

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 15 November 2021 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

PRESENT: Cllrs D Sim (in the Chair), P Argyle, N Bettinson, D Bowler, C Hale A Kaldos,
J Mellor, H Monaghan, S Ritson, C Robson, E Taylor & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr J Hailes, CBC Ward Councillor
Cllr C Whiteside, County Councillor St Bees/Egremont North
Mr R Silk, Headmaster, St Bees School

Also present: 2 members of the public

182/21 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

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

183/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs G Gilmour, A Linton and D Millington.

184/21 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

185/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms Robertson explained that she was the owner of the Little Learners Nursery and would like to explain the background to the planning application for the change of use of Grindal House. The nursery was currently located at Abbots Court but the lease would expire next year and she was keen to find alternative premises within the village. Grindal House was no longer required by St Bees School and had been empty for some time. It offered the space required and would be convenient for the 100+ families who used the nursery. Parking would be provided on site and there had been discussions with Cumbria Highways about the arrangements for vehicle access and egress.

In answer to questions, Ms Robertson explained the proposal to move the wall which was a listed structure and ensure that its character was retained. Mr Silk welcomed the idea that Grindal House might continue to be used for an educational purpose as it had been for many years.

186/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2021

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

187/21 ST BEES SCHOOL

The Chairman invited Mr Silk to outline events being organised by the School. The bonfire had proved very popular and had been attended by many local residents. It was hoped to repeat this next year with even more food stalls etc. The School had also been pleased to welcome some members of the Parish Council to the remembrance service in the chapel. A carol service would be held in the chapel at 4.30pm on 9 December followed by refreshments. The service would be open to Parish Councillors, old St Beghians and, space permitting, to local residents. Those wishing to attend were asked to contact the School to request a ticket. There were also plans for Arts Out West events in the coming months.

Parish Councillors congratulated the School on its willingness to share events with the local community and noted that it was heartening to see pupils using the buildings and playing fields again.

In answer to a question, Mr Silk confirmed that there would be no problem with visitors to the Priory being taken to see the School providing that Reception was informed for safeguarding reasons.

188/21 CCC & HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Whiteside provided an update on progress with the move to two unitary authorities. The draft Structural Change Order had been received from central government. A formal joint committee would be formed and it would be important to ensure that the interests of communities in the west were represented. There would be 46 elected members in the new Cumberland Council with elections to be held in May 2022. The new authority would then exist in shadow form until May 2023 when the new

unitary authority became a legal entity. The area represented by each councillor would be much bigger than in the current structure. There might be opportunities for parish councils to take over some services but this would be a decision for the new authority. Cllr Whiteside agreed to forward a copy of the Structural Change Order for circulation to councillors.

Cllr Whiteside then reported on a number of on-going matters:

- Work was underway to extend the pavement on Outrigg. The work had taken longer than expected but should be completed shortly.
- The Parking Enforcement team had apparently visited the area around the Village School and Cllr Whiteside would check whether any penalty tickets had been issued.
- The wall alongside Beach Rd had still not been repaired as the Highways team had been busy with flood defence work but it was hoped that the work would take place shortly.
- Cllr Whiteside had pressed for a site visit by Highways staff to Nethertown Rd but Highways did not believe this was necessary. He had forwarded concerns about the flooding of the development site to the relevant officers.
- County councillors had attended a presentation on the new highways reporting system (HIAMS) which seemed to be working well. It was noted that the new system was causing some frustration for local residents who could no longer assume that all lighting faults could be reported to CCC and then had to make a separate report to CBC.

In answer to questions from councillors, Cllr Whiteside agreed to follow up progress with the 'no footway' signs on Abbey Rd, the road markings around Fleatham Croft junction, the reinstatement of the litter bin by Stonehouse Farm and the testing and repair of the lights by Fairladies footpath.

