

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 6.30pm in New College Hall**

PRESENT: Cllrs E Taylor (in the Chair), N Bettinson, G Gilmour, C Hale, A Linton, D Millington, H Monaghan, & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr C Whiteside, County Councillor - Egremont North/St Bees

Also present: 12 members of the public

132/22 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Cllr Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the date and venue for the meeting had been changed in light of the period of national mourning following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

133/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Argyle, Kaldos, Mellor, Ritson, Robson and Sim. Cllr Hailes, CBC Ward Councillor, and Cllr Minshaw, member of the Shadow Cumberland Council, were also unable to attend due to the change of date.

134/22 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in matters on the agenda.

135/22 CCC & HIGHWAYS ISSUES

It was RESOLVED to bring forward this item on the agenda as Cllr Whiteside had to leave early to attend another meeting.

Cllr Whiteside explained that there had been problems with the IT system at CCC so he had not been able to obtain information from officers on some on-going matters as he had hoped.

- Highways officers had agreed to look at a request for a residents parking permit scheme for parts of the Beach estate if the Parish Council were to put forward a proposal. However, this might take some time, particularly with local government reorganisation on the horizon. The matter was due to be discussed in detail later in the meeting but, on the basis of the report previously circulated, it was clear that there was in principle support for such a scheme. It was RESOLVED to ask Cllr Whiteside to take forward a request for a residents parking scheme on Firth Drive.
- The LCWIP had been launched on 21 September and there was to be a briefing session for county councillors on 3 October.
- It was expected that the government would announce their decision on the new mine on 8 November.
- Officers at CCC were still looking at options for allowing the Parish Council to install new play equipment on the Village School field. It was suggested that the Parish Council discuss with grant funders what assurances they would require.
- CCC officers were considering the possibility of supporting the rewilding of the verge on Beach Road with funding from the Environment Fund.
- The Adams Recreation Ground Committee had requested funding from CCC to help with a planned project but the costs had risen. It was suggested that some match funding from the Parish Council would be useful. It was agreed that FRAG would consider this if the Adams Recreation Ground Committee were to make a request.
- Information was still awaited from officers on new signage for the top of Sea Mill Lane.

Cllr Whiteside then left the meeting.

136/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public explained that there were two main issues which they wished to raise – the issue of parking on the beach estate and antisocial behaviour in the village.

Mr Silk, Headmaster of St Bees School, also wished to report on some upcoming activities and to outline his initial plans to develop a community library and theatre at the school.

137/22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2022

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 18 July be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

138/22 PARKING ISSUES -BEACH ESTATE

Cllr Millington had circulated a report following a meeting with a resident of Firth Drive, detailing his findings and his recommendation that a request be made to CCC for a residents only parking permit scheme. A resident of Firth Drive explained that he had contacted other residents and there was a high level of support for such a scheme. It was explained that the proposal was that the scheme would cover only Firth Drive and the short section of road which forms a link to Priory Road.

It was RESOLVED to write to CCC with a formal request for a residents only parking permit scheme.

139/22 ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There had been numerous incidents of antisocial behaviour in different areas of the village in recent months ranging from racist language to vandalism, assault and criminal damage. Members of the public explained their experiences and it was clear that the problem was escalating, both in the frequency and seriousness of the incidents. Representatives of St Bees School were concerned about the safeguarding of their pupils. It was believed that those responsible were from the village and it was stressed that anyone with information should pass details to the police. It was important that all incidents were reported to the police so that they were fully aware of the situation. Councillors were dismayed by recent events and would do everything possible to see the culprits identified and action taken. Urgent action was required to prevent any further escalation and it was suggested that a taskforce approach was required as had been successful in other areas bringing together the police, Parish Council, schools etc to tackle the problem.

