

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 19 June 2023 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

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

Also present: 3 members of the public.

108/23 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

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

109/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Gilmour & Sim. Cllr Minshaw, Cumberland Councillor, had also sent his apologies due to work commitments.

110/23 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

111/23 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING ON 15 MAY 2023

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the annual meeting on 15 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

112/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public present explained that they were involved with the development on Nethertown Road and wished to speak to the Parish Council about the new applications for reserved matters which were now subject to consultation. They indicated that they would be happy to answer any questions from councillors.

It was RESOLVED to bring forward discussion of this planning application.

113/23 NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS – NETHERTOWN ROAD

Two new applications had been received for comment from Cumberland Council- Ref 4/23/2086/0B1 Variation of conditions & Ref 4/23/2100/0R1 Additional & Amended information relating to access, layout & drainage.

The developer, Mr Morgan, explained that the new applications included a traffic management plan to show how construction traffic would reach the site. Vehicles would not travel through the village but would approach from the southern entrance to the village on the B5345 before turning left into Nethertown Road. Space would be created for vehicles to turn on site but in the short term the cul de sac would be used.

Councillors welcomed the assurance that construction traffic would not travel through the village but were concerned that the plan made no reference to how traffic would be managed on Nethertown Rd. Councillors pointed out that there was no clear line of sight from the site entrance to the junction with the B5345 and the road was too narrow for vehicles to pass, so it was almost inevitable that vehicles would meet head on. This was likely to cause considerable inconvenience to residents. It was also pointed out that the turn into Nethertown Rd from the B5345 was very tight and it would be unsafe for vehicles to reverse back into the B5345 to manoeuvre round the corner. Mr Morgan stated that it would be the responsibility of drivers of construction vehicles to carry out their own risk assessment. Councillors urged the developers to contact the residents of Nethertown Road to listen to their concerns and consider whether measures could be taken to minimise the disruption, perhaps by avoiding peak times or informing residents of traffic movements.

In answer to questions, Mr Morgan confirmed that surface water would be dealt with by soakaways within the site. Foul water would be discharged into the existing United utilities sewer with Plots 1 to 3 being gravity fed and Plots 4 & 5 via a pumped system. Until detailed permission was in place for all the properties it was not possible to give an estimated time scale for work on site. Mr Morgan explained that it was hoped to carry out a readiness review before work began.

It was RESOLVED that a response be sent to the consultation stating that in the Parish Council's view the Traffic Management Plan was inadequate, as it did not include a plan for movements on Nethertown Rd. This raised potential safety issues and the Parish Council did not believe that haulage drivers could make an adequate risk assessment on the spot. The Parish Council believed that a meeting with residents was required and a site meeting should take place with Highways and Planning Officers to discuss the Parish Council's concerns.

114/23 CUMBERLAND COUNCIL MATTERS

Cllr Minshaw's written report on Cumberland Council issues was received. The following points were noted:

- the potholes at the entrance to Station car park and brow of the hill had been repaired.
- the road markings requested at Fleatham Croft and Seacroft Drive were to be included in the next package of work. There was no timescale available at the moment.
- the problem with the pavement by 117 Main St had been reported and was awaiting repair.
- there was no progress yet with the flooding issues on the Outrigg road but Cllr Minshaw was continuing to press for a solution to be found as soon as possible.
- the RNLI was being consulted on new signage for the lifeboat ramp.
- a more extensive camera survey of the drain from Nethertown Rd to Sea Mill Lane had been promised but had not yet taken place. Cllr Millington reported that a deep hole had recently appeared in a neighbour's garden along the line of the drain. Fortunately, this had not caused injury but it had been drawn to the attention of Cumberland Council staff.
- Highways had confirmed that reports of problems with public rights of way could be reported using the online system by clicking on the 'pavements' icon and giving the grid reference. Cllr Hale had experienced problems with this and would take up the matter directly with Cllr Minshaw.
- the Whitehaven & Coastal Community Panel had held its first meeting and Cllr Minshaw had been elected as Chairman.

It was noted residents had raised concerns about traffic safety on the B5345 at the northern entrance to the village where the road was still narrowed by cones around the damaged gully. The Clerk had contacted Highways to ask for better signage at the location and the removal of the redundant 'mud on road' sign.

The poor state of the groynes at the main beach was also noted. The Clerk would contact the Coastal Defence Officer at Cumberland Council to ask for an update on the consultant's report which was commissioned some time ago.

It was reported that the hedge by 2 Flatt House was obstructing the pavement forcing pedestrians to walk into the road. The Clerk would report this to Highways.

Cumberland Council had also asked for the Parish Council's comments on two requests received from businesses wishing to trade at the main beach over the summer months:-

- Request to site hot dog/candy floss/sundries stall
It was RESOLVED to oppose the request on the grounds that it would increase the litter & sea gull problems and would also be inappropriate at a time when there were high levels of obesity and dental decay in the area.
- Request to operate a paddle board hire business at the main beach
Limited information was available on the details of how the hire business would operate. Concerns were expressed about potential safety issues as there is no lifeguard service at the beach.
It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council could not support the request on the basis of the information available.