189/21 COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS

Cllr Hailes reported on the following issues:

- The emergency road closure at High Walton had caused problems with refuse collections to some properties. CBC was looking at using a smaller vehicle to make collections as it was not clear when the road would be reopened.
- Recycling collections had been missed again on Main Street and Outrigg. This had been reported to CBC but there was only one vehicle and crew available at the moment. Cllr Hailes would follow this up with CBC officers.
- Cllr Hailes had passed additional details of the faulty light on the Beach Rd footpath to the officers concerned as it is clearly listed on the CBC inventory from 2013.
- A contract had been awarded for the repair of the lights at the beach car park. It was noted that there had been a recent incident of a vehicle colliding with one of the columns and the police were involved, as this might result in an insurance claim.
- A request had been received from a resident of Whitehaven asking whether there could be a reduction in car park charges over the winter months to help fishermen who used the beach car park for long periods. Cllr Hailes was taking this up with the CBC management team.
- Cllr Hailes agreed to take up with officers the issue of the litter bin which was missing from the beach car park close to the caravan park entrance.

The Chairman reported that a reply had been received from CBC to the formal complaint about the delay in resolving the issue of bird proof bins. CBC had given an assurance that suitable models were being investigated and the bins would be in place before the 2022 season.

190/21 PLANNING

(a) New Planning Applications

- Ref 4/21/2486/0F1 Change of use of ancillary senior school accommodation to children's day nursery including two openings in the front garden wall to allow circulation around the property; new vehicle exit from the site; new door opening and blocking up of door internally.
- Ref 4/21/2487/0L1 Listed building consent for above development.

Grindal House was a prominent building in the centre of the village and had been unoccupied for some time. It was agreed that there were no fundamental objections to the change of use and associated works and councillors supported the building being used for a local business. It was noted that parking would be provided within the site and there had been consultation with Cumbria Highways about vehicle access. The wall to the front was a listed structure and the application proposed that this would be retained but moved back. This would leave a small strip of land which the applicant proposed to have as a grassed area. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate to pave this strip to allow more room for pedestrians to pass.

It was RESOLVED that there were no objections to these applications in principle but that CBC be asked to consider a requirement for the narrow strip of ground at the front to be paved.

(b) Nethertown Rd Development

The Clerk reported on the advice received from a planning consultant and highways specialist on the second outline application and the reserved matters application for the three dwellings previously approved. The outline application for two dwellings (ref 4/21/2368/001) had been further amended and details were awaited. It was understood that the reserved matters application was also to be amended but CBC had not yet received this.

The recent period of heavy rain had caused significant flooding on the site which had still not drained away despite the application stating that the land was not subject to flooding. There were indications that on the eastern boundary water was draining down from Egremont Rd.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to submit comments on the amended outline application following consultation with the Chairman and Planning Advisory Group in order to meet the consultation deadline.

(c) Applications approved by CBC

The following application had been approved by CBC:

4/21/2405/TPO Removal of sycamore tree within the conservation area - 117 Main Street

(Cllrs J Mellor and C Whiteside left the meeting at this point)

191/21 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Financial Report

The summary of accounts at 31 October was received and noted together with the report of the FRAG meeting on 8 November. The Finance & Risk Advisory Group had looked in detail at the variance figures at the half year point and had recommended that £480 be vired from the Projects budget to Open Spaces to fund the new gate for Priory Paddock. No new risk items were identified.

It was RESOLVED to accept the recommendations contained in the FRAG report.

(b) Budget 2022/3 onwards

The budget and precept would need to be approved at the next meeting. It was agreed that any suggestions for inclusion in the budget should be sent to the Clerk with a completed project evaluation form by 22 November.

(c) Review of Financial Regulations

The 2 yearly review of the Financial Regulations was now due. There had been no changes to procedures since the last review and FRAG had recommended that no amendments were required. The Clerk had produced a summary of the emergency procedures in place when the council was unable to meet during the Covid epidemic the Covid and this would now form an appendix to the regulations.

It was RESOLVED to approve the financial regulations without amendment.

(d) Centenary Book Fund

It was noted that a payment had been made to the PCC some years ago from the Centenary Book Fund to help with the publication of two local history booklets. The PCC was now in a position to repay the loan and it was agreed that this should be credited back to the Centenary Book Fund to fund similar projects in the future.