It was RESOLVED that:

- The Vice Chairman contact the police tomorrow morning to discuss a strategy for tackling the issues
- The problem be highlighted via social media and parish magazine, explaining how to report incidents or pass on information to the police
- The Parish Council work with Cllr Hailes and other interested parties to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the problem
- The Parish Council write to the Police & Crime Commissioner if the response from the local police did not resolve the issue

140/22 ST BEES SCHOOL

The Headmaster explained that there were a number of events in the coming weeks to which all would be welcome:

- A bonfire on 4 November. As last year there would be no fireworks.
- A cheese & wine and quiz evening on 18 November
- A murder mystery evening on 2 December

He went on to apologise for the disruption caused by the number of visitors attending an event at the School over the summer. The numbers had been far higher than expected and the School would not be hosting another of these events.

A fundraising campaign was underway to finance the creation of a library and theatre and he hoped that these could be shared with the local community. Plans were still at an early stage and it was agreed that Mr Silk would provide more information for a fuller discussion at the next meeting.

141/22 NOISE NUISANCE

There had been numerous complaints from residents about loud music from the Manor House during an event in August. Recordings had been sent to CBC and their officers had taken up the issue with representatives of the owners. An assurance had been given that in future only background music would be played in the outdoor area.

142/22 COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS

Cllr Hailes had provided a written report on on-going matters. The following issues were noted:

- Network Rail had confirmed that the recent faults with the level crossing gates had been unexpected and had required a team from Network Rail to attend.

This inevitably caused traffic disruption but there no plans in place to allow traffic movements with marshalling control. Cllr Hailes had raised the issue of potential delays for emergency vehicles and a response was awaited.

- CBC would be carrying out repairs to some of the picnic benches at the beach and it was hoped that the redundant street light outside 97 Main Street would be removed shortly.
- The bin by the beach café was due to be replaced with a bird-proof bin in the near future.
- Some green waste bins by Abbey Farm had not been emptied on two occasions. This was because a van was blocking access but a request had been made for them to be emptied at the next collection.

A member of the public reported that people had been seen removing pebbles from the beach. The Clerk had reported this to CBC and had clarified with CBC officers that this was an offence under the Coastal Protection Act and could be enforced by CBC Enforcement Officers. If no-one was able to attend at the time, photographic evidence could be used to follow up the incident later. It was suggested that CBC might wish to display some signage at the beach, warning that removing pebbles was an offence.

143/22 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT

It was noted that a complaint had been made about the conduct of Cllr Ritson. The complaint had been investigated by Copeland Borough Council in line with the procedure set out in the Code of Conduct. A hearing had taken place and the complaint was upheld. The Standards & Ethics Committee had forwarded a copy of the decision and had asked that the matter be drawn to the Parish Council's attention.

It was RESOLVED that the decision be noted.

144/22 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Monthly Financial Report

A summary of the accounts at 31 August 2022 was received and noted. A further sum of £130 had been banked from the donation boxes at the toilets. The notes of the FRAG Meeting on 28 August to consider the Qtr1 variance figures were noted. Overall expenditure was less than anticipated at the end of Qtr 1 due in large part to invoices being delayed.

(b) External Audit

The external audit had been completed and an unqualified opinion had been given with no matters drawn to the council's attention. The notice of completion of audit had been posted on the website and main noticeboard.

(c) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002882 Works 4 You Ltd – grasscutting/emptying bin August £430.20 + £86.04 VAT Total £ 516.24
- Chq 002883 Real Christmas Trees –Norway spruce £375.00 + £75.00 VAT Total £450.00
- Chq 002884 HMRC- PAYE Qtr 2 Total £677.25
- Chq 002885 CBC – repair to zip wire £951.49 + £190.30 VAT Total 1141.79
- Chq 002886 CBC – replacement of monkey bars & rails with stainless steel £1517.94 + £303.59 VAT Total £1821.53
- Chq 002887 PKF Littlejohn LLP – audit fees £300.00 + £60.00 VAT Total £360.00
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (Sept) £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00

The payments made since last meeting were noted:

