

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of St Bees Parish Council held on
Monday 21 September 2020 at 6.30pm via Cisco Webex**

PRESENT: Cllr D Sim (in the Chair), P Argyle, G Gilmour, C Hale, A Kaldos, F Kennedy, A Linton
H Monaghan, D Millington, C Robson, E Taylor & the Clerk

In attendance: Cllr C Whiteside, County Councillor - Egremont North/St Bees
Cllr J Hailes, CBC Ward Councillor
Mr T Kelly, Trustee of St Bees School

94/20 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed Tom Kelly who would be giving a report on behalf of the Trustees of St Bees School.

95/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs N Bettinson, J Mellor and D Rothery

96/20 DISPENSATIONS & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

97/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised.

98/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2020

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 20 July be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

99/20 ST BEES SCHOOL

The Chairman invited Mr Kelly to give a report to the council on progress with re-opening the school and the Trustees' future plans.

Mr Kelly explained that in the early days after the school closed the Trustees' primary focus had been on securing the re-opening of the school. The school had re-opened with 8 pupils which had now increased to 53, including about 20 boarders from various countries. Having successfully re-opened the school, in 2018 the Trustees had begun to look at the buildings and land it owned and how these assets could best be used to support the purpose of the Trust, which was to provide education for children in St Bees. Some buildings such as Grindal and Barony House were empty and Abbotts Court was only partially occupied by a private business. All of these buildings were in need of extensive repair and maintenance and the costs involved were very significant. The Trustees had concluded that the right course of action was to divest themselves of land and property which was not likely to be required for the operation of the school and to use the proceeds to support the provision of education. Mr Kelly stressed that the Trustees' role was not to be property developers or land owners but their duty was to secure the purpose of the Trust in providing education in St Bees.

It was likely that a planning application would be submitted shortly by a private individual for building on the piece of land behind School House. Grindal House was now on the market and there had been interest from a number of developers in Abbotts Court and the land behind it. Mr Kelly stated that the Trustees were in discussions with someone who was interested in acquiring the property and land. The details of those discussions were confidential but the interested party had indicated that they would wish to retain the existing building.

Mr Kelly explained that the Trustees wanted to be open and transparent about their plans and the reasons behind them and wanted to ensure that the Parish Council was aware of the situation.

Councillors thanked Mr Kelly for explaining the background to the Trustees' plans and were pleased to hear that pupil numbers were increasing. In answer to questions Mr Kelly confirmed that the commitment to the school from its Chinese backers had not been affected by a recent deterioration in relations between the national governments. The Trustees were confident that the buildings to be sold would not be needed for boarding facilities in the future. The costs of bringing them up to the current standard for boarders would be prohibitive and new buildings would be a cheaper option.

The Chairman thanked Mr Kelly for his report and Mr Kelly then left the meeting.

100/20 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

(a) Financial Report

The account summary at 31 August was received together with the notes of the FRAG meeting on 10 September. Income was very slightly under budget and overall expenditure remained under budget. The Covid-19 situation had delayed progress with a number of projects but the expenditure budgets for Play Area and Fees would be kept under review by FRAG.

The recommendations of the Internal Audit report had been considered by FRAG and it was agreed that all the recommendations should be accepted and implemented.

It was noted that a contractor had been found to repair the faulty light at Fairladies footpath who was also prepared to carry out the routine testing.

The Clerk had investigated alternative options for the emptying of litter bins in light of the significant increase in charges by CBC. Whilst an alternative provider had provided a lower quote, it was felt that the service provided by CBC staff had been good and the service had been reliable. Use of the bins would be monitored and larger bins might also help to reduce the frequency of emptying,

It was RESOLVED that the recommendations in the FRAG report be accepted and that CBC continue to provide the service to empty litter bins.

(b) Risk Management

The risk register had been reviewed at the recent FRAG meeting and two amendments had been proposed.

It was RESOLVED that the amendments to the risk register be approved.