115/23 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Financial Report

The summary of accounts at 31 May was received and noted. The query on the invoice for play area repairs had been resolved and a credit note had been received for part of the sum. The payment had now been made. The AGAR and supporting paperwork had been sent to the external auditor.

(b) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Works 4 You – grass cutting April & May £1034.44 + £206.88 Total £1241.32
- Solway Direct – commemorative seat £350.00 + £70.00 VAT Total £420.00
- Open Spaces Society- annual membership subscription Total £45.00
- J Donaldson -salary June Total £692.29
- J Donaldson – reimbursement for printer ink charges £8.32 + £1.67 VAT, stamps £6.00, Land Registry search £3.00 Total £18.99
- HMRC – PAYE Qtr 1 Total £533.86
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (June) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (standing order)

Payments made since last meeting were noted:

- Cumberland Council -play area repairs £1965.11 + £393.02 Total £2358.13
- K Nesbitt – water butts (VIB) Total £120.23 + £12.05 VAT Total 132.28
- D Robinson – compost/plants (VIB) £92.78 + £ 18.56 VAT £111.34 (chq 2939)
- 2 Minute Foundation – postage costs (replacement dispenser nozzle) Total £3.00
- Water Plus – allotment water Total £110.62 (direct debit 10/06/23)
- Npower – toilet electricity £32.38 + £1.62 VAT Total £34.00 (direct debit 19/06/23)
- Water Plus- water/wastewater to toilets Total £175.03 (direct debit 1/06/23)
- Answer 4-U -answering service £13.88 + £2.78 Total £16.66 (direct debit 17/06/23)

116/23 VILLAGE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS**Cllr Mellor declared that he was a member of the Governing Body of the Village School**

The Headteacher had been invited to the Parish Council meeting but had replied that the report from the safeguarding survey had not yet been received, so at this stage there was nothing new to discuss. It was agreed to invite the Head to come to a Parish Council once plans were clearer. The question of the ongoing maintenance of the path from the Crofts was raised. Cllr Mellor agreed to raise this at the next Governors' meeting and pass on the Parish Council's willingness to discuss maintenance arrangements.

117/23 LENGTHSMAN SCHEME

This financial year was the final year of the three year lengthsmen contract. The small surplus from previous years would be used to keep contributions at the same level as last year. The contribution from St Bees PC would be £2000.

Attention was now turning to arrangements beyond 31 March 2024. The general feeling of other parishes was that a lengthsmen scheme was useful and worth retaining. It had been suggested that this was an opportunity to review what parishes wanted from the scheme and parish representatives would be meeting on 30 June to begin discussions.

It was RESOLVED that the contribution of £2000 for 2023/24 be approved.

It was further RESOLVED that Cllr Taylor and the Clerk represent the council at the meeting on 30 June.

118/23 SELLAFIELD PARKING

A letter had been received from Egremont Town Council seeking support for a joint approach to Sellafield Ltd to tackle problems of inconsiderate parking by SL staff on residential streets in local towns and villages. It was noted that this had been a problem in St Bees previously but seemed to have been less so recently, perhaps due to changes in working patterns since Covid and the increasing availability of park and ride services.

It was RESOLVED to support Egremont Town Council in any joint action which was organised.

119/23 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

Cllr Linton had provided a written report on work of the Climate Change Group. A number of initiatives were being considered including planting a community orchard. The Pinfold was one of the sites being considered. As this was registered common land, permissions would be required for any type of development. The Clerk would investigate the process required.

120/23 PROJECT REPORTS**(a) Community Events**

The commemorative seat for Priory Paddock had now been ordered and would be delivered to Works 4 You Ltd who would store it until it could be installed.

Information had been received about nationwide celebrations of the 80th anniversary of D-Day in June 2024. It was agreed that councillors would consider whether to take part.

(b) Beach & Play Area

Some of the render on the external wall of the toilets had come loose. A contractor had been found who had agreed to give an estimate for the work.

It was reported that the timber at the north end of Gutterfoot bridge was rotting. The Clerk would report this to Cumberland Council.

Last year the Parish Council had joined the contract let by CBC for the annual inspection of play areas. This had worked well and the reports provided had been comprehensive. Cumberland Council would be letting a similar contract this year which the Parish Council could join.

It was RESOLVED to join the Cumberland Council contract for annual play area inspections.

(c) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area

There was no progress to report.

(d) Station car park extension/transport hub

Representatives of Network Rail would be visiting St Bees on 3 July and the meeting would also include representatives of Cumberland Council and Community Rail Partnership. Tom Milburn had offered to provide a meeting room and refreshments at the Seacote Hotel.

