

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on  
Monday 18 December 2023 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs D Sim (in the Chair), P Argyle, N Bettinson, G Gilmour, N Graham, C Hale, A Kaldos, J Mellor, D Millington, E Taylor & the Clerk

**In attendance:** Cllr G Minshaw, Cumberland Council

Also present: 2 members of the public.

**205/23 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairman welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

**206/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr A Linton.

**207/23 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Bettinson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the discussion of the replacement of the litter bin near the Post Office as he lived close to the location.

It was RESOLVED to extend the dispensation given to Cllr Millington as there was still no resolution to the drainage issue affecting his and other properties on Sea Mill Lane.

**208/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 20 NOVEMBER 2023**

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 20 November 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the correction of a typographical error in minute 193/23c to show the contribution to the parish magazine as £1250.

**209/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The members of the public present expressed an interest in the flooding on the Outrigg to Egremont road to be discussed as part of the Cumberland Council agenda item.

**210/23 CUMBERLAND COUNCIL MATTERS**

**(a) Flooding on the Outrigg to Egremont Road**

The Chairman explained that the flooding remained a cause for concern. A formal road closure had been put in place but vehicles were continuing to attempt to drive through the flood, ignoring the closure signs.

Cllr Minshaw reported on the latest information provided by Cumberland Council's officers. It had not been possible to negotiate access to the neighbouring land and it had now been decided to instal a new drain which would run up to the crossroads and link into the existing drainage system. Highways officers were committed to ensuring that the work was done as soon as possible. The first stage was to complete the design work. Once this was done, it was anticipated that the road could be reopened in six weeks.

Councillors welcomed this news but noted that in the short term the signage needed to be improved. Members of the public reported that the road closure was not shown on the Cumberland Council website and there was no signage to warn pedestrians and cyclists that the road was not passable. Cllr Minshaw agreed to take up these points with Highways officers.

**(b) Blocked drain Nethertown Rd/Sea Mill Lane**

Cllr Minshaw reported that officers had now received permission to access private land to carry out further investigation of the drain. This work was now expected to take place between Christmas and New Year and the property owners concerned would be notified. It was pointed out that the problem had first been reported in April and, despite some limited investigation in August, the problem had still not been resolved. It was particularly concerning that no action had been taken to deal with the deep holes which had appeared in the garden of one property which posed a safety risk. Councillors hoped that there would be significant progress to report at the meeting in January to avoid having to consider steps to escalate the issue.

**(c) Safety Issues – Outrigg/Main Street Junction**

Cllr Minshaw had passed on the concerns raised at the last meeting about safety at this junction. The repainting of the double yellow lines on Main Street would be included in the next package of work in St Bees. However, officers did not believe that bollards would be acceptable due to the road layout and width of the road. Highways officers had already agreed to look at this area after reports that the pavement was not suitable for disabled access or for those with prams and pushchairs.

**(d) Drainage & flooding problem – entrance to Station car park**

Cllr Minshaw confirmed that work was being scheduled on this drain but he still had no specific date.

**(e) Other issues**

- The Community Panel had announced its first grants for community projects. The deadline for applications for the next grant awards was 12 February.
- Sport England had announced its Place Partnership Programme aimed at encouraging take up of sports activities. Cumbria had been chosen as a pilot area and three specific localities had been identified to receive funding, including Mirehouse, Kells and Woodhouse. The area covered would include Rottington. It was accepted that sports clubs and groups in the pilot area were also likely to involve people from adjacent communities such as St Bees, Moor Row and Bigrigg.
- It was noted that vehicles were continuing to park close to the junction of High House Rd and Fleatham Croft. Cllr Minshaw agreed to follow this up.

**211/23 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT****(a) Financial Report**

The summary of accounts at 30 November was received and noted.

Cumberland Council had agreed a short extension of the deadline for notifying the precept for 2024/25 to allow the budget and precept to be agreed at the meeting on 15 January.

