

**Draft Minutes of the Annual Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 15 May 2023 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

PRESENT: Cllrs D Sim (in the Chair), N Bettinson, N Graham, C Hale, A Kaldos, A Linton,
J Mellor, D Millington, & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr G Minshaw, Cumberland Council

Also present: 10 members of the public.

84/23 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE CHAIRMAN

Nominations were sought for the office of Chairman and Vice Chairman for the coming year.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Sim be elected as Chairman for the coming year (proposed by N Bettinson, seconded by D Millington) & that Cllr Taylor be elected as Vice Chairman (proposed by J Mellor, seconded by A Kaldos).

The Chairman then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Chairman for 2023/24.

85/23 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting. He explained that this was the first meeting since the recent elections at which there had been 11 nominations for the 14 seats. All those nominated had been elected without the need for a poll and there were now 3 vacancies which could be filled by co-option. Cllr Gilmour had been unable to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the meeting as he was away.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Gilmour to allowed sign his Declaration on his return.

86/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Argyle, Gilmour & Taylor.

87/23 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation. It was noted that the dispensation given at the last meeting to allow Cllr Millington to take part in any discussion of drainage issues on Nethertown Rd/Sea Mill Lane was still valid.

88/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 17 APRIL 2023

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 17 April 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

89/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public present expressed an interest in various issues including the planning application for a wind turbine on land to the rear of Grindal House. The Chairman confirmed that an email had been received from the applicant shortly before the meeting indicating his intention to withdraw the application but there had not yet been formal confirmation of this from the Planning Officer. Until confirmation was received, the Parish Council would continue to discuss the application and agree its comments. Residents drew attention to the confusion which had arisen over the deadline for comments on the application. The Cumberland Council website gave a deadline of 21 days from the valid date of 20 April whereas the public notices were dated 5 May. The Chairman explained that the Planning Dept had stated that comments could be submitted up to the date of decision on an application, although earlier submission made it easier for Panel members to be properly briefed.

Other members of the public raised the issues of parking in the High House Rd/Finkle Street area with vehicles regularly parking on yellow lines and obstructing junctions and asked whether a residents parking scheme had been considered. The Chairman explained that parking was an issue throughout the village and most of the vehicles belonged to local residents so residents parking permits would not necessarily help. The Parish Council was actively engaged in plans to create an additional 40 spaces as an extension to Station car park to take vehicles off the streets.

A resident raised concerns that surface water was causing flooding problems on Main Street where water was not being channelled into the drains. Another resident reported a problem with an uneven road surface near the entrance to Fleatham House which was made more dangerous because the street light was obstructed by a tree. Cllr Minshaw agreed to report these issues and Cllr Bettinson offered to help with identifying the street light involved.

It was reported that there was a pothole at the entrance to Station car park. Cllr Minshaw agreed to check whether this was a highways responsibility.

The resurfacing of the Beach car park was praised by residents and Cllr Minshaw agreed to pass on these comments to the officers concerned.

90/23 APPLICATION FOR WIND TURBINE – LAND TO REAR OF GRINDAL HOUSE

A new planning application (ref 4/23/2113/0F1) had been received for an 18m high wind turbine to provide energy to Grindal House. The application provided little supporting information and failed to address issues of visual impact, noise nuisance and environmental damage. The site was within the valley where it would be clearly visible from all directions and there had been considerable opposition from local residents. Councillors suggested that energy conservation measures and a ground source heat pump would be a more suitable alternative. Although it seemed that the application was to be withdrawn, it was agreed that objections should nevertheless be sent to Cumberland Council.

It was RESOLVED to submit objections to the application on the grounds of significant loss of visual amenity within the Coastal Sandstone landscape, and the visual effect on the Heritage buildings at St Bees School and St Bees Priory within the St Bees Conservation Area.

91/23 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

As this was the first meeting since the 4 yearly elections, the council was required to confirm its continued eligibility to use the General Power of Competence. The two criteria to be met were that two thirds of council seats must have been filled by election and that the Clerk holds a relevant qualification. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council met the eligibility criteria and would adopt the General Power of Competence.

92/23 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Asset Register

The asset register at 31 March 2023 was received and noted.