(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 at the Paddock including repairs to the gate and updating the QR code. Cllr Linton had helped to source compost bins. The gate post was in need of replacement and the Clerk had contacted a local contractor to provide a price for the work. The Open Day had been well attended and there had been numerous visitors to the site from this county and abroad.

(g) Interpretation Boards

The designs had been finalised for the updated village maps, Fairladies car park sign, Priory Paddock finger post and two interpretation boards for Priory Paddock. A quotation was awaited for their manufacture. It was noted that expenditure on the Fairladies car park sign and finger post had already been approved.

It was RESOLVED that expenditure of £800 be approved for the signs, supports and delivery costs.

121/23 PLANNING**(a) New applications**

The two applications for Nethertown Rd had been considered earlier in the meeting. The Planning Advisory Group reported on three other applications:

- Ref 4/23/2140/0F1 Alterations to form en-suite bathroom within main house, reinstatement of cottage as annex, including increased height of ground floor store, new window opening & proposed access ramp
Ghyll Farm, Egremont

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

- Ref 4/23/2141/0L1 Listed building consent for above works
Ghyll Farm, Egremont

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

- Ref 4/23/2150/0F1 Alterations & two storey extension for enlarged kitchen and new en-suite bathroom
13 Abbots Way, St Bees

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

(b) Other Planning Matters

- The application for three dwellings adjacent to School House with access from the B5345 had now been approved but with a number of conditions.
- No decision had yet been made on application ref 4/22/2407/0F1- The Knoll, High House Road.
- The public examination of the Local Plan had been concluded. The Inspector had identified various issues which need to be addressed before the Plan was finally approved. There would be a further consultation later in the year on the Main Modifications.

122/23 FOOTPATHS

Cllr Hale reported on a number of footpath issues. There had been no progress with the request to Cumberland Council for a new kissing gate on Wood Lane. The Clerk would follow this up. The Scalebarrow to Rottington path was difficult to walk as crops had been planted over the footpath. The sign near St Bees Common had disappeared. The gate to the footpath on Nethertown Road was not opening/closing properly.

123/23 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Mellor reported that interviews for the post of Headteacher at the Village School were scheduled to take place on 11/12 July with the successful applicant taking up the post in January 2024.

124/23 CLERK'S REPORT

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

125/23 CORRESPONDENCE

(a)Cumberland Council was consulting on its Statement of Licensing Policy and Statement of Gambling Policy. The consultation would end on 11 July. Noted

(b)An email had been received from a local resident about the possible culling of deer in Abbey Wood. The resident had not objected to the principle of culling as a means of controlling numbers and preventing damage to trees but had questioned the timing of any proposed cull. The concerns had been forwarded to the Land Agent and his response had been passed on to the resident. Noted

(c)The government's Community Ownership Fund had been extended to include local councils interested in taking over facilities such as village shops or pubs which would otherwise be lost. Noted.

(d)Correspondence had received from a person interested in renting the toilet block as a storage facility for a proposed paddleboarding school & hire business. The correspondent had not been aware that the toilets were in use. Noted.

(e)CALC had forwarded information on the BBC's search for budding new designers (aged 10 to 14) to take part in a CBBC Sustainable Fashion Show. Noted.

(f)ACT had forwarded a link to a survey on Transport Options. The survey was seeking views on transport in the Lake District and people's appetite for change. The survey would close in late June, Noted.

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

(h)Northern Gas Stakeholders Group had organised an online workshop on 13 June to shape how the energy sector could reach digitally excluded customers in power outages after the VoIP landline transition. Noted.

(i)NALC was seeking case studies from councils with experience of various aspects of the planning system to help share good practice and raise awareness of what local councils can do. Noted.

(j) Cumbria Community Resilience Group had provided information on various sources of advice on summer safety. Noted.

(k) Details had been received of an online Open Challenge Session with United Utilities on 23 June. Noted.

(l) CALC had circulated details of the rescheduled Special General Meeting which would take place on Sat 22 July. Noted.

(m) The Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner was inviting applications from volunteers to join the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme. Noted.

(n) An invitation had been received to the launch of the Cumbria People & Nature Network hosted by Natural England on 13 July. Noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

NALC Newsletter & Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins

Rural Services Network – weekly bulletin

Cumbria Police update May

Open Spaces Society April Update

Connecting Cumbria Newsletter

ACT Newsletter May

CALC News April/May

NW Coastal Access update

Cumbria Local Authority Climate update May

126/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA

(a)The next beach clean would take place on Saturday 15 July at 2.30pm.

(b)There had been some damage to the Tommy silhouette near the war memorial. Cllr Bettinson agreed to look at whether it could be repaired.

(c) The foul water sewer which crosses under Pow Beck had surcharged into the field during heavy rain. United Utilities had been made aware of the problem.

127/23 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council Meeting take place on Monday 17 July 2023 at 6.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....