

## **ACOMB PARISH COUNCIL**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 8th December 2004 at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall, Acomb.

### **Present**

Councillor J Wilkinson (Chairman of the Council in the chair)  
Councillors Mrs J Wrigley, C. Enderby, K. Laidlow, G. Scorer, W. Rutherford

### **Also Present**

County Councillor B Pickering  
Bill Grigg - Clerk to the Council  
R. Smith - N.C.C. Public Transport  
P. Crow - Kimberley Coaches

### **Apologies**

Councillor Mrs A Earnshaw

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs J Wrigley - Acomb Tennis Club  
Councillor C Enderby - Planning Application Ref. 20041494/20041495  
Councillor B Pickering - N.C.C. Public Transport  
B. Grigg – N.C.C. Public Transport

### **Discussion with P. Crow - Kimberley Coaches, Prudhoe (operating as Tyne Blue Service) and R. Smith - NCC Public Transport Team**

The Council Chairman welcomed P. Crow and R. Smith to the meeting.

P. Crow explained that they began operating on the 31st August 2004 and there had been some teething problems, and some minor problems were still happening and he deeply regretted any inconvenience to residents.

This is a new venture for the company and new staff had to be recruited and trained, and most of the problems seemed to be staff not fully understanding the new routes or misunderstandings of information given.

There have been recent problems of drivers not going to the Pant to begin the service and residents missing their train connections at Hexham. Also on leaving

Hexham Bus Station not calling at the interchange at Hexham Railway station, therefore residents had not been collected for their return journey to Acomb.

Mr Crow apologised and informed the Council he was aware of these recent problems and had taken action with the drivers to rectify these problems.

R. Smith, NCC, asked the Council if they had any objections to the services coming into Millersfield and other estates at other times rather than just 9am - 3pm as it does at the present time; to lift this restriction would allow the service to improve and provide a better service for residents.

With the new buses having disabled facilities and facilities for pushchairs etc it allowed more residents access to public transport. R. Smith felt this would not cause any problems with children on the estates; he had visited the area and felt there would be no safety issues.

The Council agreed in principle that a trial period of the services going through the estates could go ahead and any views expressed to NCC would be taken into consideration.

R. Smith informed the Council that funding would be available from April 2005 through the Local Transport Plan to install new bus stops and timetable display boards, and NCC felt that designated bus stops should be installed in the village so that the bus drivers and residents know which is the official collection point and drop off point rather than just residents having a bus at various locations which can delay the service and can cause problems with services that connect with trains and other bus services.

Full consultation will take place with all residents concerned by NCC, and their comments taken into consideration. The Council agreed in principle to bus stops being installed at the following locations:-

1. Top of Main Street (The Pant)
2. Main Street (going up the street)
3. Post Office (opposite side of Post Office)
4. Village Hall
5. Millersfield
6. Morrison Terrace (The Bridge)
7. Orchard Avenue (both sides)
8. Alemouth Terrace (both sides)

There has been a large problem with lack of information in regards to the new services. The timetables were never delivered to households and none have been displayed in the bus shelters or public places and a large amount of complaints have been received on this matter.

Councillors agreed to deliver timetables to residents, but R. Smith agreed to try and produce a new timetable with the new proposals for bus stops etc on the back, and a map of the route etc with all the contact details on, and also provide larger sizes for the bus shelters. He thought he might be able to arrange delivery of this information in early January 2005.

Should there be a problem with delivery R. Smith would deliver the information to the Clerk and Councillors would deliver the information. It was also agreed new train timetables would go out at the same time.

R. Smith also informed the Council that Saver tickets, Explorer tickets etc would be available soon and hopefully you would be able to purchase a joint train/bus ticket shortly.

The Council Chairman Councillor J Wilkinson thanked P. Crow and R. Smith very much for attending and their contribution to the discussion.

**90/2004 The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 3rd November 2004**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 3rd November 2004 were signed as a correct record.

**91/2004 Matters arising from the minutes of the Council meeting held on 3rd November 2004**

- a) Ref. 85/2004 (b) Tynedale Open Space Recreation Strategy Draft Consultation

Anne May Pottage, Tynedale Council, has visited the site and is preparing a list of possible additions to the play area, which the Council can consider in due course.

