

Minutes of the Meeting of Crosthwaite and Lyth Parish Council held on 1st December 2011

PRESENT: Messrs M L Dobson (Chair), C Smith, M Casson, Ms M Harkness, J Bownass, D T Dobson. 18 members of the public.

In Attendance: Cllr J Holmes (SLDC), Cllr J Bland (CCC). Mr G Pitt (Clerk).

1. **APOLOGIES:** Mr M.J. Dobson,.

2. **MINUTES** of the meeting held on 3rd November 2011 (already circulated) were approved.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (not covered elsewhere in this agenda)**

Re 13.1 Clerk had inserted an advert for a replacement Clerk in Dec edition of Two Valleys magazine. There had been no response to date; he would follow up with an ad in CALC bulletin in January if necessary.

4. **SOUTH CUMBRIA WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT GROUP (SCWLMG)**

The Chairman agreed to allow members of the public to express their views on the issues raised under this item as a means of informing the decisions of the Parish Council when considering the questions asked in the EA's e-consultation process.

Matters Arising from previous Meeting

Letter to C&L Parishioners: The clerk reported that, having received advice on the information to be provided by the SCWLMG in the Parish Magazine, he used his discretion to withdraw from preparing a separate letter, recommending that effort should be put into filling the gaps left by the Mag. The PC members had been advised of his decision and no objections had been raised. He was taken to task by a number of the members of the public for having not implemented a decision of the PC. The Clerk maintained that the decision was far from clear cut and he was entitled to use his discretion in this matter, and in the event the vast majority of the population had had access to the SWLMG statement. The members of the public were clearly not satisfied by this response but no action was proposed or taken.

M Harkness; Statement on SCWLMG use of public funds: It was noted that MH had apologised to Councillor Holmes for making this statement which was incorrect. She had been told of the figures and used them in good faith but without checking them. She also apologised to those people present who had been at the previous meeting.

Extended closing date for e-consultation: J Holmes reported that he had pursued the request for an extension with EA but had received no formal response. He would continue to press EA but he considered it unlikely that they would agree at this stage

Consultation process to date – drop in session, Gilpin Bridge Inn 25th Nov. It was generally agreed that the drop in session had not been effective due to the sheer weight of numbers and hence the difficulty of getting to talk to representatives of EA and SCWLMG.

Email comments from RSPB: The Clerk tabled an extract from the RSPB website relating to the Lyth Valley. The comments were strongly in favour of wetting up the parts of the valley for the benefit of wetland birds and not in favour of maintaining the pumped system. The comments also suggested that the EA consultation was flawed because it did not offer this as a viable alternative.

South Lakeland Focus Extra (Lib Dem Circular); This paper, presumably delivered to all properties in the catchment areas, pointed out the IDB proposal to level charges on all, stating that there was no direct benefit. In effect the paper encouraged those affected to join in the consultation and to register their opposition to the option 2 proposals.

Riparian Rights & Duties: A list extracted from EA papers was tabled and was quoted to justify landowners' claims that they had no legal responsibility for water in watercourses after leaving their property.

Public Views: Many members of the public who were present gave their views both during the above items and also at this stage in the proceedings. It was clear that nearly all of those present were against the Feasibility Study's Option 2 as proposed by SCWLMG, on the grounds that there were no clear benefits. Riparian rights were quoted to justify the view that people in the catchment area but outside the direct area of drainage benefit had no responsibility for water leaving their land. There was one

dissenting view that uncertainty about long term food supplies and the need for food security should be considered before taking good land out of production..

Although not discussed explicitly it was clear that, even under option1 (Medway) there was no support for maintaining the pumping system. A number of people spoke in favour of the ‘Wetter Farming’ option described in the original Halcrow report (March 2010), questioning why this had not been given as a (costed) option in the feasibility report.

Cllr Daniel Dobson spoke up for the farmers in the community emphasising their self sufficiency and willingness to support each other. They had helped to build this community and were still an important element in maintaining the character of the valley. However many farmers were struggling to make a living in the current situation.- some support from the rest of the community would be welcome.

Much of this phase was punctuated by aggressive questions directed at the members of SCWLMG, critical of the Group’s proposals and of their calculations. John Holmes pointed out that the figures were reasonable estimates based on the information available and had been put forward as a guideline. The particular example of the proposed rate for businesses had reduced from £500 to £150pa as the original figure of 87 businesses provided, had been later changed to 387.

Eventually it was agreed that the PC should be allowed to discuss the real issue

PC Response to e-consultation

The Clerk tabled copies of the 18 consultation questions put forward by the EA as an aide memoire.

However it was decided that the majority of these questions were superfluous and the PC did not propose to complete an e-consultation, but to write to the EA giving their conclusions. The only significant question was no 12 which asked for views on the best boundary for an IDB – offering three alternatives – Option 1 (Medway), Option 2 (Hydrological Catchment) and Other.

There was no discussion of these options before Mary Harkness proposed and Martin Casson seconded a motion that ‘The Parish Council would not support any IDB requiring the use of public funds’. A vote was taken, resulting in the motion being approved by 4 votes to 1 (Daniel Dobson) with 1 abstention.

The Clerk was asked to write to the EA accordingly.

Action: Clerk

5. PARISH PLAN – PROGRESS REPORTS

5.1 Housing:

There had been no formal response to pleas for The Row and The Howe to be recognised as clusters linked to Crosthwaite Village, arising from C Smiths application to build a house for his daughter..

C Smith reported that there was to be a site visit.

Cllr Holmes reported that he had discussed this issue with LDNPA planners and confirmed that they were seeing this application as a test case which will provide the planners with a precedent in considering future applications.

