

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on  
Monday 19 February 2024 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs D Sim (in the Chair), P Argyle, N Bettinson, N Graham, C Hale, A Linton,  
D Millington & the Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllr G Minshaw, Cumberland Councillor- Egremont North, St Bees

Also present: 2 members of the public.

**19/24 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

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

**20/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**21/24 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that the dispensation given to Cllr Millington had been extended as there was still no resolution to the drainage issue affecting properties on Sea Mill Lane.

**22/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 15 JANUARY 2024**

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 15 January 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**23/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public present expressed an interest in the planning application for holiday pods and associated development on Nethertown Rd as well as the ongoing flooding problems on the Outrigg to Egremont road. It was agreed to bring forward the agenda item on the planning application for the development on Nethertown Rd. The flooding issue would be dealt with under Cumberland Council Matters.

**24/24 PLANNING APPLICATION 4/23/2394/0F1 LAND AT NETHERTOWN RD**

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had engaged a planning consultant to review the application and prepare a statement of objection. He had identified a number of grounds for objection and his statement had been sent to Cumberland Council within the deadline for consultation.

Cllr Minshaw reported that he had received a number of objections and had asked for the application to be called in rather than be decided by officers under delegated authority. At this stage it was not known whether the application would go to the Planning Panel. If it were decided by the Panel, only five objectors would be allowed to speak and each would be limited to five minutes. The planning consultant had indicated that he would prepared to attend on behalf of the Parish Council, if required.

**25/24 CUMBERLAND COUNCIL MATTERS**

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

Cllr Minshaw reported that a meeting had taken place to discuss the financing of the project but there was no further information on time scales for the work. It was noted that vehicles were still driving through the flood despite road closure signs being in place. Cllr Minshaw agreed to check with officers whether any other measures could be taken to prevent vehicles driving through the flooded section.

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

Cllr Minshaw reported that officers had undertaken to contact Cllr Millington direct but it appeared that this had not yet happened.

Cllr Millington reported that he and a number of other residents had submitted formal complaints to Cumberland Council about the delays in resolving the issue. Despite receiving an acknowledgement, there had been no substantive response within the deadline specified in the complaints procedure. It was noted that no reply had been received to the complaint submitted by the Parish Council.

If there was no response within the next few days, the residents would consider other options including a letter to the Chief Executive, referral to the Local Government Ombudsman or perhaps press coverage. The deep holes in one of the gardens also presented a safety concern which could be referred to the Health & Safety Executive.

**(c) Traffic Safety – B5345 Barony House – Wood Lane**

Highways officers had responded that it was not good practice to instal mirrors in this kind of situation as it could raise other safety issues and the narrow bend was in itself a traffic calming measure. It was RESOLVED to ask Highways to review the safety issues on this section of the B5345 and suggest possible measures to improve safety.

**(d) Beach Litter Bin**

Over a year ago CBC officers had promised to provide a bird proof bin by the beach café but had said that they were awaiting delivery of a new vehicle able to empty this type of bin. The promised bin had never been provided and the start of the season was now only a few weeks away. Litter strewn around in this prominent area gave visitors a very poor impression of St Bees. It was RESOLVED to contact Cumberland Council to ask for the additional bird proof bin to be provided before the start of the season.

**(e) Road Closure – Pallaflat**

Notification had been received of a closure of the C4008 at Pallaflat from 4 March for two days.

**(f) Collapsed Wall – Abbey Road**

It was reported that the garden wall of two properties on Abbey Road had collapsed during a recent storm and debris was obstructing the highway. It was believed that this was the responsibility of the property owners but it was agreed to contact Highways about the debris obstructing the road.

**26/24 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT**

**(a) Financial Report**

The summary of accounts at 31 January and the notes of the FRAG meeting on 5 February were received and noted. It was noted that the risk register had been reviewed with no amendments required. The group had also reviewed the system of financial controls and was satisfied that they were working well and met the council's requirements.

FRAG had noted that it was good practice to have an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy. Cllr Millington offered to research suitable policies which could be adapted to the council's needs.

It was noted that there was to be a finance course for clerks of councils which were not VAT registered. It was RESOLVED to approve the course fee of £30 for the Clerk's attendance at the course.