In regards to the play area, there had recently been a lot of broken glass and damage to the gate and litter all over the area. A local resident had contacted Tynedale Council in regards this matter. Councillor Mrs J Wrigley visited the site and cleared away the glass and Tynedale Council staff visited the area and cleared up the litter etc to make the area safe. The Council will be recharged for this work which was urgent to make it safe. The Clerk has organised for the Village Hall's cleaner/handyman to visit the site on a weekly basis to check the area and clear away all litter, glass etc, and to report any other damage that might require repairs or any safety matters. He has also agreed to try and repair and install the gate once again. Older youths appeared to be going in on the evenings and causing these problems.

- b) Ref. 86/2004 District Councillor's Report, Councillor Mrs J Wrigley

Councillor Mrs J Wrigley is still seeking information in regards carrying out a survey with Senior Citizens in the village to see if there is a need to provide some form of help. Councillor Mrs J Wrigley will report back to the Council when she is able to obtain the information.

## **92/2004 Planning Matters**

### **Applications**

- a) Ref. 20041494/20041495

M. Somer, Riding Farm, Acomb.  
Conversion of farm buildings into one dwelling with associated access gardens, parking and provision of bin stores at above location. (This includes listed building consent).

Support the application.

## **93/2004 Financial Matters**

- a) **Income**

23/11/04 Bank Interest (C/A)	£0.55
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- b) **Payments**

Cornhill (DD)	£65.42
W.C. Grigg (fee)	£339.90
W.C. Grigg (telephone/postages)	£55.00
Tynedale Council (litter)	£52.88
NCC (grass cutting)	£697.10
Crawford & Oliver (repairs)	£115.15
Village Hall	£500.00

- c) **Precept 2005/2006**

After careful consideration of the budget for 2005/2006 the Council fully agreed a precept of £20,000. The Chairman and Clerk were authorised to sign the documents for the precept for 2005/2006.

d) **Accounts January 2005**

As the Council does not meet in January 2005 the Chairman and Clerk were authorised to agree the Council's payments for January 2005. The Council fully agreed on this matter.

e) **Acomb Tennis Club**

The Tennis Club are busy applying for grants to resurface the courts but there is a problem with the VAT as this will increase the costs by approx. £2,500.00. As the Council are the trustees of the playing fields, including the courts, the Tennis Club have asked if the Council could deal with the payments of the accounts for this work if they pay the grant aid to the Council, this meaning the Council will pay the VAT and reclaim the VAT through its accounting system. The Council fully agreed to this request.

f) **Annual Accounts Return 2003/2004**

The Council agreed to amend the annual return as requested by the auditors - £4000 loan from Tynedale Council repaid in 2003 should have been indicated in box 5 (repayments) as well as in box 10 total borrowing. It was also agreed the Clerk amend these records with his signature.

**94/2004 Correspondence**

- a) Letter from the Hexham Courant re. Tynedale Visitor 2005 asking the Council if they wished to be included in the 2005 edition. It was agreed to use the information supplied as in previous years.
- b) Notice from NCC re. Northumberland local transport plan 2006-2011 issue papers. The Council noted the contents of the report.
- c) The Council noted a copy of the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership's first newsletter which has been recently set up with an office at Hexham Railway station.
- d) Notice from NCC re. Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework. The Council noted the content of the notice.
- e) Notice from the Standard Board for England re. Local Investigations Guidance for Monitoring Officers and Standard Committees. The Council noted the contents of the notice.

- f) Notice from the Tynedale Community Safety Partnership re. Tynedale Crime and Disorder Audit 2004. The Council noted the contents of the report with no comments from this Council.
- g) Letter from Tynedale Community Safety Partnership in regards to Tynedale Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy Community Punishment Project. From April 2005 it is hoped the project will continue in Tynedale and Parish Councils can put schemes forward. A possible scheme could be the outside decorating of the hall and inside the hall when updating takes place.
- h) Notification from Northumbria Police that the programme of visits to Rural West Tynedale Communities by the Police and Community Safety Officer will be starting again in 2005. The first visit to Acomb is on the 23rd February 2005.

#### **95/2004 Citizenship Award**

Thanks were expressed to Councillor Mrs A Earnshaw for the research she has done on this matter and the information prepared for this meeting as she was unable to attend the meeting.

The Council carefully went through the information provided and agreed the information, agreeing to delate under eligibility recently elected members of the Parish Council are not eligible.

It was agreed to print 700 copies with Acomb Parish Council and the Acorn emblem at the top of the page in a fold-over style which Councillors agreed to deliver to every household and some placed in public places.

The scheme will operate from January 2005 - December 2005 and the same each following year.

The awards will be presented at the Council's Annual Parish Meeting held May/June each year; the first awards will be presented in 2006. It was thought a trial run could run in 2005, but the Council felt it should not nominate for a trial run in 2005 and should be seen to be open minded and the scheme should operate from Jan - Dec 2005 with awards in 2006.

