

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 19 October 2020 at 6.30pm via Cisco Webex**

PRESENT: Cllr D Sim (in the Chair), P Argyle, N Bettinson, G Gilmour, C Hale, A Kaldos,
F Kennedy, A Linton, J Mellor, H Monaghan, D Millington, D Rothery, E Taylor & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr C Whiteside, County Councillor - Egremont North/St Bees
Cllr J Hailes, CBC Ward Councillor

Also present: One member of the public

112/20 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the protocol for speaking and voting during the meeting.

113/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr C Robson

114/20 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this stage of the meeting.

115/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public raised the issue of anti-social behaviour, particularly associated with large groups of young teenagers gathering around the wooden pagoda in the grounds of the Village School in the evenings and at weekends. There had been damage to property and objects had been thrown, creating noise and nuisance to those living nearby. Residents who had attempted to speak to the youngsters had received abuse. The incidents had been reported to the police but they were not able to attend on every occasion. It was known that there had been vandalism at Lonsdale Terrace recently and it was believed that security was now being increased. There had also been damage to the phone box at the beach and some minor incidents at Priory Paddock. After publicity on social media some youngsters had come forward and apologised for their behaviour but the problems were still continuing.

The Chairman pointed out that it was important that local residents reported all incidents to the police so that they had a full picture of the situation. The Clerk would also contact the local PCSO to request additional patrols to tackle the problem. Cllr Kennedy agreed to contact the Village School about the issues raised.

116/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 21 September be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

117/20 COUNTY COUNCIL & HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Whiteside provided a report on the following issues:

- The amended planning application from West Cumbria Mining had been approved by the County Council's Development Panel. Work could not start until notice of the decision had been sent to central government but he was hopeful that the project would now move ahead. There had been changes to the Sec 106 agreement following discussions with landowners which have an impact on plans for the proposed St Bees – Whitehaven cycle track.
- There was no progress with improvements to the Fleatham Croft/High House Rd junction. The Highways Area Network Manager was following this up with the officer dealing with the project.
- It was expected that the enhanced gateway features would be installed shortly on the B5345 at the northern entrance to the village.
- The possible extension of the pavement on Outrigg had been raised at the Highways Working Group. The Highways Manager would set up a meeting with Parish Council representatives to discuss the project.

- Following a number of complaints about inconsiderate/dangerous parking around the village school Cllr Whiteside had requested more visits from Enforcement Officers.
- It was still hoped that resurfacing of the B5345 from the level crossing to the Priory would take place in October.

It was noted that a number of complaints had been received about the issue of parking around the Seacroft Drive junction particularly at the start and end of the school day. The junction was often obstructed by vehicles, inconveniencing residents and making it difficult for larger vehicles to turn in. Work to extend the double yellow lines at the junction had still not been completed, apparently because of parked vehicles. Councillors offered to help by putting out cones to prevent parking the day before the work was to take place. Cllr Whiteside agreed to take this matter up with Highways officers.

118/20 COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS

Cllr Hailes provided a report on the following issues:

- CBC staff had been asked to deal with the lamp post at the beach area which was leaning at an apparently dangerous angle. It was noted that it had not been working for some time.
- Cllr Hailes had asked for repairs to be carried out urgently on the interpretation board by the beach café. Cllr Sim reported that the board had become completely detached and he had removed it for safekeeping until CBC were able to repair it.
- The public telephone was now back in operation.
- He was continuing to discuss with CBC officers whether a further discount could be given on the new charges for emptying litter bins. He would also discuss with officers the removal of some bins at the beach area which seemed to have taken place earlier than usual this year.
- He was in discussions with CBC officers about the removal of the old heras fencing which had been left in place after work took place at Rottington Beck some years ago.

Councillors asked whether action could be taken to repair or remove the damaged lighting column in the beach car park. Local residents had previously expressed the view that lighting in the beach car park encouraged anti-social behaviour and supported removal of the lights. It was also noted that on two recent occasions local residents had reported faults with two lights via the CCC website and had received responses asking them to contact CBC direct. One light by the Post Office lights was in an area which had heavy footfall and an uneven pavement. Cllr Hailes agreed to follow this up with CBC officers.

There had also been further correspondence from CBC about the transfer of responsibility for footway lights to parish councils. They were asking that the parish council take responsibility for 5 lights in total but the locations were not clear and further clarification had been sought. CBC had indicated that they were negotiating with CCC to take over responsibility for the other 50 lights but it was not clear at this stage whether that would be successful.