**(b) Payments**

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Npower -toilet electricity Nov £37.15 + £1.86 VAT Total £39.01
- YNH Ltd– domain name & hosting renewal Total £211.00
- GEO Environmental Engineering Ltd – Ground survey and CBR testing £3340.00 + £668.00 VAT Total £4008.00
- J Donaldson -salary Dec Total £680.85
- J Donaldson – reimbursement for printer ink charges £8.32 + £1.67 Total £9.99
- HMRC – PAYE Qtr 3 Total £890.33
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (Dec) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (standing order)

The following payments made since the last meeting were noted:

- Water Plus- allotment water charges Total £72.01 (direct debit 12/12/23)
- Over 60s – donation £120.00 (cheque 2943) agreed at last meeting
- Great North Air Ambulance – donation £100.00 (cheque 2944) agreed at last meeting
- St Bees PCC – contribution to publication of parish magazine £1250.00 agreed at last meeting
- Village Hall Committee -donation £750.00 agreed at last meeting
- Furness Line Action Group – membership/donation £50 agreed at last meeting
- Friends of the Priory – membership/donation £50 agreed at last meeting
- 1<sup>st</sup> Beckermest Scouts – donation £250.00 agreed at last meeting
- Royal British Legion – wreath/donation £150 + contribution from RNLI & Scouts Total £217.50 agreed at last meeting
- JRB Enterprise Ltd – dispenser bags £194.35 + £38.87 VAT Total £233.22
- Answer 4 U -answering service £14.50+ £2.90 VAT Total £17.40 (direct debit 17/12/23)

**212/23 LITTER BINS**

There had been no progress with the two additional bins which had been requested, as it was proving difficult to contact the Street Cleansing Team at Cumberland Council to check whether they would be able to empty additional bins.

Since the last meeting a letter had been received from a resident about the plan to reinstate the bin outside the Post Office. Councillors understood the concerns raised and accepted that litter was not a significant problem at the moment. However, litter tended to increase during the summer months.

It was RESOLVED to delay reinstating the bin and monitor the litter problem in that area over the next few months. If the problem worsened, the council would review the situation and consider reinstating the bin.

**213/23 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP**

Cllr Linton had provided a written report which was received and noted.

**214/23 PROJECT REPORTS****(a) Community Events**

- The Santa Parade had gone well with lots of families turning out to watch. The sleigh had been accompanied by elves on bicycles and a street collection for the RNLI had raised £205.22. At times the collectors had been ahead of or behind the parade and it was suggested that this could be better co-ordinated next year.
- Cllrs Sim and Taylor reported on discussions that had taken place with Cumberland Council's tourism officers who were keen to organise a 'Light District' event in St Bees over a weekend in March next year. This would be professionally run and would involve a light show at the Priory and would also include the School quadrangle. There would be opportunities for local organisations to participate as vendors. This would be a prestigious event for the village which had been made possible by the links forged with tourism officers as part of the project to extend the station car park and promote the tourism potential of St Bees.

**(b) Beach & Play Area**

Cumberland Council had passed on prices for a new item of equipment as a possible replacement for the dizzy roundabout. However, the items suggested were largely duplications of existing equipment and would be more expensive than repairing the roundabout. Cumberland Council had been asked for a quotation for repairing and reinstating the roundabout.

There had been some flooding at the beach area, apparently caused by a blocked drain in the area where the ice cream van usually stands. This had been reported to Cumberland Council who had agreed to investigate.

**(c) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area**

Cumberland Council had been informed that the Parish Council wished to open discussions about an asset transfer of the land. No response had yet been received.

**(d) Station car park extension/transport hub**

Cllr Taylor explained that the CBR testing had now taken place and the report received. The testing had not revealed any serious cause for concern. The next stage would be to revise the design and update the costings.

**(e) Valley Link Cycle Track**

There was no further progress to report.

**(f) Priory Paddock**

Cllr Bettinson reported that this was a quiet time of year in the garden. The QR code had been updated. Cllr Bettinson confirmed that he was aware of the recent government ban on the propagation of certain types of giant rhubarb but did not believe that this was an issue for the Paddock.

**(g) Interpretation Boards**

The Clerk would ask Works 4 You to instal the new board at the Priory as soon as possible.

**215/23 PLANNING****(a) New applications**

The Planning Advisory Group reported on two new planning applications:-

- Ref 4/23/2366/0F1 Erection of roadside fence with screen hedge planning, installation of oil tank, construction of garden/bike store & screened domestic waste store – Moorleys, Egremont
- Ref 4/23/2367/0L1 Listed building consent for above works – Moorleys, Egremont

It was noted that both applications were retrospective.