(b) Annual Governance Statement

The assurances required in the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 were considered and it was agreed that affirmative answers could be given in all cases.

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed by the Chairman.

(c) Annual Accounting Statement

The Annual Accounting Statement for 2022/23 had been circulated with the agenda. A more detailed breakdown of income and expenditure for the year had also been circulated with a summary of funds carried over to 2023/24. The period for public inspection of accounts would begin on 5 June and the required notice would be published on the website and main noticeboard.

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Accounting Statement be approved and signed by the Chairman.

(d) Appointment of Internal Auditor

The vacancy for an internal auditor had been advertised in the parish magazine and on Facebook but so far there had been no expressions of interest. If no local volunteer could be found, enquiries would be made about engaging an auditor already working for neighbouring councils.

(e) Insurance

The financial year 2023/24 would be the final year of the three year long term arrangement with BHIB. The renewal premium quoted for 2023/24 was £1269.89 which included cover for the new seats and strimmer purchased last year.

It was RESOLVED to renew the policy with BHIB for 2023/24.

(f) Bank Mandate

It was RESOLVED that cheque signatories for the coming year be Cllrs Sim, Argyle, Taylor & the Clerk. As Hayley Monaghan did not stand for re-election, her name would be removed from the mandate.

(g) Financial Report

A summary of accounts at 30 April was received and noted. The precept for 2023/24 had been paid into the NatWest account with some funds being transferred to the reserve account where it would accrue interest.

The notes of the FRAG meeting on 25 April were received and noted. Expenditure in 2022/23 was lower than had been anticipated due mainly to the decision not to go ahead with some resurfacing at the beach play area and to delays in receiving invoices for play area repairs. FRAG had also recommended some minor changes to the risk register and changes to the wording of Section 1.12 of the Financial Regulations.

It was RESOLVED to transfer £2000 from general reserves to the Major Asset Repair & Replacement Reserve and to approve changes to the risk register and Financial Regulations.

(h) Payments

- G Burgess – reimbursement for Coronation cake ingredients Total £13.15
- D Lee – reimbursement for Coronation party sundries Total £71.06
- P Argyle – reimbursement for Coronation cake decoration Total £24.18
- D Lee – reimbursement for Traidcraft coffee for street party £20.00
- J Donaldson -salary May Total £692.29
- J Donaldson – reimbursement for printer ink charges £8.32 + £1.67 VAT Total £9.99
- J Mellor – reimbursement for speed gun batteries £6.25 + £1.25 VAT Total £7.50
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (May) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (standing order)

Payments made since last meeting:

- N Bettinson – reimbursement for plants for Priory Paddock Total £78.95
- Npower – toilet electricity £32.38 + £1.62 VAT Total £34.00 (direct debit 19/05/23)
- Water Plus- water/wastewater to toilets Total £175.03 (direct debit 2/05/23)
- Answer 4-U -answering service £12.69 + £2.54 Total £15.23 (direct debit 17/05/23)

93/23 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/ADVISORY GROUPS & REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was RESOLVED that the membership of committees and advisory groups for the coming year would be as follows:

Beach Committee	D Sim, P Argyle, A Linton, A Kaldos & community reps
Allotment Committee	N Bettinson, A Linton & allotment holders
Traffic Calming Committee	D Millington, D Sim, J Mellor & community reps
Village in Bloom	G Gilmour & community members
Planning Advisory Group	G Gilmour, P Argyle, N Graham & E Taylor
FRAG	D Sim, C Hale, E Taylor, A Kaldos
Beach Toilets	N Bettinson, P Argyle
Cycle Track Project Group	D Sim, E Taylor + additional representatives yet to be appointed
Data Protection Working Group	G Gilmour & C Hale
Play Area Working Group	A Kaldos, G Gilmour, A Linton, D Sim

It was further RESOLVED that the following representatives be appointed to outside bodies:

Adams Recreation Ground Committee	A Linton
Shepards & Whitehead Charity	N Bettinson, B Hewetson
Friends of the Priory	N Bettinson
West Copeland Partnership	G Gilmour
Village Hall Committee	J Mellor, C Hale
West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group	D Sim (deputies E Taylor & G Gilmour)