**(c) Payments**

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Npower -toilet electricity January £39.22 + £1.96 VAT Total £41.18
- YNH Ltd– renewal of US domain names Total £46.00
- J R Carr – street light repair Total £250.00
- Groves Town Planning – professional fees Total £500.00
- Unipar Services LLP – speed gun recalibration £287.00 + £57.40 VAT Total £344.40
- D Sim – reimbursement for timer Total £12.59
- Cumberland Council – annual & Qtr3 play area inspections £512.65 + £102.53 VAT Total £615.18
- J Donaldson -salary February Total £680.85
- J Donaldson – reimbursement for printer ink charges £8.32 + £1.67 & chain saw £136.14 + £25.83 VAT Total £171.96
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (Feb) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (standing order)

## 1501

The following payments made since the last meeting were noted:

- Water Plus- water/wastewater charges Total £206.22 (direct debit 19/0/24)
- Answer 4 U -answering service £14.50 + £2.90 VAT Total £17.40 (direct debit 17/01/24)

### **27/24 POLICY REVIEWS**

The Health & Safety and Risk Management were due for annual review.

It was RESOLVED that both policies be re- approved without amendment.

### **28/24 COASTAL ART PROJECT**

The Chairman reported that Cumberland Council officers had recently approached the Parish Council about the possibility of siting an art installation in St Bees as part of the ongoing Coastal Art Project. The intention was to create an art trail along the Cumbrian Coast, attracting tourists to visit the coastal area. Parish Councillors who had attended a site meeting earlier in the day outlined the proposals and explained some of their concerns. It was agreed that the particular installation discussed was not appropriate for the site for a number of reasons. The Chairman would pass on the decision to Cumberland Council officers.

### **29/24 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP**

The group had designed a draft questionnaire to seek residents' views on possible environmental projects in the parish and this had been circulated to councillors for comments. Some comments had been received and councillors were asked to forward any other comments to Cllr Linton as soon as possible so that the questionnaire could be finalised. In the past Citizen Space had been used for such questionnaires but the Cumberland Council website no longer provided a link. The alternative would be to trial the questionnaire using Google Forms. Cllr Minshaw offered to provide contact details for the Cumberland Council IT team who might be able to help.

### **30/24 PROJECT REPORTS**

**(a)Community Events** – Tickets were going well for the Light District event in St Bees on 14/15 March. The Chairman had designed a hand-out which it was hoped could be given to those attending to explain more about the Priory and St Bees School.

#### **(b)Beach & Play Area**

Cllr Linton explained the initial ideas for creating a mural at the beach toilets. It was suggested that it could be painted on boards attached to the wall rather than directly on to the rough cast wall. Details had been obtained of an artist who might be able to with the project. It was agreed that preliminary enquiries be made to ascertain the likely costs.

It was noted that the last beach clean had been well attended with 20 people taking part.

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

The Cumberland Council officer dealing with the matter had visited the site and was now consulting colleagues in the Legal Dept before responding to the request for a community asset transfer. The Clerk would investigate what plans were in place for cutting the grass in the play area now that it was no longer regarded as part of the school grounds.

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

Cllr Taylor had met the designer on site to discuss amended designs. His amended designs were awaited.

#### **(e) Valley Link Cycle Track**

There was no further progress to report.

#### **(f) Priory Paddock**

Cllr Bettinson reported that a new QR code was in place explaining what could be seen in the Paddock at this stage in the year. The pollarding had been completed and invasive plants were being removed to keep the open water clean. The strimming of the central area would be taking place in the next few weeks. The first frog spawn had just been seen.

A cordless telescopic chain saw had been purchased with the remaining grant funding to enable some pruning work to be carried out without engaging a specialist contractor.

### **(g) Interpretation Boards**

The Clerk would contact the lengthsman to ask whether the new interpretation board by the Priory could be installed before the Light District event in March.

It was noted that there continued to be problems with dog fouling at Priory Paddock and it was suggested that some signage was required which could perhaps be incorporated into signs already being designed. Dog fouling signs were also required on the gates to the footpath from Nethertown Rd to Sea Mill. Signage for the Beach Road verge would be considered once it was clear if the planting last autumn had been successful.