It was RESOLVED there were no valid objections to the works but it was regrettable that the opportunity had not been taken to consider greener energy solutions.

Two applications for tree work had been received immediately after the last meeting. Responses had been sent under delegated authority to meet the 21 day deadline.

- Ref 23/2338.TPO Felling of beech tree within the conservation area – Khandella House, High House Rd – no objections
- Ref 4/23/2339/TPO Various works to trees in the conservation area- St Bees Priory – no objections

**(b) Applications approved by Cumberland Council**

4/23/2268/0F1 Alteration & improvements to rear of building – Grindal House

4/23/2267/0L1 Listed building consent for above works – Grindal House

**216/23 FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Hale's written report was received and noted. It was noted that a resident had raised concerns about the state of the path and gates on the footpath from Sea Mill Lane over the railway crossing. It was confirmed that gates/fences alongside the railway were the responsibility of Network Rail and any problems should be reported to Network Rail by phone or online.

**217/23 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

There were no reports on meetings attended.

**218/23 CLERK'S REPORT**

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

**219/23 CORRESPONDENCE**

(a) Cumberland Council was working with the University of Liverpool to carry out a Cumberland Food Insecurity survey to measure the extent to which people in Cumbria struggle to access food- whether for financial or other reasons- and what support services (if any) they use. The survey was open to all households and would run to 21 December. The link had been shared via the Facebook page.

(b) An email had been received from the developers of the Nethertown Rd site to inform stakeholders that Phase 2 of the work was likely to run into December due to delays caused by weather and other issues. Noted

(c) Notice had been received of a road closure of the C4007 Outrigg road due to the dangerous state of the carriageway. The closure would apply when signs were in place from 29 November for 21 days. Noted.

(d) An email had been received from a local resident about an incident of anti-social behaviour involving letting down a tyre and tampering with a petrol cap. The resident had been advised to report the incident to the police.

(e) A number of groups including the Scouts, Over 60s, GNAA, PCC and Friends of the Priory had sent their thanks for the donations agreed at the last meeting. Noted.

(f) Cumbria Police Economic Crime Unit were offering to give talks on Fraud Prevention to town & parish councils. Noted

(g) CALC & CAfS would be hosting a free online forum 'Climate Change & Biodiversity Loss -How Town & Parish Councils can take action' on Thursday 25 January at 7pm. Noted.

**1491**

- (h)Workington Transport Heritage Trust would be operating a free bus service to/from Whitehaven on Boxing Day, picking up and dropping off at the top of the village, by the station and at the beach. The service would be operated by their volunteers. Timetables have been posted on the noticeboards.
- (i)Details had been received from Cumberland Council of food banks/pantries across the area. Noted.
- (j) A resident had provided a copy of a letter sent to the Heritage Planning Officer about the damage being caused to traditional sandstone properties by salt/grit. Noted.
- (k) A letter had been received from the RNLI thanking the council for holding a collection in aid of the RNLI as part of the Santa Parade. Noted.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

- NALC Newsletters & Chief Executive’s Bulletins
- Rural Services Network Newsletters
- Northern Gas Networks Stakeholder Update
- CALC News Sept/Oct
- Cumberland Council newsletters
- Connecting Cumbria Newsletter
- ACT Update December 2023
- Police Newsletter – Cleator Moor, Egremont & Rural
- Police Newsletter – Whitehaven & District

**220/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA**

- (a)The young oak tree was ready to be planted in Beck edge Garden to commemorate the coronation of King Charles earlier this year. Cllr Sim would plant the tree on behalf of the Parish Council and would liaise with Cllr Bettinson to agree a convenient time.
- (b) Cllr Taylor explained that, following the meeting of the Community Rail Partnership in St Bees over the summer, St Bees had been mentioned in a CRP magazine which has a national circulation.
- (c) Cllrs Gilmour and Hale raised concerns about traffic safety on the bends between Barony House and Wood Lane. It was agreed that this should be an item on the next agenda.
- (d) Cllr Argyle pointed out that the noticeboard at top of Sea Mill Lane was letting in water. The Clerk would ask the lengthsman whether it was possible to fit new seals as an alternative to purchasing a new board.

**221/23 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting take place on Monday 15 January 2024 at 6.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....