

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 19 December 2022 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

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

In attendance: Cllr G Minshaw, Shadow Cumberland Council

Also present: 3 members of the public.

198/22 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

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

199/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Argyle, Gilmour, Kaldos, Monaghan & Robson. Apologies were also received from Cllrs Hailes who was ill and Cllr Whiteside who had family commitments.

200/22 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that Cllr Sim had a pecuniary interest in the setting of allotment rents as part of the budget for 2023-26 as his wife was an allotment holder. He had been given a dispensation to allow him to take part in the discussion as his interest was deemed to be minimal.

201/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public expressed an interest in the planning application for land adj to Fleatham Farm and one was interested in the discussion on climate change.

It was RESOLVED to bring forward the Planning item and to take comments during discussion of the application.

202/22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022

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

203/22 PLANNING

(a) New Applications

The Planning Advisory Group reported on the following recent planning applications:

- (i) Ref 4/22/2465/001 Outline application (with all matters reserved) for 2 dwellings
Land at Fleatham Farm, High House Road, St Bees

There were a number of concerns about this outline application. New dwellings would put additional demands on the drains and sewers in this area which are already under strain. There would also be issues of overlooking nearby properties. The new development would be accessed from High House Rd where there are ongoing concerns about parking. There is limited visibility for vehicles turning out into High House Road from Fleatham Croft and the proposed development would lead to more vehicles using this junction. The plans showed a turning area for vehicles which left open the possibility of further development despite the fact that this land was not allocated for development in the Local Plan. The Design & Access Statement referred to a proposed diversion of the historic public right of way but it was not clear why this was necessary or what purpose it would serve.

The Chairman invited members of the public to explain their concerns. They concurred with the points already made and pointed out that the new dwellings would be outside the settlement boundary and close to the conservation area. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had argued against similar proposed developments outside the settlement boundary but the old Local Plan was deemed to be out of date and could be given only limited weight. The new Local Plan was still not fully approved but was now at the stage of Public Examination.

It was RESOLVED to object to the application on the grounds stated above.

(ii) Ref 4/22/2543/0F1 Modifications to conservatory
Bell House, Sandwith

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

(b) Applications approved by CBC

There had been no decisions published since the last meeting.

(c) Other Planning Matters

Concerns were raised about the proposals for entrance gates to be installed as part of the redevelopment of the former school buildings at Lonsdale Terrace. It was felt that this was out of character with the traditional buildings in the village and would be socially divisive. The Clerk would contact CBC to check the position with this aspect of the work.

204/22 CCC & HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Cllr Whiteside had provided a short report on several on-going matters:

- Highways officers were talking to the landowner to find a solution to the flooding on the Outrigg road.
- As approval of the new mine had been announced, CCC officers were working to establish what funding might be available for the proposed cycle track.
- CCC officers were awaiting the results of the consultation with residents about the signage at Sea Mill Lane and would then amend their plans accordingly.

County Council officers had approached the Parish Council about an application for grant funding from the Adams Recreation Ground Committee for a scheme to improve accessibility and to provide interpretation boards and seats. The Local Committee was supportive of the project but, as the Adams Ground Committee was not VAT registered, the costs were quite high. If the scheme were to be undertaken by the Parish Council, the costs would be reduced.

Councillors were supportive of the proposed development but felt that they had insufficient information about the project to make an informed decision on any risks to the Parish Council in taking on responsibility for the project.

It was RESOLVED to invite a representative from the Adams Ground Committee to the January meeting for more detailed discussions.

205/22 COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS

Cllr Hailes had provided a report on the following matters:

- The street lights reported at the last meeting had all been repaired.
- The police would be holding a Talk & Tidy event in St Bees on 20 December.

It was noted that Pat Graham had stepped down as CEO of CBC due to ill health and Steven Brown had been appointed as Interim CEO until March.