(c) Payments

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

- Chq 002672 PKF – professional fees £175.00 + £35.00 VAT Total £210.00
- Chq 002673 Works 4 You Ltd – grasscutting August £390.86 + £78.17 VAT Total £469.03
- Chq 002674 Npower -electricity to beach toilets £30.92 + £1.55 VAT Total £32.47
- Chq 002675 + 002676 J Donaldson – printer ink service August £6.66 + £1.33 VAT, monthly Webex costs £12.50 + £2.50 VAT & salary Sept (incl backdated salary award) £639.82 Total £662.81
- Chq 002677 HMRC – PAYE Qtr 2 -£721.20
- Thomas Milburn Property Ltd -toilet service £583.33 + £116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (to be paid by SO)

The following payments made since last meeting were noted:

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

Chq 002662 Works 4 You Ltd £390.86 +grasscutting July £390.86 + £78.17 Total £469.03

Chq 002663 YNH Ltd -domain name renewal Total £22.00

Chq 002664 + 002665 J Donaldson – salary £540.42, Webex monthly charge £12.50 + £2.50 VAT, printer ink £6.66 + £1.33 VAT Total £563.41

Thomas Milburn Property Ltd – toilet service (Aug) £583.33 +£116.67 VAT Total £700.00 (paid by SO)

Chq 002666 Npower – toilet electricity £31.65 +£1.58 VAT Total £33.23

Chq 002667 Playsafety Ltd – RoSPA inspections £182.50 + £36.50 VAT Total £219.00

Chq 002668 Information Commissioner – renewal of registration Total £40.00

Chq 002669 CBC – emptying litter bins Qtr1 & 2 Total £1639.82.00

Chq 002670 Water Plus Ltd– water/wastewater to toilets £537.73

Chq 002671 D Robinson – reimbursement for plants (VIB) £98.25 + £19.65 VAT Total £117.90

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

Water Plus Ltd – allotment water Total £48.58 (paid by DD)

101/20 CCC & HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Whiteside reported on a number of highways matters:-

- A virtual meeting was scheduled to take place on Friday between Highways officers and Parish Council representatives to discuss the cycle track project.
- The County Council had no responsibility for off-street parking so discussions about the Station car park extension project would need to take place with CBC but Highways officers would give any support they could.
- Major resurfacing improvements on the B5345 from the level crossing to Barony House which were planned to start on 1 August had been postponed and were now expected to take place during the October half term.
- The possible extension of the pavement on Outrigg was still under discussion but Cllr Whiteside was continuing to press for more positive progress. There had been further problems with parking around the entrance to the school on Outrigg since the start of term and Cllr Whiteside had requested visits by the Enforcement Team.
- Cllr Whiteside was seeking an update from the officers involved on plans to improve the junction of High House Rd and Fleatham Croft.
- Highways England were expected to begin a consultation on the improvements at the Moor Row & Linethwaite junctions on the A595 in the near future.

Councillors asked whether a firm date was available for the installation of the additional speed reduction measures at the northern entrance to the village. Cllr Whiteside agreed to follow this up with Highways and report back.

Councillors drew attention to the problems of large lorries trying to drive down Sea Mill Lane and finding that they were unable to get through the point where the road narrowed. There was nowhere for large vehicles to turn around without using private drives and in some cases damage had been caused to walls. There had also been instances recently of large camper vans driving down the road but finding that they could not get under the bridge. At present there was no signage at the entrance to Sea Mill Lane to warn drivers about the restricted width of the road or the height of the railway bridge.

It was RESOLVED to ask Highways to install suitable signage.

102/20 CBC MATTERS

Cllr Hailes reported that he was working with officers on a number of issues:-

- New dog fouling stencils had been painted.
- The former dog toilet was being resurfaced and would be used for cycle stands.
- The public telephone kiosk at the beach was being repaired and new equipment had been installed although it was not yet operational.
- The damaged interpretation board had not yet been repaired as its ownership seemed unclear. Councillors were able to clarify that the board had been installed by CBC in 2015 as part of a Coastal Communities project. Cllr Hailes agreed to follow this up with CBC officers.
- The ownership of the seat by the beach café was also discussed. It was confirmed that this was not owned or maintained by the Parish Council and stood on CBC land.
- A group of volunteers had offered to help with tidying the grounds around the empty property at Peck Mill and were in discussions to obtain permission.