- Chq 002869 JRB Enterprise Ltd – dispenser bags £193.10 + £38.62 Total 231.72
- Chq 002870 Ast Signs Ltd – interpretation board £147.60 +£29.52 VAT Total £177.12
- Chq 002872 Ast Signs Ltd– signs £230.06 +£46.01 VAT Total £276.07
- Chq 002873 Works 4 You Ltd – grasscutting July £430.20 + £86.04 VAT Total £516.24
- Chq 002874 J Donaldson – salary Aug £577.72
- Chq 002875 J Donaldson- Webex cost £12.50 + VAT, printer ink £8.32 + £1.67 VAT, traffic cones £39.93+ £7.99 VAT, domain name renewal £22.00 Total £94.91
- Chq 002876 CBC- play area inspections Qtr 1 £347.85 + £69.57 VAT Total £417.42

1403

- Chq 002877 D Robinson – reimb for VIB plants £171.42 + £34.28 VAT Total 205.70
- Chq 002878 Information Commissioner – Data Protection renewal Total £40.00
- Chq 002879 & 002880 J Donaldson -salary Sept £577.72, Webex costs £12.50 + £2.50 VAT, printer ink £8.32 +£1.67 VAT Total £602.71
- Chq 002881 CBC – maintenance of Rottington lights 2021/22 £176.84 + £35.37 Total £212.21
- Npower – toilet electricity £29.88 +£1.49 VAT Total £31.37 (direct debit 15/8/22)
- Answer 4-U– answering service £12.88 + £2.58 VAT Total £15.46 (direct debit 17/08/22)
- Water Plus – water/wastewater toilets Total £129.37 (direct debit 2/8/22)
- Water Plus – allotment water Total £19.47 (direct debit 31/8/22)
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service August £583.33 + £116.67 Total £700.00
- Npower – toilet electricity £33.84 + £1.69 VAT Total £35.53 (direct debit 12/9/22)
- Water Plus -water/wastewater toilets Total £135.81 (direct debit 1/9/22)
- Answer 4-U -answering service £14.27 + ££2.85 Total £17.12 (direct debit 19/9/22)

145/22 WARM SPACES PROJECT

Cllr Gilmour explained a proposal by the PCC to create warm spaces for those who want somewhere warm to meet outside their homes over the winter. The suggestion was to use community spaces which were already being heated for other activities. Councillors expressed support for the principle of the scheme but suggested that there could be issues of safeguarding, supervision etc to be considered. It was not clear what support was being requested from the Parish Council as it did not own any buildings. It was agreed to ask for further details of the plans.

146/22 PROPOSED NEW PROJECT – FRIENDSHIP BENCHES

Cllr Argyle had proposed that there should be one or more benches designated as ‘Friendship Benches’, where people could sit if they would welcome a chat with passers by. This had been tried successfully in other areas to help combat loneliness. Beck Edge Garden had been proposed as a location but other possible locations were suggested. Councillors supported the project in principle and it was agreed that Cllr Argyle be asked to complete a project evaluation form so the project could be considered for inclusion in next year’s budget.

147/22 PROJECT REPORTS

(a)Community Events

(i) A brief ceremony was held in Beck Edge Garden at 8pm on 18 September to mark the National Moment of Reflection following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II attended by a small group of councillors and residents.

(ii) Cllr Hale was seeking support for an event to give residents the opportunity to talk about their experiences of the Covid pandemic. The ‘Places to Talk’ initiative was suggested by Cumbria Public Health and funding was available to cover costs of hiring a venue.

It was RESOLVED to support the initiative by holding one session.

(b)Beach & Play Area

The repair to the zip wire had been completed and the wooden post which had rotted would be replaced shortly. New wooden stepping posts were on order.

(c) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area

There had been no further progress.

(d)Station car park extension/transport hub

Cllr Taylor reported some encouraging progress. A meeting had taken place with representatives of Network Rail, CBC and Community Rail Partnership and a further meeting would be taking place in early October when Northern Rail would also be represented.