(e) Donations

It was RESOLVED that the following donations be approved:

Village Hall Committee –£600

St Bees PCC (contribution to the publication costs of the parish magazine) –£720

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal - £125

Great North Air Ambulance -£100

Calderwood House- £100

Friends of the Priory - £50 (annual membership + donation)

Furness Line Action Group £50 (annual subscription + donation)

(f) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002790 CALC– course fees Total £20.00
- Chq 002791 WDS Ltd – design fees for car park £875.00 + £175.00 VAT Total £1050.00
- Chq 002792 South Lakes Ecology -preliminary ecological appraisal Total 679.00
- Chq 002793 Glasdon Ltd– litter bin £137.41 +£ 27.48 VAT Total £164.89
- Chq 002794 J Donaldson – reimb for Webex costs, printer ink, hi vis vests, stationery, graffiti removal spray £117.01+£15.03 VAT Total £132.04
- Chq 002795 J Donaldson – salary Nov £491.12
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service Nov £583.33 + £116.67 Total £700.00 (paid by standing order)

The following payments made since last meeting were noted:

- Answer 4 U -answering service Nov £11.31 + £2.26 VAT Total £13.57 (DD)
- Npower -electricity to beach toilets £50.02 + £2.50 VAT Total £52.52 (DD)

192/21 BROWN TOURIST SIGNS

It was pointed out that in other areas brown signs were used to point visitors to historic buildings and other attractions but around St Bees there were no signs to encourage visitors to the Priory, RSPB reserve etc. There were also some outdated and misleading signs within the village which should be removed. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had tried unsuccessfully in the past to get brown tourist signs. It was very unlikely that National Highways would allow signage on the A595 but more local signage might be possible. It was agreed that Cllrs Robson, Argyle and Gilmour would review the signs which need to be removed and investigate the procedure for applying for new brown signs.

193/21 ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Cllr Linton had circulated some suggestions for inclusion in a survey of local young people and asked that any comments or suggestions be sent to her as soon as possible. It would be important that the survey did not to raise expectations as some of the ideas put forward might be undeliverable for practical or financial reasons.

194/21 PROJECT REPORTS

(a)Beach & Play Area

As the proposal to put a donation box at the beach toilets had now been approved, a suitable box would be purchased and installed. Cllr Hale was preparing a new notice for the wall of the toilets.

A meeting had taken place with a representative of a company which supplied play area surfacing. The ground around some of the equipment was badly eroded and was very wet and muddy. The company had been asked to supply a quotation for wet pour surfacing around equipment in the toddler area and the dizzy roundabout in the main play area.

It was noted that one of the zip wires was still out of commission. The Clerk would ask for a progress report from CBC.

(b) Upgrading of Outrigg Play Area

There was no further progress to report. Cllr Kaldos would liaise with Cllr Whiteside to establish whether it was possible to apply for Dept for Education approval even if this would take some time.

(c) Beach Bowl

Some thought was needed on how best to progress the project at a time when the Parish Council was heavily involved with other projects. It was suggested that an event over the summer would demonstrate the potential of the project before time and expense was committed to design and planning of a permanent performance area.

(d) Station car park extension/transport hub

Cllr Taylor had provided a written report on progress. A further positive meeting had taken place with the Community Rail Partnership. Cllr Taylor had raised with a senior member of staff at Sellafield the problems of indiscriminate parking around the village as employees shared cars to travel to the site. He had offered to attend the Parish Council meeting in January to listen to concerns.

(e) Valley Link Cycle Track

Cllr Taylor had provided a written report on progress. A letter of support from Trudy Harrison MP had also been circulated.