103/20 PARKING ISSUES

Cllr Argyle explained that the Working Group proposed to carry out a survey across the village to identify the scale of the parking problems which could be used to inform longer term planning. Whilst the results of an online survey would be easier to analyse, it was felt that more people would respond to a questionnaire delivered to, and collected from, their property. Cllr Argyle offered to collate the results. Cllr Whiteside suggested that the draft questionnaire should be discussed with Highways officers who had experience of carrying out similar exercises.

Cllr Kaldos reported on discussions which had taken place with ACT about the possibility of developing a scheme for creating off-street parking in light of the planning consent for development of Outrigg Yard. A project of this nature might be difficult to fund whether by the Parish Council or by a Community Interest Company and at this stage no information was available on the price being asked

for the Outrigg site. The Working Group was also looking at other options and would report back to a future meeting.

104/20 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Central government had asked CCC and the six district councils to put forward proposals for a restructuring of local government in the county. CALC had issued an interim position statement, broadly supporting the need for reform, and was proposing a full consultation with parish and town councils in due course. Cllr Whiteside explained that central government was looking for proposals which would facilitate further devolution of powers. CCC Cabinet favoured one county-wide authority but other possibilities were being put forward including two unitary authorities with a Metro Mayor. Cllr Sim was to join the CALC Executive and would keep councillors informed as the situation developed.

105/20 PROJECT REPORTS

(a) Beach Regeneration & Play Area

The annual RoSPA inspection of the play areas had taken place and the new equipment for the toddler area was due to be installed within the next few days. Cllr Gilmour suggested that, as the play equipment was now several years old and maintenance requirements were increasing, it would be sensible to review the system for following up the regular inspection reports. He would discuss this with the Clerk and report back to the next meeting.

Work was expected to take place this week to repoint the Wainwright wall and arrangements were in hand to repaint the anchor and remount it on the wall.

Cllr Linton had followed up the idea of having adult fitness equipment at the beach and had provided some suggestions and prices. It was agreed that this was a project which should be considered for inclusion in the council's future plans. Cllr Linton would continue to look at issues such as siting and ongoing maintenance.

(b) Traffic Calming/Speedwatch

It was noted that Speedwatch sessions had resumed.

(c) Community Events

Some time ago a local company had offered to donate funds to provide a Christmas tree for the village this year. Cllr Taylor would confirm whether this would still be possible. The Clerk would confirm the price and availability of trees from the supplier used last year.

(d) Station Car Park Extension

Cllr Taylor explained that he had had some dialogue with Sellafield Ltd about support for the project and help was being sought from companies in the Sellafield supply chain to develop a business plan for the project. The project details had been posted on the Cumbria Exchange web-site.

Preliminary advice had been sought from CBC Planning Department who had provided useful guidance which would be considered as the project progressed.

(e) Cycle Track

A virtual meeting was due to take place on 25 September between Parish Council representatives and Highways officers. The new owners of the land at Abbey Wood had confirmed that they were supportive of the project but were unable to contribute funding.

At the last meeting it had been suggested that a neighbourhood or village plan might be useful in ensuring that Parish Council projects were recognised and supported in CBC and CCC plans. Cllr Gilmour had approached a member of the local community who was willing to provide help but could not take a lead role because of his other commitments. Cllr Kaldos had recently attended a CALC course on neighbourhood planning which had provided a useful introduction.

(f) Village in Bloom Base

The VIB Committee had identified a shed which met their requirements and the order would be placed shortly. Delivery was not expected until Jan/February. The shed would be painted green once erected to meet the planning conditions.

