and suggested to the PC that if we wanted a local meeting we should probably organise it ourselves.

The Isos representatives had a number of people wanting to speak with them.

e) 13 14/10/13 Our Views on challenges for rural communities were acknowledged as very helpful by M. Darrington – He will use it along with other input at a conference at Alnwick Castle on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

f) 18d 14/10/13 Cllr Bell provided a telephone number for a group called Action for Women who did a six-week course at Slaley and included a cookery demonstration, willow weaving, car maintenance, a massage and felt craft. Janis Walker and Linda Salvesen on 606749. Clerk has made contact with Linda Taylor who has replied with the attached **as appendix 1/111113, page 918**. To be feasible, there would need to be 10 women paying £10 each per session, the Councillors felt that the likelihood of this was improbable. Clerk to write and thank Linda Taylor but report that for the moment the idea would be shelved.

## **5.Public Participation.**

None

## **6.Community Trust Report**

- a) Copy of the invitation for Thursday November 21<sup>st</sup> at 7.30 p.m. inviting people to join Slaley Community Trust. **Attached as appendix 2/111113, page 919.**
- b) Email from S. Band enquiring about the success of and how the PC organised the Post Christmas lunch several years ago. Clerk replied that the lunch was stopped because people had lost interest.

## **7.Matters for Discussion with County Councillor**

None.

## **8.Correspondence.**

### **Hard copy**

Receipt from Slaley School for £939.51

Clerks & Councils Direct; War Memorials Trust Bulletin No 59

### **Emails**

- a) 15/10/13: Carrol Hessey: Playground Inspection Training – two day courses during November at Spennymoor, Blyth and Newton Aycliffe. The costs would be £250 per delegate. Cllr N Green was interested and asked who would pay, is it a formal qualification that the insurance company would recognise and had he sufficient holidays left? Later that month Cllr Green confirmed his holiday entitlement was not sufficient to cover this.
- b) 17/10/13: RSN – Rural Vulnerability Service
- c) 28/10/13: RSN weekly digest.
- d) 28/10/13: NALC E-NEWS October.
- e) 1/11/13: Neil Easton, Policy officer – Commissioning Voluntary and Community Sector Support services
- f) 1/11/13: CAN e:news for October.
- g) 1/11/13: Gordon Stewart Northumberland Community Development Network launch of North East Pathfinder project.
- h) 1/11/13: Stocksfield PC asking if anyone has any experience of electronic devices for getting rid of rabbits.
- i) 1/11/13: NCC Leader & Chief Executive promoting the ‘Tales from Northumberland with Robson Green.
- j) 1/11/13: Richard Hall new edition of the public transport newsletter for October 2013.
- k) 1/11/13: John Renwick: Whittonstall Action Group update.
- l) 1/11/13: Matthew Bewick - Parish Town Council Questionnaire – Community Sport Activation Fund. Clerk asked Slaley Notes to put in Hex Courant column. Re-ask Slaley Notes to mention.
- m) 4/11/13: Admin WNCAB – appeal for financial help from West Northumberland Citizens Advice Bureau. After discussion it was agreed to send a cheque for £25.00
- n) 4/11/13: Know Northumberland Update.
- o) 6/11/13: RSN ROB November.
- p) 6/11/13: RSN weekly digest
- q) 6/11/13: Mike Bird – west Area Committee 12/11/13 at Otterburn Castle.
- r) Defra workshops for people living in rural communities. Hexham meeting is 21/11/13 from 2 – 4.30 p.m.
- s) 10/11/13: Declan Langan reminder of Northumberland Suppliers Survey 2013 questionnaire.
- t) 11/11/13: RSN weekly digest

u) 11/11/13: Carrol Hessey reminder about the Playground Maintenance & Inspection Training. Clerk asked her if the training certificate was acknowledged by Insurance Companies? CH replied with a message from Eric Anderson that there is an option to go to the next stage and achieve a recognised qualification in Inspection to Routine or Operational Inspector level. This involves sitting an exam and carrying out a practical inspection. Eric ended by saying he was able to offer this as well but there would be additional cost and it would require further training. **Cllr. Green to check with his work colleagues regarding the Certificate standing.**

## 9. Financial Report.

a) Cheques to be signed

No 503 P. Wilson for replacement Community storage chest in school grounds	£129.99
No 506 Michael Elphick for Web Page management	£50
No 509 James Wilson litter bin repair/PO parking survey & Bolt for new shed.	£108.00

b) Payment of grants for 2013/14

No 504	West Northumberland CAB	£25.00
No 505	GNAA	£150.00
No 507	St. Mary the Virgin Slaley Churchyard upkeep	£50.00
No 508	CAN	£20.00
*No 510	Slaley Commemoration Hall	£1,000.00

Proposed by Cllr. N Green and seconded by Cllr. M Goldring the cheques were signed.

