

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on  
Monday 21 December 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, 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: 5 members of the public

**149/20 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

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

**150/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs J Mellor, H Monaghan and C Robson.

**151/20 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Cllr Gilmour took the chair for this item.**

Cllr Sim had declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5 (c) as a family member was an allotment tenant and the rent for allotments would be considered as part of the discussion on the budget for 2021/22. He had requested a dispensation to allow him to take part in the budget debate and setting of the precept.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Sim be granted a dispensation in view of the importance of the budget for 2021/22 and the minimal pecuniary interest involved.

**152/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public present indicated that they were interested in Agenda Item 11 (a) and specifically the outline planning application for land on Nethertown Road. The Chairman invited members of the public to explain their comments which would be taken into account by councillors during the discussion of the application later in the meeting.

Mr Morgan stated that he was the applicant and wished to explain to councillors the background to the application. He had lived in the village for some years and now had a young child. The house they had built a few years ago was not suitable for young children but he and his family wished to stay in the village. He had been unable to find a suitable property and he was therefore applying for planning permission to build a new home. In answer to questions he explained that the application was for three dwellings with the other two to be sold by the owner of the land. The exact details of road access etc would be confirmed at a later stage if outline permission was granted. Mr Morgan explained that he had undertaken a number of projects to renovate/build properties and believed that the houses would be entirely in keeping with the adjacent properties.

Other members of the public present put forward their objections to the application. The site was outside the settlement boundary and would lead to an extension of the village south towards Nethertown. The road was narrow with no pavements and was not suitable for increased traffic. The drainage system & other services in the village were outdated and already unable to cope with the demands of existing properties. Flooding was a problem in this area in times of heavy rainfall. Concerns were also raised about possible damage to the wildlife and ecology around the site if development was allowed.

The Chairman thanked those present for putting forward their views. He explained that the Parish Council would make a decision later in the meeting on its response to the consultation by CBC but the decision on whether to grant outline permission would lie with CBC.

**153/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020**

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 16 November be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**154/20 BUDGET 2021/2024**

The notes of the FRAG meeting on 9 December had been circulated with a projection of the year end position for the current financial year and an outline budget for 2021/24 for discussion. FRAG had recommended that allotment rents should remain the same for 2021/22 with an increase likely in the following financial year.

From the projected year end figures it was clear that some 40% of the precept was spent on items such as providing public toilets and play equipment at the beach which were used primarily by visitors to St Bees with no contribution being received from CBC. This limited the options available for the budget in future years. The outline budget included all the projects which had been put forward. It had been assumed that a substantial amount of grant funding would be sought towards certain projects but, even taking this into account, there would need to be an increase in the precept and a significant contribution from reserves to balance the budget

It was proposed that some projects should be deferred until the following year to reduce the impact on reserves with priority being given to the contribution to the extension of the pavement on Outrigg and the expenditure necessary to initiate the station car park project. The renewal of the play area equipment on Outrigg and fitness equipment at the beach would be postponed for a year, although provision would be made for essential repairs on the Outrigg play area.

It was RESOLVED that:

- allotment rents remain unchanged for 2021/22
- the precept for 2021/22 be set at £50,000 (a £7.43 per year increase for a Band D property)
- FRAG be asked to review other areas of discretionary expenditure and provide a revised budget at the next meeting.

**155/20 COUNTY COUNCIL & HIGHWAYS MATTERS****(a) Extension to Outrigg Pavement**

Cllr Whiteside reported that a meeting had taken place on 17 December with the Area Highways Manager, Kevin Cosgrove, and representatives of the Parish Council to discuss the possible extension of the pavement on Outrigg. Mr Cosgrove had explained that the new pavement would not meet the standards recommended in CCC's Design Guide as it would be narrower and at a much steeper gradient than was recommended. However, it was noted that these standards were intended to be applied to new developments and in this case the extension of the pavement was a means of improving pedestrian safety on an existing highway. Subject to detailed designs and assessment by highways engineers it was hoped that the work could be done during the next financial year.

Mr Cosgrove was seeking confirmation that the Parish Council accepted that the pavement would not meet the usual design standards and that the financial contribution from the Parish Council was still available.

It was RESOLVED to support the extension of the pavement, accepting that it would not meet the usual design standards, as it would help to improve the safety of pedestrians, particularly children attending the Village School.

It was further RESOLVED to confirm that the Parish Council would contribute £5000 to the costs.

**(b) Nethertown Road**

Cllr Whiteside had spoken to the Highways Manager about problems on Nethertown Road where a cyclist had come off his bike on the uneven road surface. Recent hedge cutting had brought mud on to the road from the verges and the road was now flooded. Highways had arranged for a sweeper to attend and then temporary repairs would be done.

**(c) Pow Beck Footbridge**

The footbridge had been removed for repairs and was now back in place. Several residents had reported that the surface was slippery and the Bridge Engineer had agreed to look at whether a non-slip surface could be fitted.