119/20 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Financial Report & Risk Review

The account summary at 30 September was received together with the variance report for Quarter 2. At the half year point income was very slightly under budget and overall expenditure remained under budget. The budgets for Asset Maintenance and Fees/Subscriptions were slightly over budget and FRAG were keeping the position under review.

Preparation of the budget for 2021/22 would need to begin shortly. Suggestions for inclusion in the budget should be sent to the Clerk by mid-October.

The risk register was reviewed. It was noted that new risk assessments would be required for activities such as Remembrance Day and any Christmas event.

(b) External Audit

It was noted that the external audit had been completed. An unqualified opinion had been given with no matters drawn to the council's attention. The notice had been posted on the web-site and also on the main noticeboard.

(c) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002681 Works 4 You Ltd – grasscutting Sept £390.86 + £78.17 VAT Total £469.03
- Chq 002682 CBC – play area inspections Qtr 3 £336.00 + £67.20 VAT Total £403.20
- Chq 002683 Npower -electricity to beach toilets £27.16 + £1.36 VAT Total £28.52
- Chq 002684 YNH Ltd – renewal fees for hosting bega.dev.co.uk Total £29.95
- Chq 002685 CALC – course fee Total £20.00
- Chq 002686 PKF Littlejohn LLP – external audit fee £200.00 + £40.00 VAT Total £240.00
- Chq 002687 Real Christmas Trees – Norway spruce £350.00 + £70.00 VAT Total £420.00
- Chq 002688 CBC – play area repairs/equipment installation £2130.54 + £426.11 Total £2556.65
- Chq 002689 + 002690 J Donaldson – printer ink service Sept £6.66 + £1.33 VAT, monthly Webex costs £12.50 + £2.50 VAT & salary Oct £549.52 Total £572.51
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd -toilet service £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (to be paid by SO)

The following payments made since last meeting were noted:

Answer 4-U – answering service (Oct) £9.99+ £2.00 VAT Total £11.99 (paid by DD)

Chq 002678 B & C Atkinson Ltd – repairs to office/Wainwright wall £2522.00 + £504.40
Total £3026.40

Chq 002679 A Robinson – batteries for speed gun £4.17 + £0.83 VAT Total £5.00

Chq 002680 YNH Ltd – transfer of ownership/domain name renewal £23.00

120/20 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION & CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The consultation period on the draft Local Plan was now under way. The link to the documents had been circulated and the Chairman had circulated information on the sections relevant to St Bees. A virtual meeting had been arranged between the Planning Advisory Group and CBC officers on 29 October and an extension to the deadline was being sought to enable the Parish Council to agree its response at the Parish Council meeting on 16 November,

The draft Plan included an extension of the settlement boundary to include two sites behind Abbey Road. Councillors pointed out that there would need to be improvements to infrastructure to support any development as there are already issues with drainage, electricity and traffic. It was also noted that the Plan did not include any mention of the proposed cycle track and it was important that this was included to ensure it featured in CCC's Local Traffic Plan.

The Clerk would put a note in the parish magazine encouraging residents to take part in the consultation.

CBC was also undertaking an appraisal of the four conservation areas in the borough, including St Bees. The draft consultation document would be published on the CBC web-site on 23 November and public consultation would run until 18 December. CBC planned to hold a virtual public meeting on 15 January to discuss the outcome of the consultation exercise. Anyone wishing to take part would need to contact Samuel.woodford@copeland.gov.uk to obtain details of how to join the meeting.

121/20 PARKING ISSUES

The Working Group set up to consider options following the outline planning consent for Outrigg Yard had produced a report for the meeting. The report included four recommendations:

1. Consider other areas within St Bees civil parish that the parish council believe should be classified as an asset of community value.
2. St Bees Parish Council does not have the finance or the expertise to take on a project of this nature, and will not continue with any plans to acquire the Outrigg Yard site. The burden of borrowing would be too great for the council and community.
3. Determine whether there is the desire within the community to establish a social enterprise business to construct a viable business case for the purchase and running of Outrigg yard.
4. Consider other initiatives which could reduce the number of cars within St Bees, in an attempt to compensate for the development of Outrigg yard, should it take place.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Working Group for their report.

It was RESOLVED that the recommendations be accepted and that the decision to take no further action to acquire the land at Outrigg Yard be communicated to the owners of the site and publicised through the parish magazine.

The next stage was to consider how best to take forward those recommendations which required further work. In the past the Traffic Calming Committee had dealt with some specific parking issues and a decision was needed on whether the Working Group should continue as a separate group or whether its work could fall within the remit of the Traffic Calming Committee. It was agreed that Cllr Millington as Chairman of the Traffic Calming Committee would discuss with the Working Group before the next meeting how best to take the recommendations forward. Cllr Hale asked whether the proposed parking survey could still take place. It was agreed that this was a matter for discussion by the Working Group.