(e) Valley Link Cycle Track

There was no progress to report until the decision on the new mine was announced.

(f) Priory Paddock

A team of volunteers had carried out some planting and a range of butterflies had been seen this year.

The board walk was continuing to deteriorate and quotations for repair/replacement would be sought from contractors who were experienced in this kind of work.

(g) Speedwatch

As Cllr Mellor was unable to attend, this item would be deferred to the next meeting,

148/22 PLANNING

(a) New Applications

- 4/22/2372/0L1 Listed building consent for installation of woodburning stove and external flue Orchard House, 115 Main Street

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

- There had recently been two applications received for comment relating to changes of design for three properties already approved on Nethertown Rd. The Planning Advisory Group would be considering these in the next few days.

It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of these applications until the next meeting.

(b) Applications received since last meeting

The comments submitted under delegated authority on a number of applications received during July and August were noted:

- 4/22/2350/TPO Felling of sycamore tree protected by TPO – 1 Fleatham Gardens

Comment: There was insufficient detail included in the application for meaningful comment. Note: CBC had subsequently forwarded a report from their expert who believed felling was necessary and had proposed a suitable replacement.

- 4/22/2348/TPO Felling of castanea sativa tree within conservation area -Highfield House

Comment: No objection as the tree is close to the road and posing a danger

- 4/22/2324/TPO Various works to trees protected by TPO – Fleatham House

Comment: Whilst regrettable to lose any mature tree, the Parish Council was content to rely on the opinion of CBC's expert. If felling were recommended, the Parish Council would wish to see a condition that it should be replaced by a tree of an appropriate species.

- 4/22/2315/0F1 Erection of 3 dwellings – Land adj to School House

Comment: The only access to the properties would be from the B5345 almost opposite the entrance to Abbey Vale where there are already concerns about traffic speeds and safety. There is insufficient detail of the access which will be very steep. Further information is needed on how these traffic issues will be dealt with during construction and later when refuse lorries, delivery vans and residents will need to access the properties. It is proposed that the properties should have cedar cladding which is not in keeping with the sandstone used in most nearby buildings. The east facing elevation makes extensive use of windows and roof lights which will overlook the school boarding house and other buildings.

Councillors expressed concern about the number of applications for tree work around Fleatham House where there was an established rookery.

It was RESOLVED to contact CBC to ask that careful attention be given to protecting the rookery when considering applications for tree work.

(c) Applications Approved by CBC

- 4/22/2252/0F1 Proposed single storey extension to side & rear, demolition of rear conservatory & front porch. Replacement rear & front extensions – 8 The Crofts
- 4/22/2199/0F1 Retrospective application for rear step, gravel access route & 1.8m high boundary timber fence – 4 Richmond Crescent, St Bees
- 4/22/2228/0F1 First floor extension & porch – 18 The Crofts
- 4/21/2486/0F1 Change of use of ground floor to children's day nursery – Grindal House, St Bees
- 4/21/2487/0L1 Listed building consent for above application – Grindal House
- 4/22/2206/0L1 Replacement of windows & other associated works- Ghyll Farm, Egremont
- 4/22/2324/TPO Various works to trees protected by TPO – Fleatham House, High House Rd

(d) Other Planning Matters

The Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 16 Sept. The Public Examination was expected to run into early 2023.

149/22 FOOTPATHS

The report by Cllr Hale was received and noted,

150/22 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Gilmour reported on the meeting of West Copeland Partnership on 16 August.

Cllr Robson had provided a brief report on the preview of the Deep Time exhibition at the Beacon which he had attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

151/22 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Cllr Minshaw had provided a report on progress in setting up the shadow Cumberland Council in readiness for Vesting Day on 1 April 2023. The report was being circulated to councillors.

