

Loweswater Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3rd November 2016 in Loweswater Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Mitchell (Chair), Leck, Todd, Walker and Robinson.

Apologies: Cllrs. Meadley and Astley.

Also in attendance: Cllr. Annison (ABC), Cath Johnston (LDNPA), Geoff Davies (LDNPA), Cllr. Alan Bowness (CCC) & David Smith (Clerk).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

71.16 Declarations of Interest:

There were no Declarations of Interest.

72.16 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the September meeting were accepted as an accurate record by the councillors present:

Proposed: Cllr. Mitchell
Seconded: Cllr. Robinson

The Chair duly signed them.

73.16 Report from the Northern Distinctive Area Parishes Representative (Geoff Davies):

Geoff Davies introduced himself and Cath Johnston, one of the Rangers working in the Northern Distinctive Area. Geoff explained that he was the Parishes representative for the NDA and he issues monthly reports which he hopes people find helpful and informative. He also hopes that they illustrate some of the interesting planning decisions he has been involved in as a member of the relevant committee.

The National Park has adopted the distinctive area way of working and the DA team meets up every two months. The team is made up of:

- 4 members of the Authority, one of which is Geoff
- 1 Planning Officer
- 1 Strategic Planning Officer
- 1 member of the Property Team
- 5 Rangers of whom Cath is the first point of contact for the wider community. Other rangers look after specific projects, rights of way issues and repair work.

Geoff mentioned that one of the other ways that the Authority communicates with Parish Councils, other than through himself and Cath, is the CALC organised Parish Forums. There are usually two of these a year, though the most recent one has been cancelled because of a perceived lack of interest. Geoff felt that the Forums should be supported and kept going and this was generally agreed by those present.

ACTION: Clerk to inform CALC that Loweswater PC would support the continuation of the Parish Forums.

Cllr. Mitchell asked about the Lake District Communities Fund and explained that the Council was currently fund-raising for some new notice-boards. Cath explained that the fund was for capital projects and had five priorities. She felt that the notice-board project would meet the Public realm priority and she will forward an application form to the Clerk.

ACTION: Clerk to complete and return the LDCF form.

Geoff provided the meeting with an update on the World Heritage Status bid in which he explained that two UNESCO inspectors had visited the NDA recently and spent a couple of nights in Borrowdale. The Authority will not find out anything until summer. If successful, the new status will not have any legislative impact but it is hoped that it will attract more international visitors who will stay longer in the area and visit at different times of the year. The bid highlights the importance of the farming community on shaping the landscape and, in general, farmers do seem to be supportive of the bid.

The North West Coastal Connections Project was discussed in light of the decision by the National Grid to put the new power lines underground as they pass through the National Park. There is also to be some work on removing existing pylons in the Park. However, there are still concerns that the new pylons will be running very close to the boundary of the National Park and lobbying is still continuing to try and change this proposal.

Cllr. Walker asked a question about ideas that have been discussed recently regarding trying to reduce flooding downstream. Both Geoff and Cath felt that the National Park was generally supportive of trying new methods of encouraging water filtration from the high fells to the valley bottoms, thus slowing down the flow of water in times of high rainfall. The introduction over time of more upland heaths might be one way of doing this but there is no 'one size fits all' answer to the problem of flooding. Cllr. Walker raised his concerns about the degradation of the peat fells in the Loweswater area and Cath agreed to meet with him to look at the issue on the ground.

ACTION: Cllr. Walker and Cath Johnston to meet up on site.

The Chair thanked both Geoff and Cath for their attendance at the meeting.

74.16 Public Participation:

The issue of an ambulance responding to a 999 call and getting stuck on the Old Mosser Road whilst following a sat nav was raised by councillors. The incident had occurred early on the morning of 16th October. An alternative ambulance was sent but it took over an hour for the second vehicle to arrive. Fortunately the lady for whom the ambulance had been sent made a full recovery but the outcome could have been much more serious. The Clerk handed round copies of a letter to the County Council from a First Responder who had attended the incident. Cllr. Bowness said he would make sure that the Area Highways Manager received a copy of the letter.

After some discussion, and reference to the numerous similar incidents that have occurred over the last three years, it was agreed that, in light of the most recent incident, the Council should write to Karl Melville, the Area Highways Manager, and ask Cumbria Highways to:

1. Install a larger blue sign at the northern end of the road stating that 'The road is unsuitable for motor vehicles beyond this point'.
2. Install a 'Ignore your Sat Nav' sign on the same post as the above.
3. Undertake some remedial works on the road itself as it is becoming dangerous for even farmers on tractors to use in certain sections, and local farmers do need to use this road to get to their stock.