(f) Community Events

- (i) **Christmas** - The Christmas tree had been delivered and would be put up on 27 November. Arrangements were in hand for the Santa Parade on Tues 7 December. This would follow the same pattern as last year and would begin at 6pm. Santa and elves on bicycles would visit as many areas of the village as possible to ensure that families who did not want to gather at the tree could still see Santa. Santa would then switch on the tree lights on Cross Hill at 7pm.
- (ii) **Platinum Jubilee** – Cllr Monaghan reported that she had registered the Parish Council's interest in the lighting of beacons across the country on 2 June next year. Suggestions were still being sought for suitable events to mark the occasion and this would be publicised in the parish magazine. It was noted that an Arts Out West event would be taking place at the Village Hall which could mark the start of a week of events in the village.
- (iii) **CPR/AED Training** -A course had been arranged for Monday 22 November in New College Hall.
- (iv) **Remembrance Sunday** -Cllr Bettinson reported that the parade and wreath laying ceremony had gone well and had been well attended.

(g) Priory Paddock

It was reported that there had been cases of ash die-back in the village and several saplings had been affected.

195/21 FOOTPATHS

The report provided by Cllr Hale was received and noted. The Chairman was writing to the landowner to seek a meeting discuss the creation of a link between Pitman's Trod and the common.

A visitor had written to congratulate the Parish Council on its downloadable walks leaflets and had pointed out a problem with a stile and gate on route 3. It was suggested that there could be a simple, inexpensive solution to the problem and this would be discussed with the landowner.

196/21 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS WITH OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman reported that he had attended a recent meeting of West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group when the main subject for discussion had been the use of the NDA's socio-economic funds.

197/21 CLERK'S REPORT

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

198/21 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) An email had been received from the Chairman of Barton & Pooley Bridge PC seeking views on a possible approach to central government to oppose the establishment of two unitary authorities. The grounds would be the low level of public participation in the consultation and the view that two authorities would not represent the demographics of the county. Noted.
- (b) A local resident had forwarded a copy of his response to the CBC Local Plan consultation. Noted.
- (c) An email had been received from a visitor to St Bees congratulating the PC on its downloadable walks leaflets and providing information on the poor state of repairs of the stiles on route 3. A reply had been sent.
- (d) The Environment Agency was setting up a series of ‘Meet the Regulator’ meetings for stakeholders, building on the experience of similar events organised in other areas. Noted.
- (e) Information had been received from CCC on arrangements in the event of flooding in the County. Noted
- (f) CCC had forwarded information from Cumbria Community Transport to confirm that ‘ad hoc’ transport requests would be curtailed until a new co-ordinator was appointed. Noted.
- (g) A resident of Whitehaven had emailed to ask whether charges at the beach car park could be reduced over the winter months. A reply had been sent pointing out that the car park was owned by CBC and suggesting that he contact CBC or a CBC councillor. Noted.
- (h) An invitation had been received from CVS to their AGM on 24 November 10.00am -12.30pm via Zoom. The focus would be social value. Noted.
- (i) Cumbria in Bloom newsletter had been received with details of the AGM. Noted.
- (j) An update had been received from CCC on preparations for local government reorganisation. Noted.
- (k) Details had been received of the Run the Edge event now scheduled to take place on 18 June 2022. The event would take place between Millom and Whitehaven and was being promoted as part of the Cumbria Hidden Coast Project. The event would include a 10km run, a half marathon and an ultra marathon. Noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins
- NALC Newsletter
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins
- Trudy Harrison MP – Newsletter
- Open Spaces Society Newsletter
- Friends of the Lake District Planning & Policy News Update
- Action for Health & Mental Health Provider Forum bulletin

199/21 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDAS

- (a) It was noted that there had been a suspected case of avian flu locally. Those who keep poultry were asked to be vigilant and any dead birds found at the beach with no obvious cause of death should be left in situ and reported to the Defra helpline (03459 33 55 77)
- (b) Cllr Robson reported that a stone had been found in a wall at the bottom of Scalebarrow which had an inscription which was thought might be a memorial to a child. The age of the stone was uncertain.
- (c) The village Hall would be hosting Arts Out West events on 12 March and 28 May next year.
- (d) An opening event was planned at the Village Hall on 18 December.

200/21 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next meeting take place on Monday 17 January 2022 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....