152/22 CLERK'S REPORT

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

153/22 CORRESPONDENCE

(a)Details had been received of the Healthy Start Scheme which provides free vitamins for all children in Cumbria aged under 2 and also help with food & milk for those who meet eligibility criteria. Noted

(b)CALC's AGM would now take place on 29 October at 10.00am. Noted

(c)CALC had circulated the new model Code of Conduct drawn up by the six district authorities and county council. The adoption of the Code would be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

(d)CALC had reminded all parishes of the need to consider the costs of the elections in 2023 when setting their budgets this autumn. Noted

(e)Information had been received on Churchill Fellowships which were open to individuals to fund research in various areas. Details available from the Clerk.

(f)CALC had provided an update on the action plan for Climate Change headed by the People's Panel set up by CBC some months ago. Noted

(g)Details had been received of the government's decision on the future governance arrangements for Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service. The Home Secretary had agreed that it would come within the remit of the Police & Crime Commissioner. Noted

(h)CCC had provided a summary of all Legal Event Modification Orders made for rights of way in the county. Noted

(i)The contract for providing external audit services for local councils was due for renewal. The SAAA had asked councils to consider whether they wish to opt out of the national contract and make their own arrangements. If councils did not opt out, they would automatically be part of the new national contract. Noted

(j) The Government's announcement that the Coast to Coast Walk would be given national trail status was noted.

(k)The shadow Cumberland Council had launched a consultation into its Council Plan covering the areas the council will focus on up until 2027, as well as how the council will work and what residents can expect. Noted

(l)National Highways had forwarded details of plans for extensive work on the A595 north of Whitehaven to begin late this year. A drop-in event would take place at the Solway Hall, Whitehaven on 3 October. Noted

(m) Robin Rigg Community Fund had announced a new round of grant funding (£1000 to £15000) for community projects. Noted

(n)An update had been received on the Covid 19 and flu vaccination programme. Noted

(o)CCC had begun a consultation on its Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Noted.

(p)United Utilities had published their 2022 Final Drought Plan which was now available on their website. Noted

(q)A Teams meeting had been arranged for local councils in Allerdale and Copeland under the general title Thriving Nature for People and Planet. This would take place on Tuesday 11TH October 2022 at 7.00 pm, Noted

(r)Adopt Coast to Coast (a regional agency representing CCC, Durham CC and Sunderland City) were requesting help in raising awareness of the need for people to come forward to adopt babies and children. Noted

(s) CALC had organised a virtual course on Community Engagement and Community Plans on 3rd October at 7.30pm. Noted

(t)The Environment Agency had organised another Cumbria Engagement Meeting to give local councils the opportunity to ask questions about nuclear issues. The meeting would be on 19 October 5.30-7.30pm. Details available from the Clerk

(u)The next Copeland Health & Wellbeing Forum would be on 6 Oct 2-4pm via Teams. Link available from the Clerk.

(v) The Environment Agency & CCC were organising a Cumbria Flood & Coast Forum on 20 Oct at Castle Green, Kendal. One representative was invited per council. Registration details from the Clerk.

(w) Andrew Seekings & Mark Fryer would provide an update on local government reorganisation for parish councils on 15 November at 7pm via Teams. Noted

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins

NALC Newsletter

Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership Newsletter 3

Northern Gas Stakeholder Update

Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins & Funding Digest

Connecting Cumbria Newsletter

Trudy Harrison MP – Newsletter

OSS Updates July & August

LGR Updates

CALC News July/August

154/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDA

(a)It was reported that one of the picnic benches at the beach play area was in need of repair. The Clerk would ask the lengthsman to deal with this.

(b) Cllr Robson would be taking part in the London Marathon on 2 October.

(c)It was reported that the cover over part of the drainage channel outside the parking area of Rowan Terrace was missing, after apparently being damaged by the contractor’s vehicle while cutting the grass in Beck Edge Garden. Cllr Taylor and Bettinson would investigate and source the part required.

155/22 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next meeting take place on Monday 17 October at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....