ACTION: Cllr. Bowness to raise this issue with the Area Highways Manager.

ACTION: Clerk to write to the Area Highways Manager again and raise with him the concerns of the Council as outlined above

75.16 The Clerk's Report:

The Clerk reported that after the September meeting he had undertaken the following actions:

- 61.16: Clerk to speak to LDNPA Officer re: Jenkinson Place: Done and reported to Councillors

- 61.16: Clerk to contact Cumbria Highways re: work on road to Jenkinson Place: Done
- 62.16: Clerk to follow up grant for Notice-boards project with ABC: Done
- 62.16: Clerk to pull together application forms for match-funding: Ongoing
- 62.16: Clerk to contact ABC to find out what is happening with street-light opposite Dancing Pastures: Ongoing
- 63.16: Clerk to ask Cumbria Highways to repaint the SLOW signs on the road in the vicinity of Waterend: Done
- 65.16: Clerk to inform the LDNPA of the views of the Council: Done
- 65.16: Clerk to inform ABC of the views of the Council: Done.
- 67.16: Clerk to report highways concerns to Cumbria Highways: Done (see below)
- 67.16: Clerk to request the return of the bin to the lay-by between Waterend and Loweswater Hall: Done
- 69.16: Clerk to send out all payments: Done

Highways Issues: The Clerk reported that he is to meet up with the new highways engineer for the area on Thursday 10th November.

Mockerkin Issues: The Chair reported that the light opposite Dancing pastures was still not operational.

ACTION: Clerk to report it again and copy in Cllr. Annison.

A list of correspondence received, as below, was read out and duly noted by councillors.

Correspondence	For information	For action
LDNPA Allerdale Members Report: Aug & Sept	X	
CALC Newsletter: Sept & Oct	X	
Local Govt. Boundary Commission: Electoral Review	X	X
Discussion document: Insurance cover for Melbreak Communities	X	X
Letter from Carolyn Davies (Mel Com) confirming a grant of £300 towards the Notice-board Project	X	
Letter from Great North Air Ambulance seeking grant	X	X
Letter from HSBC re: bank closure	X	
Email from Pensions Regulator re: need for enrolment	X	
Copy of letter to CCC from Roger Hiley re: Mosser Road	X	X

The clerk informed the meeting that he did not meet the criteria that would mean that Loweswater Parish Council would need to enrol with a pension scheme and provide a pension for the Clerk.

76.16: Chairman's Announcements:

Cllr. Mitchell informed the meeting that a number of Mockerkin residents had raised their concerns about the continued deterioration of Mockerkin Hall despite various enforcement notices having been issued to the owners by Allerdale Borough Council. Cllr. Annison confirmed that an Improvement Order had been issued and that he would chase up the Enforcement Officer within the Planning department at the Council.

ACTION: Cllr. Annison to provide Councillors with an update on the Mockerkin Hall situation.

The Chair has been in contact with Mr. Starkie who has informed the Council that he does not require any expenses for maintenance of Mockerkin Green and he is happy to carry out the work again next year. It was noted that the work undertaken by Mr. Starkie had been of a high quality and was well received by local residents.

ACTION: Clerk to send a letter of thanks to Mr. Starkie via the Chair.

77.16: Update from Borough Councillor:

Cllr. Annison referred to the ongoing Electoral Review consultation which is seeking to reduce the number of Allerdale BC wards from 56 to 48. His ward of Crummock is one that is being considered for alteration and those present agreed that they would prefer to keep the boundary of the ward as it is.

The purple bags currently used in the recycling scheme are to be replaced in the near future with hessian sacks as the bags are not recyclable.

The Allerdale Investment Partnership has been in the news recently and Cllr. Annison explained that whilst there had been no breaking of the law by Allerdale Councillors, the scheme could have a long term negative impact on the Council finances.

Reporting back from other Parish Council meetings, Cllr. Annison expressed his concern that the new format of Police Report to local councils was not fit for purpose and suggested that Loweswater Parish Council write to the Police & Crime Commissioner expressing any concerns that Councillors might have. Those Councillors that had followed the link to the website confirmed that the figures given were two months out of date and as such completely useless.

ACTION: Clerk to write to the PCC about the new style of Police Report.

78.16 Draft Budget 2017/18:

Prior to the meeting, all councillors had received a copy of the proposed draft budget for the next financial year. Only minor changes were suggested to the various budget headings and no increase in the precept, currently set at £1,450, was suggested.

Councillors agreed the draft budget as:

Proposed: Cllr. Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr. Todd

Councillors agreed that there should be no increase in the Council Precept as:

Proposed: Cllr. