

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 16 March 2020 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall**

PRESENT: Cllrs N Bettinson, C Hale, A Kaldos, F Kennedy, A Linton, J Mellor, D Millington,
C Robson, E Taylor & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr J Hailes (CBC Ward Councillor)
Cllr C Whiteside (CCC item only)

39/20 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

As both the Chairman and Vice Chairman were absent it was necessary to elect a councillor to chair the meeting.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Millington chair the meeting.

40/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs P Argyle, D Sim, G Gilmour,
D Rothery and H Monaghan.

41/20 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

42/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised.

43/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2020

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 17 February be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44/20 CORONAVIRUS

New guidelines had just been issued by the government asking everyone to avoid social contact to prevent the spread of the virus. This would have an impact on all aspects of daily life for some time to come and it was important that the community worked together to ensure that vulnerable members of the community were able to access help and support during this difficult time.

Cllr Hailes explained that he was keen to ensure that help and support was available to anyone who needed it. It was reported that the church and PCC were also looking at ways to help those who were isolated at home. It was noted that in Sea Mill Lane a local resident had taken the initiative and set up a Whats App group for all households in that area so that requests for help could be matched with offers of help and support. It was agreed that this was an excellent model which might be copied in other neighbourhoods within the parish, although it was recognised that not everyone was able to use social media and other methods of communication might be appropriate in other places.

It was RESOLVED to take the following steps:

- To encourage everyone to adopt a 'good neighbour' approach and ensure vulnerable neighbours were able to manage
- To work with Cllr Hailes and the PCC to divide the parish into small local areas and seek volunteers to take the lead in setting up a support network in each area to help vulnerable residents
- To use the Parish Council's channels of communication (noticeboards, web-site & Facebook page) to publicise information on support available.

45/20 CBC MATTERS

Cllr Hailes reported on a number of on-going issues:-

- More dog fouling stencils were still required and it was hoped that the work would be carried out shortly.

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- Discussions had taken place between CBC and the RNLI which it was hoped would expedite the repairs to the lifeboat ramp. CBC officers had confirmed that the steps from the promenade to the beach could not be repaired and would not be replaced.
- CBC officers were looking again at repairs to the lights at the beach car park to assess whether lighting actually increased the risk of anti-social behaviour.
- The Manor had now re-opened with a new licensee. It had been agreed that there would be better supervision of the outside area at the front to reduce inconvenience to local residents. Cllr Hailes would continue to maintain contact with the new licensee.
- A resolution had now been found to the issue of school transport for post -16 students at Westlakes Academy following discussions between Cllr Whiteside and CCC officers.

46/20 POLICE REPORT

In the current circumstances it had been agreed that Sgt Ashbridge would postpone his visit until April.

47/20 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Risk Management/Business Continuity

The government restrictions to control the spread of coronavirus were likely to impact on the ways in which local councils functioned in the coming weeks. It was therefore necessary to consider how the council could continue to conduct business if restrictions prevented meetings being held or being quorate. Under current legislation it was not possible for meetings to take place by video or teleconference so temporary changes to the powers of delegation needed to be considered for the duration of these exceptional circumstances.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- The financial regulations be amended to increase the limit for emergency/exceptional expenditure which could be authorised by the Chairman & Clerk to £1000 per item
- The Clerk be given delegated power to authorise expenditure on any item up to the limit of the budget for that item of expenditure
- The powers delegated to the Clerk in Standing Orders to respond to planning applications be extended to give the Clerk the power, in consultation with the Chairman & Vice Chairman, to respond to any matter on which comments or decisions were required before the council was next able to meet.

(b) Finance Report

The summary of accounts at 29 February was received and noted. The draft Internal Audit report had been received and it was expected that the final report would be available in April.

(c) Waste Management

A letter had been received from CBC notifying an increase in charges for emptying litter bins to £5.95 per bin per collection from 1 April. This amounted to a 213% increase and would increase the annual costs from £1185 to £3713.

It was RESOLVED to contact CBC to express dissatisfaction about the scale of the increase and the lack of notice and to request a detailed breakdown of the charges.

(d) Annual Inspection of Assets

The annual inspection of assets was now due. It was agreed that each councillor would be allocated a list of items for inspection with reports to be sent to the Clerk.