206/22 SHADOW CUMBERLAND COUNCIL

Cllr Minshaw provided an update on progress with local government reorganisation. It had been agreed that there would continue to be offices across the area, including Whitehaven & Millom. The Shadow Cumberland Council had been focussing on its internal arrangements to ensure that the council was ready to take over provision of services on 1 April. Discussions had now begun with members on how the new council could work with local communities. At this stage it was proposed that there would be a number of local panels with delegated powers across the council's area which would meet quarterly. There was likely to be one panel serving Whitehaven and neighbouring parishes (including St Bees) and another for Egremont and parishes to the south. The proposal was for one Planning Panel to cover the whole area which was likely to mean more decisions delegated to officers and greater reliance on online meetings.

Councillors felt that it would be more appropriate for St Bees to be included in the area of the panel serving Egremont and the south, as it had more in common with the rural parishes than with the urban area of Whitehaven. It was also agreed that panel meetings should be held more frequently, perhaps on a two monthly basis.

207/FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT**(a) Financial Report**

The summary of the accounts at 30 November 2022 was received and noted. The change to the bank mandate would be made shortly as the first step towards transferring to an online account.

The total received to date from the donation boxes at the beach toilets was £399.82.

(b) Budget 2023-2026

A draft three year budget had been prepared. It was noted that there remained a number of uncertainties about election costs, the policy of the new Cumberland Council on litter bin charges etc. The draft budget for 2023/4 was based on allotment rents remaining unchanged, as they were raised last year. As household budgets were under pressure, the budget proposed only a modest rise in the precept. There were no figures available for the current council tax base but it was likely that the rise in the precept would amount to an increase of approximately 5p per week on a Band D property.

It was RESOLVED that

- Allotment/grazing rents remain unchanged
- The draft budget be approved
- The precept for 2023/24 be set at £54000

(c) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002915 CBC – annual play area inspections £127.06 + £25.41 VAT Total £152.47
- Chq 002916 Community Heartbeat Trust (Solutions) Ltd– defibrillator pads £124.00 + £24.80 VAT Total £148.80
- Chq 002917 CALC – course fees Total £70.00
- Chq 002918 J Donaldson– salary Total £625.09
- Chq 002919 J Donaldson domain name renewal £211.00, Webex costs £12.50 + £2.50 VAT, printer ink £8.32 + £1.67 VAT, stamps £5.44 Total £241.43
- Chq 002920 HMRC – PAYE Qtr 3 Total £856.34
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (Dec) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00

The payments made since last meeting were noted:

- Water Plus water/wastewater toilets Total £135.81 (direct debit 2/12/22)
- Answer 4-U -answering service £11.50 + £2.30 Total £13.80 (direct debit 17/12/22)
- Chq 002905 Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal – donation £150.00
- Chq 002906 St Bees Priory PCC -donation to parish mag costs £1200.00
- Chq 002907 Village Hall Committee – donation £750.00
- Chq 002908 D Robinson -donation to Vicarage Community Garden £60.00
- Chq 002909 St Bees Over 60's Club – donation £125.00
- Chq 002910 Great North Air Ambulance – donation £125.00
- Chq 002911 Citizens Advice Copeland – donation £125.00
- Chq 002912 Furness Line Action Group – subscription/donation £50.00
- Chq 002913 Friends of the Priory – subscription/donation £50.00
- Chq 002914 Petty cash top-up -£136.91

208/22 CLIMATE CHANGE

Cllr Linton had circulated information from the recent Carbon Literacy course and explained her proposal to set up a Climate Change Working Group made up of parish council representatives, local organisations and businesses to look at initiatives that could be taken at a local level. Guidance from NALC and CALC supported the establishment of local groups which could also share good practice. It was noted that there was already interest from several local individuals and groups. Recommendations from the group would be reported to the Parish Council.

It was RESOLVED to establish a Climate Change Working Group led by Cllr Linton.

209/22 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Neighbourhood Policing Team held another drop-in session on 24 November. It had been suggested that an evening session might be more convenient for some residents and the police had been asked to consider this. There had been fewer incidents recently, although the police had been made aware of some ongoing issues.

210/22 PROJECT REPORTS**(a) Community Events**

The Christmas tree had attracted many positive comments. The Santa Parade had taken place on 29th November with Santa travelling around the village on an extended route to take in Wood Lane before switching on the lights at 7pm. Santa was accompanied by elves on bicycles and almost £300 had been collected in donations for the Lifeboat along the route. The Chairman thanked everyone who had taken part.