(g) Office Improvements

Work was due to take place this week to replace the windows in the office at the Village Hall.

(h) Tree Planting

Cllr Bettinson had reported that a number of young willows had been planted in a nursery bed.

106/20 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Taylor reported on the recent meeting of Sellafeld Parish Liaison Forum. Among topics discussed had been plans to move more staff off-site and to encourage park and ride and car sharing schemes. It was also planned to make some improvements to railway stations to encourage more staff to travel to work by train.

107/20 PLANNING**(a) New Planning Applications**

There had been three recent planning applications which had been considered by the Planning Advisory Group:

4/20/2319/0L1 Listed building consent for steel framed extension to house a wc and sheltered landing at first floor level: demolition of existing stand alone wc structure, staircase and porch. Remedial works comprising repainting timber, window surrounds and repointing existing stone work & repair of stone masonry units to chimney breast.

Signal Box, St Bees Station

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

4/20/2332/0F1 Extension of existing garage & formation of a new parking space
14 Firth Drive, St Bees

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

4/20/2345/0F1 Change of use from guest house to domestic dwelling
Tomlin House, Beach Rd, St Bees

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

(b) Decisions by CBC

It was noted that there had been no decisions affecting the parish since last meeting.

108/20 CLERK'S REPORT

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

109/20 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) CALC had provided information and guidance on the new web-site accessibility regulations which come into effect on 22 September. Noted.

(b) Details had been received from CCC on arrangements for the re-opening of Whitehaven library from 10 August. Noted.

(c) Information had been received on CCC's Highways Asset Management Strategy. Noted.

(d) Details had been received of the CALC Virtual AGM to be held on 26 Sept 2020 at 10.30am. Noted.

(e) Information had been received from CALC on the eligibility of parish councils for government business grants. Noted.

(f) Details had been received of DEFRA's Respect the Outdoors campaign. Noted.

(g) CALC had forwarded its interim position statement on Local Government Reorganisation. Noted.

(h) Details had been received of additional support available for Neighbourhood Planning Groups in urban and deprived areas. Noted.

(i) CBC had announced a consultation on the Local Plan to begin in late September. Noted.

(j) The Environment Agency had announced a consultation on an application from Sizewell B to change its existing radioactive substances permit. Noted.

(k) Details had been received of the Great British September Clean to take place between 11 and 27 September. Noted.

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- (l)CCC had forwarded a copy of the Order amending the Definitive Map to show the correct position of the crossing of the railway on FP423011. Noted.
- (m)Details had been received of CCC Cabinet’s approval of the proposal for local government reform. Noted.
- (n) Notification had been received of ACT AGM to be held via Zoom on 21 October. Noted
- (o) Details had been received of next Heath & Wellbeing Forum on 27 October. Noted.
- (p)CALC had provided briefing papers by three national stakeholders to help local councils understand and comment on the government White Paper on changes to the planning system. Noted.
- (q)Updated guidance had been received from ACT on the use of community buildings. Noted

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- CALC Newsletter Sept/Oct
- NALC Chief Executive’s Weekly Bulletins
- Copeland Matters
- Action for Health & Mental Health Provider Bulletin
- Cumbria Arts & Culture Network Newsletter
- Cumbria Police -weekly Covid-19 updates
- Rural Services Network – weekly bulletins
- Cumbria Tourism Update
- Natural England – NW Coastal Access Update

110/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION /FUTURE AGENDAS

- (a) The Triers had resumed their activities meeting on Thursdays at 6pm. It was hoped to restart the park runs on Saturday mornings in the near future.
- (b) Cllr Hale asked whether the new kissing gate to be installed on the Dandy Walk path would be suitable for pushchairs. It was noted that the gate would be to the standard design as used on the new golf course path which took into account disability access requirements and should be suitable for pushchairs.

111/20 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was RESOLVED that the next Parish Council meeting would take place on MONDAY 19 OCTOBER 2020 at 6.30pm via Cisco Webex.

Signed.....

Date.....