122/20 ASSET MAINTENANCE

(a) Play areas

Cllrs Gilmour & Kaldos had set up a system for monthly monitoring of inspection reports to pick up trends and developing issues. At present the council was reacting to issues as they arise and it was suggested that a programme of planned preventative maintenance would be beneficial. One of the swings at the Outrigg area had been taken out of use and a decision was going to be needed on whether to carry out a further repair or whether to look at the possibility of a more extensive upgrade of the equipment. Two companies had been invited to look at the site and offer advice.

(b) Sea Mill Car Park

It was reported that water was leaking out of a broken drain under Sea Mill car park. There had been a temporary repair carried out by CBC/Network Rail some time ago but the problem had recurred and appeared to be getting worse. It was suggested that the drain might have been damaged by heavy machinery during the work to improve the coastal defences in recent months.

Cllr Millington agreed to contact CBC/Network Rail in the first instance to ask for their help/advice.

(c) Other Maintenance Issues

It was reported that the gate and gate posts at the entrance to the small field adjacent to Beck Edge Garden were in a poor state of repair. The Clerk would obtain estimates for the work required.

123/20 FOOTPATHS

It was reported that there was a significant problem with dog fouling on the footpath from Blythe Place to the railway. It was suggested that a bin was needed in that area. The policy of CBC was to install new bins only where the Parish Council agreed to fund the cost of the bin and the on-going cost of emptying the bin. It was suggested that a bin might be relocated from the play area at the main beach. Cllr Millington agreed to check whether it would be feasible to move a bin from another location.

Councillors welcomed the initiative by Cllr Linton and the Litter Champions to put up posters around the village asking people to clean up after their dogs. The notices had attracted attention and it was hoped that it would result in an improvement in the situation.

124/20 PROJECT REPORTS

(a) Beach Regeneration & Play Area

The work to repoint the Wainwright wall had been completed and arrangements were in hand to paint the anchor and mount it on the wall.

Cllrs Linton & Sim had met to look at possible locations for siting adult fitness equipment at the beach and had identified an area near the lifeboat station which was at a suitable distance from the children's play equipment. Cllr Linton had also obtained prices for additional pieces of equipment.

It was RESOLVED to proceed with plans for the project and to look at possible sources of funding.

(b) Traffic Calming/Speedwatch

It was noted that Speedwatch sessions would shortly be suspended until the spring. New volunteers would be welcome to join the rota when the sessions restarted.

(c) Community Events**(i) Remembrance Sunday**

It was planned to have a scaled-down ceremony this year. Wreaths would still be laid at the war memorial by the Station Rd junction but numbers attending would be limited and social distancing would be maintained. Each of the groups who traditionally lay wreaths would be able to do so but would be asked to limit the numbers attending. Those laying wreaths would meet at the entrance to Station car park at 10.15am. There would be no service at the Priory this year so groups would disband after the wreath laying ceremony.

It was proposed that the Parish Council should purchase two 'Silent Soldier' silhouettes to be erected at the two main entrances to the village.

It was RESOLVED to purchase two silhouettes at a total cost of £250 + delivery.

(ii) Christmas

Nuvia had very generously agreed to provide sponsorship for the Village Christmas tree this year. The tree was on order and would be delivered in mid-November. The current Covid restrictions meant that it was unlikely to be possible to hold the Santa Parade and switch on of the Christmas tree lights in the usual way this year. It was agreed to look at how some form of event could take place without encouraging a large gathering. Cllr Kaldos would be happy to receive ideas and suggestions and he would liaise with the Village School Association.

(d) Station Car Park Extension

Cllr Taylor explained that he had received a positive response from Sellafield Ltd who had agreed to support the project if other partners were also prepared to be involved. Discussions would now take place with the Community Rail Partnership.

(e) Cycle Track

A virtual meeting had taken place between Parish Council representatives and CCC officers. It had been a very helpful meeting and CCC officers were supportive of the project. It was now important to ensure that the project was included in the Copeland Local Plan. Landowner issues associated with the mine access road would impact on the planned route and further work would be needed to find the most suitable route.

(f) Village in Bloom Base

The VIB group had provided the supplier with a detailed specification and it was expected that delivery would be early in 2021.

(g) Tree Planting & Priory Paddock Project

Cllr Bettinson had attended a site meeting at Beck Edge with the lengthsmen and colleagues from Works 4 You to agree a maintenance schedule for various trees.

There had been no further progress to report on the pond project but it was noted that there had been a few minor incidents of vandalism in Priory Paddock.