The hearing of this application was scheduled for January. M Harkness would attend and speak at the meeting. Additional support would be welcome.

Neighbourhood Planning Pilots; No further information to date.

5.2 Roads and Traffic:

Highways Authority re A590/A5074 junction ; It was noted with regret that there had been another fatality on the dualled section of the A590 at the filter from A6, Levens Hall.

There was still no sign of the safety report promised by the Highways Authority for end September.

However consultation on ‘A590 Route Management Issues’ in Kendal on 16th November had been attended. by M Harkness, M Casson and M L Dobson..A number of suggestions for improving safety had been discussed but it appeared that the Highways Authority were not willing to consider a roundabout or lighting at this stage.

It was suggested that there had not yet been sufficient deaths (at £1.75M each) to warrant a roundabout (at £2.00M).

J Bownass was particularly concerned that speeds of traffic along the A590 past the junction with the A5074 made exiting from Gilpin Bridge and crossing from the westbound carriage way hazardous. The height of the sign on the central reservation was such as to obscure sightlines along the eastbound carriage way when turning across to Gilpin Bridge.

Clerk was asked to convey the PC’s concerns to the Authority.

Action: Clerk

Winter Gritting Contract – M Casson reported that the situation was well in hand, with a signed contract, a bank account and a request to the LAP for the committed funds. However so far no grit had

been delivered. Cllr Bland commented that there had been a disagreement in CCC cabinet over the distribution of stocks of grit, although adequate stocks were in place.

Safe Routes to School – Proposals were due to be discussed at the next LAP meeting on 8th Dec. M harkness would report back in due course.

5.3 Broadband: ‘Connecting Cumbria/Community Engagement’

J Sceal, (Broadband Champion) reported that he had attended an area board meeting the night before and would provide a report for the January PC meeting. One of the requests made at the meeting was for champions to encourage people to participate in a speed assessment survey, through a specified web site. John was thanked for his work on behalf of the PC.

5.4 First Responders.

J Holmes reported that he had applied to SWLAP for funds for 2 defibrillators. The Ceilidh had been a great success, netting £1075, largely due to Crosthwaite Exchange underwriting the costs.

5.5 Crime & Disorder:

PCSO Bullock and colleague had attended Xchange and intended to do so once per month.

6. GOVERNANCE

6.1 South Westmorland LAP: Next meeting 8th Dec.

It was noted that the automatic speed indicator would be available to C&L for two weeks in the next year.

6.2 Neighbourhood Forum: J Bownass had attended the meeting on 3rd November. His application for funds towards the resurfacing work in the entrance to the Recreation Field was successful and £950 had been awarded.

There had also been a report and discussion on the SC IDB proposals.

6.2 NALC – Briefing on the Localism Bill: The Bill received the royal assent on 15th November. This briefing confirmed the key measures contained in the Bill. Clerk was asked to forward the relevant email to members of the PC. Action: Clerk

7. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 CALC – Technical Reforms of Council Tax – Consultation: Invitation to respond. – item relating to levy full council tax on second homes may warrant a reply. Clerk to forward to PC Action: Clerk

7.2 CALC - Annual Report: Circulated

7.3 CALC – Geological Disposal of Radio Active Waste - ½ Day conference 7th January

John Sceal volunteered to attend and was given all the relevant paperwork.

7.4 CCC – Cumbria Rider – Bus/Rail/Ferry services (no timetables): Circulated

7.5 Natural England – Lakes & Dales Designation Project – Decision: Circulated

8. PLANNING MATTER

Permissions granted,

7/2011/5315 - Conversion of agric'l building at Gilpin Bank Farm for Mr P Edmundson

7/2011/5355.- Bunding Work at Meathop & Foulshaw Mosses for CWT

7/2011/5459 – Extensions & alterations at Broad Acres for Mr & Mrs Sumner

New applications ,

9 FINANCES (Since last meeting)

Income:	NSI interest (Nov)	£ 9.85
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Expenditure approved	G Pitt SLCC membership	£ 46.00
	Marcus Knipe (Grass cutting)	£125.00

An application from SL CAB was deferred until the next financial year.

Budgets/Precept 2012/13:

Clerk (re) tabled a draft budget for 2012/13 showing a possible surplus of £127 but only after dropping grants to First Responders and SCWLMG. He had also made no allowance for the increased costs of paying a new Clerk in the coming year – a possible increase of c£2,000pa. He had provided £1000 towards the gritting of minor roads but all of that amount may not be required. Reserves still stood at over £9000.

After some discussion it was agreed to increase the annual precept by £1250 to £4000pa. No charitable grants would be made, if necessary.

10. Property

Parish Room: Formal acceptance from Snooker Club of PC's offer of £3 per session plus a willingness to help in redecorating the Parish Room.

Bowling Green Field:

D Blair reported that he had been investigating the feasibility of planting trees on Bowling Green Field with help from the Woodland Trust and local volunteers. He was having some doubts about the field but would take advice from John Walker as how best to proceed. If planting is still feasible, he would proceed with an application to the Woodland Trust, with the help of the Clerk. Although trees provided by the Woodland Trust would be free, tree guards and posts would have to be funded locally.

PC were happy for Mr Blair to proceed on this basis and to assume responsibility for the site on completion of the planting project.

Action: Clerk

12 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC; None

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS;

13.1 J Holmes reported on a complaint about dog fouling on the Village Green – presumably from dogs associated with visitors to the adjacent holiday cottages. Putting up of signs was discussed but no final decision was taken.

Date of next Monthly Meeting: Thursday 5th January at 7.30pm, at the Parish Room.

GP 04/12/11