\* An email from Cllr. Allsop had been circulated proposing that the Hall be awarded funding, however, there were conditions to the grant in that the Councillors would request that all user groups do carry out some fundraising for the Hall. It was agreed that the Parish Council would hold a Bingo afternoon with Cllr Green being the "Caller" help with the cash prizes should be put before the Hall Committee. A draft letter to be circulated before the cheque is presented to the Hall Management Committee. Cllr. Green also reported his concern over the north aspect of the Hall building and the soon to be expected expenditure for this section of the building if proposed improvements do not materialise. *See 16b below*

c) Vat repayment received £294.70

d) A year to date balance sheet was presented but not circulated.

## 10. Current Planning Applications.

**13/03352/FUL:** Loft conversion including two dormers to front and one dormer to rear and construction of a new entrance porch. Viewlands, Slaley **Support.**

**13/02684/FUL:** Demolition of existing barn /workshop/store and erection of replacement of barn /workshop / store at Wooley House, Wooley road. **Pending**

**13/01130/FUL:** Retrospective: Extraction system on roof at rear of premises.  
**Pending**

**13/01131/LBC:** Retrospective: Listed Building Consent: Extraction system on roof at rear of premises.  
**Pending**

**12/03599/FUL:** Construction of two storey agricultural workers dwelling - land west of Dipton Foot Farm House, Slaley. **Pending**

**12/03280/FUL:** Construction of a new two storey dwelling with garage in replacement of the existing out buildings adjacent to West Orchard House, Slaley. **Pending.**

**Decisions from planning:**

## 11. Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy: Housing, Employment and Green Belt Preferred Options. 31/10/13 – 2/1/14.

Emails forwarded on 1/11/13

1) Covering Letter from Jo-Anne Garrick, Spatial Policy & Delivery Manager.

2) NCC Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement. *Not in hard copy*

3) NCC Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt.

4) NCC delivery Document – Scoping Document. *Not in hard copy*

Hard Copy arrived and document given to Cllr. Brooks who passed on to Cllr Green who will pass on to Cllr. Milburn. The CD was given to Cllr. Goldring who will pass on to Cllr Allsop if required. The Councillors to have their comments circulated before the December meeting so that a combined response can be agreed at the December meeting.

Cllr. M Gibb (Healey) thought that (Policy 2 of stage 1 Consultation) Point 36 was the most important for everyone to concentrate on and a copy of our March 2013 response would need to be circulated.

The drop in session for Hexham is Tuesday November 19<sup>th</sup> at Prospect House, 6 – 8.30 p.m.

## **12. Update games/play area within school grounds.**

a) School telephoned Clerk 24/10/13 to say the roof had blown off the community storage chest and damaged part of its hinge system. After a conversation with the PC Chairman the Clerk spoke with local builder, Martin Kennedy, to see if he could mend it. Martin replied that it was damaged beyond repair.

b) PC Chairman and Clerk inspected the damaged community storage chest on Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup>. The Chairman then looked on line for alternative storage and suggested a wooden structure; this was circulated by email for comments on 18.43 on 27/10/13. The special price only lasted 48 hours. No negative replies were received so the Clerk ordered at the special price on the evening of Monday October 28<sup>th</sup>. *See financial report cheque No 503*

c) The wooden shed was delivered on Thursday November 7<sup>th</sup>. The instructions and fittings were missing so had to be reordered and came separately on Friday November 8<sup>th</sup>. The PC Chairman and her husband and the PC Clerk put the new community storage shed together on Saturday November 9<sup>th</sup>. The catch was considered inadequate and the Clerk's son was able to supply and fit a more substantial bolt model. **Clerk to purchase a bottle of Australian Red for Mr. Brooks as a thank you.**

## **13. Mobile Post Office Van parking Update**

a) (12e 14/10/13): James Wilson measured the site and looked at possible matting type material on line. After various telephone calls to companies James suggested that two pieces would be needed at a cost of £1,755 for the material. Additional costs would be for landscaping, levelling and eventual laying of ECO Grid. This information was circulated by email on 22.10.13. The Councillors agreed by email that prices be obtained from local people. T. Golightly declined from quoting for the work, as did Martin Kennedy and Stuart Bell. Hollybush Landscaping has not replied. GMS at Bardon Mill has suggested that we should be looking at tarmac and they are getting prices. The Clerk explained that laying the ECO would not entail planning permission but laying tarmac may. A further request for a quote has been sent to Foster's Landscaping and Chris Ryder at Wooley was also suggested.

b) (12g 14/10/13): Van problems continued throughout October. No sooner was the van back on the road until the battery which feeds the on board computer started to lose its charge. Ruth Barnes was on holiday and could not authorise a replacement battery. Martin Nichol telephoned the Clerk and explained the problem. An email was circulated and action was taken behind the scenes with the result that a new battery was authorised on Wednesday November 6<sup>th</sup> and a verbal promise that Stocksfield will get a new van in April. **Clerk to send an official letter of thanks to Mr. D. Innes.**

c) 12h 14/10/13) Clerk wrote to the parish clerks of other villages affected by the post office van problems, most were acknowledged by the Clerk but there has been no feedback since. The article

in the Hexham Courant of October 18<sup>th</sup> entitled “Villages gear up for new post office van” probably gave the impression to the affected villages that there was nothing to worry about.

d) A second email dated 27/10/13 sent to Ruth Barnes at Post Office asking if the PO would make a donation towards the cost of hard standing. She was on annual leave and asked that urgent mail be forwarded to Karen Braggs. This was done on October 28<sup>th</sup> to which the Clerk received a telephone reply verbally offering us £700 towards the cost of providing hard standing for the mobile post van.

e) While the mobile Post office was operating with a battery unable to hold its charge. Ruth Barnes contacted the Clerk to ask if there was anywhere the battery could be plugged into at Slaley for Monday November 4<sup>th</sup>. The Clerk was able to make arrangements with Billy and Sheila Borthwick. Apparently when the van arrived that afternoon the power was generated from Marion Mitchinson at No 5. The Clerk to contact and ask if a metre reading was taken and how much was owed.