(b) Beach & Play Area

The Green Social Prescribing Team had asked whether our regular beach cleans could be included in their list of projects. It was agreed that there was no objection to this.

It was noted that there would be a delay in completing some repairs at the play area as the CBC Inspector was off sick.

(c) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area

Cllr Kaldos had submitted a project evaluation form to allow the Finance & Risk Group to assess any risks before detailed discussions began about transfer of ownership of the land. It was agreed that FRAG members would review the project proposal before the next meeting.

(d) Station car park extension/transport hub

Cllr Taylor reported that an online meeting with Network Rail and the Community Rail Partnership had been arranged for 13 January. The Shadow Cumberland Council had announced that there would be no new asset transfers until at least April 2023 but it was hoped to press for the transfer to go ahead as soon as possible after April.

(e) Valley Link Cycle Track

The decision on the new mine had been announced but the approval was subject to a large number of conditions. It was likely to be some time before there could be any assessment of how this might impact on the proposed cycle track. It had been expected that central government would be inviting bids for funding for cycling projects but this had not yet happened.

(f) Priory Paddock

Recent work had focussed on keeping the pond free of ice during the very cold weather,

(g) Interpretation Boards

There had been no progress since the last meeting. Cllr Sim was working with Tony Pennick to update the village maps.

211/22 FOOTPATHS

The report by Cllr Hale was received and noted.

212/22 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

It was reported that there had been a meeting of West Copeland Partnership on 6 December. Cllr Gilmour had been unable to attend but had provided a written report on events in St Bees.

213/22 CLERK'S REPORT

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

214/22 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) CALC had forwarded information on resources available to help with the Cost of Living Crisis. Noted.
- (b) An email had been received from a local resident about the congestion in the area of Main Street at the start of the school day when the bin lorry is trying to access properties. The resident asked whether the bin lorry could vary its route to arrive later. The Clerk would discuss this with Cllr Hailes.
- (c) CALC had circulated its training programme for Jan – July 2023. A copy had been circulated to councillors.
- (d) Details had been received of the new contracts for external audits for 2023 onwards. The auditor for parishes in Cumbria would now be Moores (based in Nottingham). Noted.
- (e) Copies of correspondence had been received between CBC and the Planning Inspector about various technical issues with the draft Local Plan. Noted
- (f) An email had been received from a local resident asking whether anything could be done about the speed of traffic using the lower part of Main Street early in the mornings (starting around 5am). Noted.
- (g) An email had been received from the Elected Mayor wishing the PC a Happy Christmas.
- (h) A copy had been received of a media release by North Cumbria’s Primary Care Networks explaining how patients could make best use of primary care by using the services of other professionals (first contact physios, care coordinators & social prescribers) rather than seeking an appointment with a GP. Noted.
- (i) An email had been received from Bruno Peek, the Pageant Master, about celebrations of the coronation. There were no plans to light beacons to mark the coronation but communities were being asked to consider this as part of the 80th anniversary celebrations of D-Day in June next year. Noted.
- (j) CALC had forwarded information from Communities Prepared (a national project) which offers online training on community emergency planning & volunteering in emergencies. Details available from the Clerk.
- (k) National Highways had provided its December update on planned improvements to the A66 Penrith to Scotch Corner. Noted.
- (l) Messages of thanks had been received from St Bees Priory PCC and Over 60’s for the donations recently awarded. Noted.
- (m) Information received on the ‘Think Pharmacy First’ initiative and the Minor Ailments Scheme. Noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins
- NALC Newsletter & Open letter from NALC Chair
- Northern Gas Stakeholder Update
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins
- LGR Updates
- Cumbria Police update (Egremont, Cleator Moor and Rural)
- Connecting Cumbria Newsletter
- Trudy Harrison MP Newsletter
- ACT Update December
- Cumbria in Bloom Newsletter
- Open Spaces Update December

215/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA

There were no items reported.

216/22 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next meeting take place on Monday 16 January 2023 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....