94/23 LEAD RESPONSIBILITIES

It was RESOLVED that lead responsibilities for 2023/24 would be as follows:

Nuclear Issues	G Gilmour & E Taylor
Commons	D Sim
Footpaths	C Hale
Web-site	D Sim
Priory Paddock	N Bettinson
Speedwatch co-ordinator	J Mellor
Play area inspection co-ordinator	S Burgess
Station car park extension/transport hub	E Taylor
Tree Planting	N Bettinson

95/23 CUMBERLAND COUNCIL

Cllr Minshaw reported on the following items:

- The new vehicle required to empty the new bird proof bins was expected to be delivered in June.
- The new signage for the top of Sea Mill Lane was in hand.
- New signs had been promised to warn of slip hazards at the lifeboat ramp but it was not clear whether they were yet in place.
- The Highways Area Manager was to investigate the situation with the outstanding repairs of potholes.
- The first meeting of the new Community Panel would take place in early June.
- Work on the A595 at Moresby would be ongoing for the next few weeks.
- The Green Grants Programme was open to applications from local groups until 19 May.

Councillors raised several other matters which Cllr Minshaw agreed to follow up:

- The Outrigger to Egremont road had been flooded for several months and it was not clear what action was being taken to resolve the issue.
- A request had been made some weeks ago for repainting of the faded white lines at the Main Street/Seacroft Drive junction to help a visually impaired resident but this had not yet been done.
- The new road markings at one side of the Fleatham Croft/High House Rd junction had still not been completed.
- Some work had been done to clear the blocked drain from Nethertown Rd which had affected properties on Sea Mill Lane. Highways staff had promised that a more extensive camera survey would be carried out but this had not yet taken place.

96/23 TRAFFIC & SAFETY ISSUES

The Chairman explained that there had been a recent accident in which a pedestrian had been struck by a car on Main Street. This had happened on the section of the road outside 13 & 14 Main Street where there was no pavement. This was a particularly dangerous section as it was almost opposite the Post Office and vehicles often parked on the double yellow lines, forcing pedestrians to walk even further out into the road. A new section of pavement would greatly improve pedestrian safety.

It was RESOLVED to ask Cumberland Council to consider the building of a new section of pavement.

97/23 VILLAGE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS

Correspondence had been received from the Village School explaining that the work which was taking place would create a fenced path along the side of the school field from The Crofts down to Main Street with access to the field being only from the Outrigg play area. However, it was noted that the new fence did appear to have a gate on to the field, although this was not yet confirmed.

The Parish Council had raised concerns about whether there would continue to be access to the field for children to play outside school hours in the longer term. The Headteacher had explained that an external review of safeguarding was to take place shortly and this would advise on whether the site needed to be completely fenced off.

It was RESOLVED to invite a representative of the school to attend the June Parish Council meeting.

98/23 CAR PARK SIGNAGE

A question had been raised recently about whether camper vans could be parked at Fairladies car park and it had been agreed at the last meeting that some rules should be drawn up for use of the car park with appropriate signage on site. The Chairman had designed draft wording of a sign for approval.

It was RESOLVED to purchase a sign at an approximate cost of £150.

99/23 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

Cllr Linton reported that the Working Group had not yet had a further meeting. However, there had been a positive response from St Bees School. The School was keen to look at opportunities for their Eco Club to be involved and a representative would attend Working Group meetings where possible.

100/23 PLANNING**(a) New Applications**

The Planning Advisory Group reported on two applications received for comment:

- (i) Ref 4/22/2407/0F1 Construction of three 4 bedrooomed houses with associated infrastructure (amended plans) - The Knoll High House Rd

It was noted that the proposal was for 3 large detached properties to replace the one property which used to occupy the site. The main concern was that this would increase the demand on the drainage systems which were already under strain. The plans for dealing with surface water drainage were not clear. Although the plans included off street parking, there was some concern that this might not be sufficient for large executive properties. It was suggested that the site might be more suitable for two properties rather than three.

It was RESOLVED to forward these objections to Cumberland Council.

- (ii) Ref 4/23/2114/0F1 Change of use to mixed use (house/holiday let) - Hampton House, 29 Main Street
It was RESOLVED that there were no objections to this application.