**(d) Outrigg Play Area**

Cllr Whiteside offered to contact Cllr Southward, the relevant CCC Portfolio Holder, about formalising the arrangement for the Outrigg play area to be located on land owned by CCC.

Although there had been play equipment on this site for many years, there appeared to be no formal agreement and this would be a potential barrier to obtaining grant funding for new equipment.

Cllr Whiteside then left the meeting.

### **156/20 COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS**

Cllr Hailes reported on the following issues:

- He was continuing to press CBC to remove the old heras fencing at the end of the promenade
- A quote was being obtained for work on the lamp post which was leaning at an angle near the beach café and car park
- The interpretation board was now back in place near the beach café
- The public telephone was now only available for emergency calls but a further repair had been promised
- There had been fewer reports of anti-social behaviour recently

Councillors thanked Cllr Hailes for his work in following up issues with CBC staff.

### **157/20 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT**

#### **(a) Financial Report & Risk Review**

The account summary at 30 November was received and noted. The Litter Champions had raised £140 as a contribution towards the cost of the 2 Minute Beach Clean Station.

It was noted that the Finance & Risk Advisory Group had recommended that the existing grass cutting contract should be rolled over for a further year as the current Covid restrictions would make it difficult to show potential contractors around the various sites. Bids for a new contract would be sought next year.

It was RESOLVED that the current grass cutting contract be extended for a further year.

It was further RESOLVED to set up direct debit payments for the electricity bills and water/wastewater charges for the beach toilets.

No new risk issues were identified but it was noted that a new risk assessment had been done for the Santa Parade and switch -on of the lights as arrangements had been different this year because of Covid restrictions.

#### **(b) Donations**

It was RESOLVED that the following donations be made:

- St Bees PCC – contribution to publication costs of parish magazine £720.00
- Village Hall Committee – donation to running costs of Village Hall £600.00
- Royal British Legion – donation to Poppy Appeal £155.00
- Great North Air Ambulance - £50.00
- The CPR Group - £50.00

#### **(c) Payments**

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002705 CALC – course fees (Code of Conduct & Finance courses) Total £50.00
- Chq 002706 CPRE – annual subscription Total £36.00
- Chq 002707 Npower – electricity to beach toilets £22.47 + £1.12 VAT Total £23.59
- Chq 002708& 002709 J Donaldson – printer ink service £6.66 + £1.33 VAT, monthly Webex costs £12.50 + £2.50 VAT, payment of YNH invoice for website hosting £106.95, salary Dec £549.52 Total £679.46
- Chq 002710 HMRC – PAYE Qtr 3 £722.64
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd -toilet service Dec £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (to be paid by SO)

#### **The following payments made since last meeting were noted:**

Chq 002699 Npower Ltd – electricity to beach toilets £26.08 + £1.30 VAT Total £27.38

Chq 002700 CBC –emptying litter bins qtr 3 & 4 Total £1485.12

Chq 002701 The 2 Minute Foundation -beach clean station £354.17 + £70.83 VAT Total £425.00

Chq 002702 Water Plus Ltd – water/wastewater beach toilets Total £293.78

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Chq 002703 Craimon Construction Ltd – repair to pipe at Sea Mill £1460.00+ £292.00 VAT Total £1752.00

Chq 002704 V Turpin -reimbursement for new boat park lock £25.27 + £5.05 VAT Total £30.32

Water Plus Ltd – allotment water charges Total £ 21.79 (paid by DD)

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

### 158/20 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Cllr Linton had proposed that the council consider how it could engage with younger members of the community and provide an opportunity for them to put forward ideas and views. It was agreed that this was an important area for development and a small group should be established to look at how best to take this forward.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Linton consider the appropriate membership of the group and report back to the next meeting.

### 159/20 PROJECT REPORTS

#### (a) Beach Regeneration & Play Area

The new 2 Minute Beach Clean Station was due to be delivered in early January.

Cllrs Gilmour & Kaldos had met CBC's Play Area Inspector to discuss repair issues and ways of improving the current system of maintenance.

#### (b) Community Events

- **Santa Parade** – the Parade and switch-on of the tree lights had taken place on 8 December. Santa had made an extended tour of the village to avoid crowds gathering in the Main Street and had been accompanied by elves on bicycles. The event had been covered live by St Bees Radio. The event had been very successful and had attracted many favourable comments.
- **Drive-in Carol Concert** – the provisional plans for a drive-in event at the beach car park had been abandoned in light of the poor weather forecast. However, a lot of work had been done by Charles Bagshaw and others to investigate how to organise such an event and it was hoped that a similar outdoor event might be possible in the spring.

(c) **Station Car Park Extension** – the progress report circulated by Cllr Taylor was received and noted.

(d) **Cycle Track** – Cllr Taylor reported that Sellafield Ltd was supportive of the project and was in contact with Sustrans.