(e) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002620 Water Plus Ltd– water/wastewater beach toilets Total £74.80
- Chq 002621 I McAndrew– conversion of web-site Total £100.00
- Chq 002622 J Donaldson– printer ink/postage £9.99 + £2.00 VAT Total £11.99
- Chq 002623 J Donaldson – salary March Total £565.42
- Chq 002624 HMRC – PAYE Qtr 4 Total £609.66

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- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service March £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (to be paid by SO)

Payments since last meeting to report:

- Answer 4-U – answering service £9.99 + £2.00 VAT Total £11.99 (paid by DD 17/03/20)

48/20 COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING

Following the presentation at the last meeting it was suggested that the Parish Council should consider whether there were any specific housing needs in the parish. Whilst there were many family-sized or larger properties, there was a lack of sheltered housing and smaller units for older people. A number of older residents had been forced to leave the village to find suitable accommodation. CBC had recently commissioned a housing needs survey and the Clerk would check when the results would be available. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would press for the provision of sheltered accommodation as part of any future development in the parish.

49/20 RIGHTS OF WAY

CCC was seeking comments on the proposal to amend the Definitive Map to show the correct position of the crossing of the railway on the footpath from Sea Mill Lane to Sea Mill. It was noted that this was simply a formal procedure to correct a long-standing error.

It was RESOLVED to support the proposed change.

It was noted that there had been further erosion of the path by the golf course. Whilst this was not a public right of way, it was a popular route for walkers. The matter had been reported to the landowners, the Trustees of St Bees School, who were taking appropriate action.

The lengthsman had installed a land drain by the gate from the playing field and Dandy Walk and had laid hardcore to make the footpath less muddy. Wood chippings from recent work in Priory Paddock would be used to further improve the drainage. It was reported that the spring on the gate was very strong and this made the gate difficult to open. However, it was noted that a strong spring was necessary to prevent livestock getting out of the field.

50/20 PROJECT REPORTS

(a) Beach Regeneration

(i) Cllr Kaldos had looked at the options for replacing the two springies at the play area. Two companies had agreed to come and meet Parish Council representatives to discuss products.

It was RESOLVED that £2000 be allocated from the Major Asset Reserve to cover the purchase of new equipment.

(ii) The self-closing mechanism for the gate was on order and the Clerk had discussed with CBC's play area inspector the best way to deal with the rust which had appeared on some of the metal parts of play equipment. His advice had been that rubbing down and repainting would not be effective and the affected parts would need either to be sent away for specialist treatment or replaced with stainless steel parts.

It was RESOLVED that a quotation be obtained for replacing the parts with stainless steel equivalents.

(iii) A further quotation had been received for repointing the Wainwright wall.

It was RESOLVED that the lower quotation (£225 + VAT) be accepted.

(iv) Cllr Linton reported that she had received a request that the Parish Council consider fencing the whole of the play area. The toddler area was fenced in accordance with safety guidelines. It was agreed that fencing of the whole area would not be cost effective.

(v) It was noted that there had been no further information on whether cycle stands could be provided as part of the Hidden Coast project. The Clerk would follow this up with the Project Officer.

(b) Traffic Calming/Speedwatch

The new Speedwatch rota was now in operation.

(c) Community Events

- The activities planned to celebrate the 900th anniversary of the Priory were now being reviewed in light of the restrictions on social gatherings. The planned ball and launch in May were to be cancelled.
- A beach litter pick had been arranged for 21 March as part of the Great Cumbria Litter Pick. This was an outdoor event and would not involve close contact between participants. Cllr Linton would review whether the event should go ahead.

(d) Tree Planting

Planting had taken place at the allotment field and further work was taking place at the Adams Recreation Ground.

(e) St Bees – Whitehaven Cycle Track

No progress could be made until the outcome of the judicial review of the approval of the new mine was known.

(f) Priory Paddock Pond Project

Pollarding had taken place in Priory Paddock.

(g) Station Car Park Extension

Cllr Taylor reported on progress with discussions with Network Rail. The next stage in discussions with Network Rail would be to initiate a formal request to change the current licence agreement to a longer term lease. This would incur legal costs and an ongoing increase in annual charges. It was agreed that it was important to investigate possible sources of capital funding before re-opening discussions with Network Rail. Cllr Taylor would make enquiries about possible sources of funding.

(h) Village in Bloom – New Base

A decision was still awaited on the planning application.

(i) Repairs to office (2020/21 Project)

One quotation had been received. A second contractor had visited and his quote was awaited.

51/20 CCC & HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Whiteside reported on a number of on-going matters.

(a) Highways had provided a design for the proposed markings around the Fleatham Croft/High House Rd junction which they believed would address the issues of poor visibility.

It was RESOLVED to support the proposed design.

(b) The possible extension of the pavement on Outrigg had been discussed at the Highways Working Group. There were some concerns about the steep gradient but detailed designs would be drawn up for consideration.

(c) It was hoped that repairs to the road surface between the level crossing and the Priory could take place over the summer if the necessary permits were obtained from Network Rail. Cllr Whiteside hoped that more information would be available for the next meeting.