The Clerk would set up an independent panel from outside the Parish to select the winners, in conjunction with the Council's Chairman.

Following the February 2005 Council meeting when hopefully the leaflets will be ready, a publicity launch with the Council's Chairman and the Hexham Courant will be held to give the scheme more publicity.

Councillor B Pickering agreed to design and print the certificates for the Council.

**96/2004 District Councillor's Report**  
**Councillor Mrs J Wrigley**

Councillor Mrs J Wrigley's report had been previously circulated with the minutes and thanks expressed to Councillor Mrs J Wrigley for a full and comprehensive report. Councillor Mrs J Wrigley made the following comment to her report.

She was concerned as Caroline Barnes, Senior Youth Worker, has now left for a new post in Stanley and the funding for her post was not being renewed, that youth services in Acomb could be cut.

Junior Youth Club are not meeting at the moment. It was agreed to ask Ms Y Greener, Senior Youth/Community Worker to attend the February meeting to discuss the future plans for the youth club and the pavilion.

**97/2004 County Councillor's Report**  
**Councillor B Pickering**

Councillor B Pickering reported on the following matters:-

- 1) NCC have agreed to place a new grit bin at Chapel Close.
- 2) Following NCC full Council meeting on the 8 December 2004 which discussed the proposed changes to Education in Northumberland, it was agreed after a long debate that a full consultation with parents and all concerned will now take place. Hopefully NCC will make a decision following the consultation, hopefully in April 2005. There are some timescale problems and the time it will take to select the consultants. The NCC bid for putting the learner first to the Government has failed the first round.

It has been agreed some schools need replacing and a vast amount of repairs and improvements needed to many schools throughout the County and this will cause problems to Asset Management due to the amount of finance required to carry out the work required.

It was also agreed some schools may have to close and merge because of the number of pupils and the costs involved in keeping these schools open.

There is still a demand for the 3-tier system within the County and each area of the County needs to be looked at again to see what the needs are and what would be best for the learner in the future.

Reorganisation in this area could be 2013 with each area being phased in if reorganisation was to go ahead.

To meet some of the repairs and improvements required to schools there could be a reduction in other services; possible suggestions are reductions in the Highway budget, Library services, recycling.

This would have a large impact on services throughout the County and the Highways budget including gritting has already been cut under previous budget cuts.

- 3) Councillor B Pickering also reported on the state of the roads in the area and regretted that due to the budget restraints very little could be done at the present time. Councillor W Rutherford asked if Councillor B Pickering could ask NCC Highways if repairs could be carried out on the Birkey Burn - Peasley Gate Road, and Peasley Gate to Target House, and the Acomb to Oakwood Road. Councillor B Pickering agreed to put the request to NCC for attention.

#### **98/2004 Any Urgent Business Allowed by the Council Chairman**

- 1) Councillor Mrs J Wrigley as Chairman of Governors at Acomb County First School informed the Council builders would be starting the improvements to school on the 21st February 2005.

Some of the proposals if reorganisation of education goes ahead in the latest proposals could be Acomb First School combining with Beaufront First School on the Acomb site.

Acomb, Beaufront, Chollerton and Humshaugh First Schools forming a federation or Acomb First School to stay as it is but become a Primary School.

- 2) The Village Hall electricity system has received an unsatisfactory report from its annual inspection for a Public Entertainment Licence. It has been agreed the three improvements required can be phased in but the wiring to the toilet block must have priority. The cost will be £1,000 as agreed with Crawford and Oliver. The Council agreed it was necessary

work and agreed to cover the cost of phase one which would be carried out in January 2005.

- 3) A letter has been received from Acomb Football Club complaining about problems at the Pavilion and lack of facilities since the Youth Club moved in. This is not a Council matter and the Clerk has contacted the Football Club to inform them of this and suggested they attend the next meeting of the Pavilion Management Committee to try and resolve these problems. It is hoped a Management Committee meeting will be held early in 2005. The Council agreed to this suggestion.
- 4) The Youth Club have asked for a new footway to be provided to the Pavilion; they do have some funding towards the costs but it is thought the cost will be more than the Council can budget for, as any surplus funds from 2005/2006 budget would be allocated to the Green. The Council agreed fully this could not be a priority and was not prepared to increase the agreed Precept for 2005/2006. Further costings will be sought to see if anything can be done during the year.

**99/2004 Date of Next Meeting**

It was confirmed the date of the next Council meeting will be Wednesday 2nd February 2005 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.