### 160/20 PLANNING

#### (a) New Planning Applications

(i) Ref 4/20/2491/O01 Outline application for three dwellings

Land to the south of Southrigg, Nethertown Road, St Bees

It was noted that several local residents had provided copies of their letters of objection to this application and these had been circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. The Planning Advisory Group reported on their assessment of the plans, and the comments made for and against the application earlier in the meeting were also noted.

It was RESOLVED to object to the application on the grounds that the site was outside the settlement boundary and the Parish Council did not support development which would create a linear extension of the village along Nethertown Road. Nethertown Road was very narrow with no safe route for pedestrians and was unsuitable for further traffic.

(ii) Ref 4/20/2494/0F1 Prior approval of change of use of redundant calving sheds

Rottington Hall Estates, Rottington).

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

- (iii) Ref 4/20/2412/0F1 Single storey extension to front, double storey extension to side & raised deck with balustrade – 9 The Crofts, St Bees

After the last meeting further amendments were received to this application. It was noted that to meet the deadline for comments a response had been sent under delegated authority, reiterating the view originally put forward that the development was not in keeping with the rest of the estate.

**(b) Decisions by CBC**

The following decisions by CBC were noted:

- 4/20/2365/0F1 Conversion of part of garage to porch for main house with works to door & window -  
The Retreat, High House Rd APPROVED
- 4/20/2402/TPO Felling of two oak trees and limb removal on another oak tree protected by TPO-  
3 Fleatham Gardens, High House REFUSED
- 4/20/2409/0F1 Single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory -  
63 Fairladies APPROVED

**161/20 FOOTPATHS**

**(a)Cliff path**

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr Taylor had met representatives of the Trustees of St Bees School and the Golf Club to discuss the situation with the path from Sea Mill alongside the golf course. There was on-going erosion of the cliff and the path had become narrow. The Trustees had intended to close the path when Natural England opened the coastal access route. However, this is a popular path with local residents and after discussion it had been agreed that a new fence would be erected slightly further inland to provide a wider path. This would allow the path to remain open for the immediate future but would not provide a long term solution unless changes were made to that section of the golf course. It was RESOLVED to write to the Trustees of the School asking that the path be kept open for the benefit of local residents and expressing the Parish Council's willingness to join in discussions about the way forward.

**(b) Sea Mill to Nethertown Road**

CCC had recently completed work to improve the section of the path at the Sea Mill which had become muddy and slippery.

**(c)Dandy Walk Path**

The new kissing gate had now been installed between the hockey field and the Dandy Walk field to replace the old gate. It was hoped that this would be easier for pedestrians and also prove effective in preventing livestock getting out of the field.

**162/20 CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk's report on on-going matters was received and noted. The repair to the broken pipe at Sea Mill had now been completed and the problem appeared to have been resolved.

**163/20 CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a)The Environment Agency had published its annual report on regulating geological disposal which was available on the EA web-site. Noted.
- (b)The deadline for responses to the consultation on Local Government Ethical Standards had been extended until 29 January. NALC would be submitting a response on behalf of parish/town councils and would welcome comments from parish councils. Noted.
- (c)CALC had circulated information on the various options being put forward by CCC and district councils on local government reorganisation in Cumbria. Noted.
- (d)A press release had been received from CBC explaining the proposal being put forward jointly by Copeland and Allerdale Borough Councils for local government reorganisation. Noted.
- (e)Several local residents had provided copies of their individual responses to the consultation on the draft Local Plan. Noted.
- (f)CALC had provided a copy of the Development Programme for Jan – June 2021. All training events would be online. Copies would be circulated to councillors.

(g)CBC had provided details of the new Covid testing centre in Whitehaven which was expected to be operational shortly. Noted.

(h)CBC had provided details of a collaboration between British Energy Coast Business Cluster and Community Data Co-operative (a not-for-profit research business) to launch New Landscape: New Pioneers – survey to gauge views on the area’s priorities and how it could thrive post-Covid. The survey was open to all and details were available from the Clerk.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins
- Copeland Matters December
- Cumbria Police -weekly Covid-19 updates
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins
- Copeland Tourism Update
- Northern Gas Networks Update
- Open Spaces Society Member Update Nov
- Cumbria Police Newsletter – Cleator Moor, Egremont & Rural
- CALC Newsletter Nov/Dec
- Natural England NW coastal access update
- Geological Disposal Facility Newsletter Issue 1

**164/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDAS**

- (a)It was requested that the issue of a geological disposal facility in Cumbria be included in a future agenda.
- (b)It was reported that a power cut was planned to take place on 4 January to allow Electricity North West to carry out essential work. This would affect much of the village.
- (c) Cllr Taylor had a copy of the latest Sellafield Travel & Transport Plan which he was able to share with other councillors on request.

**165/20 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting would take place on MONDAY 18 JANUARY 2021 at 6.30pm via Cisco Webex.

Signed.....

Date.....