### **31/24 PLANNING**

#### **(a) New Applications**

The Planning Advisory Group reported on the following applications received for comment:

- Ref 4/24/2022/0B1 Variation of condition 2 to amend the floor & elevation plans for plot 3  
Plot 3 Land to the south of Southrigg, Nethertown Rd

It was RESOLVED to object to the application on the grounds that the application provided insufficient information of the change to the roof elevation.

- Ref 4/24/2046/0F1 Raised patio incorporating wheelchair access (retrospective)  
Seacote Hotel

It was RESOLVED that there were no objections to this application.

- Ref 4/24/2051/0F1 Erection of a new dwelling & associated external works (resubmission)  
Land adj to Stoneycroft, Sea Mill Lane

It was noted that this application had only just been received for comment but many of the concerns raised at the time of the original application remained valid. The Planning Group would review the plans in detail.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to submit a response to Cumberland Council under delegated authority.

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

4/24/2002/TPO Various works to trees within the conservation area– The Priory, St Bees

### **32/24 FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Hale's written report was received and noted. It was hoped to update the paths survey over the coming months and volunteers were needed to help with the task. Cllr Millington offered his help.

### **33/24 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chairman reported on the recent meeting of the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group. Quarterly meetings would now focus alternately on Sellafield and nuclear waste issues. The main topic at the meeting had been the very substantial delay to capping vault 9 at the Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg.

The Chairman had also attended a meeting of the Whitehaven and Coastal Community Panel's Neighbourhood Investment Plan meeting. This had been a constructive meeting, building on the work done over the summer to survey residents' priorities under the main headings of Environment, Health & Well Being, Access to Services and Economy. The next Community Panel meeting would be on 14 March when grants would be awarded.

### **34/24 CLERK'S REPORT**

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

### **35/24 CORRESPONDENCE**

(a) An invitation had been received from Britain Remade to a public meeting on 25 January on the subject of new nuclear in Cumbria. Circulated to councillors by email.

- (b) CALC had forwarded its training programme for the period 1 Jan to 31 July. Noted.
- (c) CALC was inviting applications for a Treasurer/ Board Director of CALC with a closing date of 29 February. Noted.
- (d) Information had been received on the Light District Event in St Bees on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> March. Noted.
- (e) Cumberland Council was organising a number of events and an online survey to seek views from residents about the future of family services. Details had been posted on the noticeboards.
- (f) Helen Sharpe, a former resident of the village, had sent some information about a series of children’s books she is writing set in a fictional village based on St Bees. It was hoped to have a book launch in St Bees at a later date. Noted.
- (g) CALC was seeking nominations for a Chairman/councillor to attend a Royal Garden Party on 8 May. Nominations would be entered into a ballot for the places available. Noted.
- (h) Cumberland Council was seeking applications for community members to join the Community Panel. Noted.
- (i) Cumberland Council had provided copies of the notices to appear in the local press formalising the proposed amendments to various sections of public footpaths following the designation of the Coast to Coast Walk as a national trail. Noted.
- (j) Local Councils had been invited to apply for a free portrait of the King. Noted.
- (k) NALC & the Cabinet Office had produced information to encourage local councils to move to gov.uk domain names. Noted.
- (l) Cumberland Council had launched a 6 week consultation on the main modifications to be made to the publication draft of the Local Plan 2021-38. The consultation would run to 28 March. Noted.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

- NALC Newsletters & Chief Executive’s Bulletins
- Rural Services Network Newsletter & Funding Digest
- Cumberland Council newsletters
- Connecting Cumbria Newsletter
- Police Newsletters (Egremont & Rural and Whitehaven & District) Jan 2024
- ACT Update Jan
- Open Spaces Society Jan update
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner Winter Newsletter

**36/24 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA**

- (a) It was noted that there were two vacant units within Bega Flats but local people had not been able to find out how to apply for a tenancy. It was believed that the flats were managed by Eden Housing and the Clerk would contact them for information on letting arrangements before the next meeting.
- (b) The replastering work on the upstairs rooms at the Village Hall was now complete and the parish council room was ready to be decorated. Volunteers would be needed to paint the room and approval of expenditure would be considered at the next meeting.
- (c) The next beach clean was scheduled for 17 March.

**37/24 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting take place on Monday 18 March 2024 at 6.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....