(d) The request for time-limited parking restrictions between the Station Rd junction and the Priory entrance had been considered. One option would be to limit parking to 2 hours between 9.30am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday with no return within 1 hour. It was reported that parking in that area seemed to have been less of a problem in recent weeks.

It was RESOLVED to write to the PCC to seek their view on whether there was still a need for restrictions and, if so, whether the proposals were appropriate.

(e) Councillors reported that vehicles often parked on the area opposite the lych gate, forcing pedestrians to walk into the road. It was unclear whether this area was part of the public highway or belonged to St Bees School. Cllr Whiteside agreed to check ownership with CCC officers.

52/20 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The notes of the last Three Tier Meeting had been circulated.

53/20 ALLOTMENTS

Works 4 You Ltd had agreed to clear the vacant plot and remove the dilapidated shed at a cost of £50. Part of the wall adjoining the neighbouring property on Sea Mill Lane had collapsed. The Clerk would arrange for it to be repaired.

54/20 PLANNING

(a) New Planning Applications

The Planning Advisory Group reported on two new applications received for comment:-

- Ref 4/20/2078/0F1 Notification for prior approval for proposed change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house – Barn 1, Coneyside Farm, Coulderton
It was RESOLVED that there were no objections to this application.
- Ref 4/20/2079/0F1 Notification for prior approval for proposed change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house – Barn 2, Coneyside Farm, Coulderton
It was RESOLVED that there were no objections to this application.

Three applications had arrived immediately before the last meeting and there had been insufficient time for these to be considered at that the meeting. It was noted that the following comments had been sent to CBC under delegated powers on those applications as a response was needed before this meeting:

- Ref 4/20/2059/TPO Crown raise one sycamore & fell one sycamore protected by a TPO
1 Fleatham Gardens, High House Rd St Bees
In line with Parish Council policy on other similar applications concern was expressed about the number of applications for pruning/felling trees around Fleatham House and the gradual loss of tree cover.
- Ref 4/20/2060/0F1 Install motor vehicle barrier at entrance to caravan park (ANPR operated)
Seacote Park, St Bees
No objection had been raised.
- Ref 4/20/2063/0F1 Single storey extension to rear
1 Abbots Way, St Bees
No objection had been raised.

(b) Decisions by CBC

The following decisions had been made by CBC:

- 4/19/2427/0F1 Double storey extension to front & new raised terrace with balustrade –
9 The Crofts, St Bees REFUSED
- 4/20/2015/TPO Remedial work to various trees in conservation area
St Bees Priory PART APPROVED/PART REFUSED
- 4/20/2038/TPO Pre-construction pruning of red oak protected by TPO
Plot 4, Fleatham Gardens High House Rd WITHDRAWN

55/20 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report on on-going matters was received. It was noted that the issue of the bill for surface water drainage was still not finally resolved. CBC had been asked to supply Water Plus with evidence of ownership of the car park and toilets.

56/20 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Radio 3 Breakfast Show planned to broadcast the show from St Bees on 1 June. The Chairman had contacted the producer to suggest items of interest locally which could be featured.
- (b) The Environment Agency had published its response to EDF’s fourth round of consultation on Sizewell C. Noted.
- (c) Details had been received of the Cumbria in Bloom Pride in Your Community competition for 2020. Noted.
- (d) Details had been received of the Great Cumbrian Litter Pick, encouraging local communities to organise litter picking events over the weekend of 20-21 March. Cllr Linton was organising an event in St Bees on 21 March.
- (e) Details had been received of changes to Sellafield Ltd radioactive substances activities permit. It was noted that the changes were as expected following the end of reprocessing.
- (f) Crosby Ravensworth PC had circulated information on a tree and hedge survey undertaken in its parish which might assist other local councils planning similar surveys. Noted.
- (g) NALC had circulated links to government websites with the official advice on Coronavirus. Further information would be forwarded by NALC as/when available. Noted
- (h) Following the workshops at Westlakes last year three further Nuclear Think Tank events were planned in April and May followed by a conference later in the year in Preston. Details had been passed to those councillors who attended the earlier events.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- NALC Chief Executive’s Bulletins 21/2, 28/2 & 6/3/20
- Copeland Matters March
- Northern Gas Networks Stakeholder Update
- NW Coastal Access Update February
- CBC Bereavement Services Newsletter
- ACT Spring Gazette
- Police Update Whitehaven & District Edition March

57/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/FUTURE AGENDAS

It was noted that the Arts Society meeting on Wednesday 18 March had been cancelled.

58/20 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting would provisionally take place on MONDAY 20 APRIL 2020 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall subject to government restrictions on public meetings.

Signed.....

Date.....