(h) Office Improvements

The new windows had been fitted and the plaster repaired. It was suggested that the room now needed to be cleared of items which were no longer required. Cllrs Sim and Bettinson agreed to identify what could be disposed of and a number of councillors volunteered to help with clearing the room with appropriate Covid 19 precautions in place.

125/20 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman reported on the recent Three Tier meeting where there had been discussion of CBC's plans to withdraw funding for footway lights and transfer responsibility for the costs to CCC and parish councils. Proposals for changes in the structure of local government had also been discussed. The Chairman had joined a recent meeting of the CALC Executive Committee where members had shown great interest in St Bees Radio and the way in which the Parish Council was able to use it for podcasts highlighting local issues.

126/20 PLANNING

(a) New Planning Applications

The Planning Advisory Group reported on three recent planning applications:

4/20/2319/OL1 Conversion of part of garage into porch for main house and external alterations to enlarge existing door and change an existing door into a window

The Retreat, High House Rd, St Bees

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

4/20/2376/TPO Felling of three sycamore trees within the conservation area

Highcroft House, High House Rd, St Bees

It was noted that it was the policy of the Parish Council to support tree work only where it was necessary for the health of the tree or to protect the safety of people or property. In this case the trees did not appear to be diseased but it was noted that the specialist report included with the application stated that the work was required for the health of neighbouring trees.

It was RESOLVED to ask CBC to take specialist advice to confirm the need for the work and to ensure that any trees lost were replaced with suitable trees.

4/20/2402/TPO Felling of two oak trees and limb removal on another oak tree protected by Tree

Preservation Order

3 Fleatham Gardens, High House Rd, St Bees

It was noted that the application gave little detail of the reason for the proposed work and there was no specialist report to accompany the application. This was the latest in a series of requests for tree work around this location since the properties were built despite the trees being protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

It was RESOLVED to submit strong objections to this application.

(b) Applications dealt with under delegated authority

It was noted that two applications had been received shortly after the last meeting where comments had been submitted under delegated authority to meet the consultation deadline:

4/20/2356/TPO Crown reduction of a sycamore and felling of a beech tree within the conservation area

115 Main Street, St Bees

Comment submitted: No objection

4/20/2357/PIP Application in principle for three dwellings

Land adjacent to School House & B5345

Comment submitted: The Parish Council has serious concerns about the proposed access/egress on to the B5345 at this location which is close to the start of the 30mph limit and almost opposite the entrance to Abbey Vale. There are already safety concerns due to the speed of traffic entering and leaving the village and Cumbria Highways has plans in place for further speed reduction measures. An increase in vehicle movements from new properties and parking of delivery vans, refuse vehicles etc would increase safety concerns.

(c) Decisions by CBC

It was noted that there had been no decisions affecting the parish since last meeting.

127/20 CLERK'S REPORT

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

128/20 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) An email had been received from a visitor to St Bees who was unhappy with the amount of litter on the beach and wanted to see more beach cleaning. A reply had been sent by the Clerk.

(b) A copy had been received of a letter from a local resident to Cllr Whiteside re parking on Seacroft Drive which had prevented emergency vehicles getting through. Noted.

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- (c) An email had been received from a resident enclosing photographs of inconsiderate parking around the school entrance on Outrigg at school start and finish times. Copies had been passed on to Cllr Whiteside and Cumbria Highways. Noted.
- (d) An email had been received from a local resident about the difficulty in opening the gate between the hockey field and Dandy Walk. A similar letter had also been received from a resident of Thornhill. Replies had been sent explaining the plans for a kissing gate.
- (f) CALC had provided an update on online courses available including some provided by third parties. Noted
- (g) CBC had forwarded the report on the recent Housing Needs Survey which would provide useful information in producing a community or neighbourhood plan. Noted
- (h) The Environment Agency had provided an update on the review of Sellafield Ltd's Radioactive Substances Activities permit. Cllr Gilmour explained that the review followed the change from reprocessing to decommissioning and had been delayed by the Covid situation. Noted.
- (i) Email correspondence had been received from a local resident about increased congestion on Seacroft Drive at school times. A reply had been sent and copies of the email and reply forwarded to CCC.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- NALC Chief Executive's Weekly Bulletins
- NALC Coronavirus Updates
- Copeland Matters
- Action for Health & Mental Health Provider Bulletin
- Cumbria Arts & Culture Network Newsletter
- Cumbria Police -weekly Covid-19 updates
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins
- Cumbria Tourism Update

129/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no matters raised.

130/20 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting would take place on MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2020 at 6.30pm via Cisco Webex.

Signed.....

Date.....