(iii) It was noted that the Clerk had responded under delegated authority to the following applications in order to meet the deadline for comments:

4/23/2102/TPO Works to 10 trees within the conservation area, St Bees Priory – No objection

4/23/2086/0B1 & 4/23/2100/0R1 Reserved matters. Land to the south of Southrigg, Nethertown Rd – copy of the response had been circulated.

(b) Applications approved by Cumberland Council

4/23/2071/0F1 Demolition of garage /living room to create garage & bedroom -Kilkeel, Egremont Rd

4/22/2042/0F1 Siting of 4 glamping pods with decking & associated works – 5 Ellerbeck Barns, Egremont

101/23 PROJECT REPORTS**(a) Community Events**

The street party to mark the Coronation had been very well attended with the celebration cake being cut by Bob Jopling. The road closure application had been approved in time by Cumberland Council. The Chairman thanked all those who had helped with the organisation of the event and contributed to its success. Expenditure had been well within the budget and the commemorative seat for Priory Paddock was now being ordered.

(b) Beach & Play Area

The next beach clean would be on Monday 29 May 2 – 3.30pm.

(c) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area

There was no progress to report.

(d) Station car park extension/transport hub

There had been positive progress in discussions about a long term lease on Station car park which was needed to secure access to the additional land required for the car park extension. Representatives of Network Rail would be visiting St Bees on 3 July and the Community Rail Partnership would be holding its meeting in St Bees on 27 July.

It was RESOLVED that a light lunch be provided for the visitors attending the meeting on 3 July.

(e) Valley Link Cycle Track

There was no further progress to report.

(f) Priory Paddock

Volunteers from the Friends group had been carrying out further work to restore the pond area. The Paddock had been entered into the RHS Small Copse competition. A finger post was needed to signpost the Paddock from the end of the Dandy Walk.

It was RESOLVED to purchase suitable signage.

(g) Interpretation Boards

There had been no progress since the last meeting.

102/23 FOOTPATHS

The report by Cllr Hale was received and noted.

103/23 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman provided a brief verbal report on the recent meeting of the West Cumbria Site Stakeholders Group.

Cllr Mellor reported that the Governors of the Village School were setting up a panel to appoint a new Headteacher.

104/23 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report on ongoing matters was received and noted.

105/23 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Information had been received from CALC of how to find details of help available with cost of living via the Cumberland Council website. The Household Support Fund would be live for the next 6 -8 months. Noted

(b) Zero Carbon Cumbria was recruiting new Climate Change Champions in the Copeland area. Noted.

(c) National Highways had provided an update on the A66 Northern Trans- Pennine Project. Noted.

(d) CALC had provided a copy of its updated Green Spaces 2 Grow support pack. Noted.

(e) Information had been received on the NALC Star Council awards. There would be several categories and nominations would close on 28 July. Noted.

(f) Information received from CALC encouraging participation in the Great Big Green Week from 10 - 18 June. Cllr Linton confirmed that St Bees Green Future group had some plans for events.

(g) CALC was to hold a Special General Meeting on 7 June to approve a change in its governance arrangements to become a Limited Company Without Shares and reflect the change to two unitary authorities. Noted.

(h) The Environment Agency was holding another of its stakeholder engagement meetings on 24 May to allow local councils to discuss issues of interest with nuclear regulators. Noted.

(i) National Highways had provided details of weekend closures of sections of the A595 as part of the Moresby Improvement Scheme. Noted

(j)Cumbria’s Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner was holding an online survey to gauge views on the support provided for victims of crime. The survey would run until 29 May. Details had been posted on the Parish Council’s Facebook page.

(k)An email had been received from the NSPCC seeking volunteers to help deliver safeguarding sessions in schools. Details were available from the Clerk.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- NALC Newsletter
- NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletin
- Cumbria Police update April
- Northern Gas Networks Stakeholder update
- Open Spaces Society April Update
- Connecting Cumbria Newsletter
- Cumberland Council weekly bulletin of festivals & events
- Trudy Harrison MP newsletter
- ACT Update

106/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA

No items were reported.

107/23 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The calendar of meetings for 2023/4 was received and noted.

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council Meeting take place on Monday 19 June 2023 at 6.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....