#### **14.Litter Bin at Townhead.**

a) Adam Keen replied by email on 23/10/13 re our Townhead Litter Bin that: “it appeared to be broken and the crew had been struggling to service it”. AK also suggested that a WHEELED BIN ON A LOCKING POST WAS THE EASIEST BIN FOR THE CREW TO SERVICE. Clerk circulated this information by email on 23/10/13 and asked for permission to have it removed. This was duly received.

b) Clerk’s son removed the bin, which was filled so full against the lid that it would not empty. The bin was emptied into heavy duty black bin liners and placed in the Clerk’s wheelie bin. The bin then had its lid removed to avoid overfilling again. The bin part was then washed out with disinfectant, and holes drilled into the bottom for drainage and finally refitted to the post back at Townhead.

c) PMK had left messages on the Clerk’s telephone prior to Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> asking that something be done about the mess, followed by an email on Saturday October 26<sup>th</sup> hoping that whatever new arrangements might be they will ensure regular attention – at least weekly clearing. Clerk replied to this by email on October 28<sup>th</sup>.

d) Clerk informed Adam Keen that the Townhead bin was emptied by email on October 27<sup>th</sup> and asked that the fortnightly Crew resume the emptying. Crew replied to AK on 28/10/13 that the locking mechanism caused problems and that they would welcome a 140 bin. AK replied to Clerk by email on October 30<sup>th</sup> that a wheeled bin on a locking post would be much less problematic in future.

e) The Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup> collection was landfill early indications (Friday 8<sup>th</sup>) are that the bin was emptied as the only items inside the bin was a black bag and an empty wine bottle.

f) The Councillors agreed that they did not wish to have a wheelie bin attached to a post at the entrance to Slaley village. It could, like those on the side of other roads, be used as general dump. The Clerk was asked to contact Keith Gray for his suggestion on litterbins in prominent rural locations.

#### **15.Dukesfield Smelt Mill Arches Project Update**

A Copy of the News Release was tabled, which detailed the topping out ceremony involving the oldest local resident, Ridley Roddam. This event will take place at Dukesfield Arches on Friday November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11.30 a.m. Several important people have received an invitation including our PC Chairman, Cllr. C. Brooks.

#### **16.Precept for 2014 – 15**

a) The Hexham Courant carried an article on 18/10/13 entitled “Village hall receives grant in council U-turn” in which the article said that Slaley PC had agreed to offer a grant to help to keep Hall hire charges down.

- b) Mg Weatherley, Hall Treasurer, had forwarded a copy of the Hall accounts by email on Sunday November 10<sup>th</sup>. There was general concern that the deficit for 12/13 was £1,760.11 and that no attempted fund raising had been undertaken by the Hall Management Committee to counteract the deficit. The Clerk explained the make up of the Hall Management Committee and that each member was involved in trying to keep its own individual organisation in a breakeven if not a surplus of funds situation. New fund raising ideas were difficult. The Councillors agreed to make an immediate grant of £1,000 towards keeping hire charges at the current level. However there had to be other fund raising undertaken, everyone had to realise the importance of the Hall and use the facility. *See 9b\* above.*
- d) Consider Precept payments for 2014/15. Without the individual sheets this was not possible. The Clerk to circulate a draft sheet for comment and agreement in December.

## **17. AOB**

- a) Mr. D. Innes happened to see one of the school buses drive onto the grass at Parks Side on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October and make a mess. He contacted NCC to report the incident and request that the mess was made good. By October 23<sup>rd</sup> Stuart McNaughton replied that repairs would be undertaken that week or the following week. Katherine Glen, Isos Housing gave NCC permission to reinstate on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Cllr. Green offered to go and jump on the ruts to improve the unsightly mess. Buses reversing into Parks Side were discussed in general. Apparently school transport can reverse but the normal service buses are not allowed to as Slaley found out several years ago when the Flothers road was closed.
- b) Cllr. Milburn reported dog dirt in the village, two near Townhead and some further down near Hillfield entrance. **Cllr. Milburn will do a reminder through Slaley News Sheet that a £1,000 fine is enforceable if a dog is seen fouling the village and the owner does not clear it up. Parents should remind their children of this requirement when they exercise the family dog.**

## **18. Date of December meeting.**

Monday December 9<sup>th</sup>. Cllr Green asked if we could have some Festive goodies at the meeting. Cllr. Bell gave her apologies for the December meeting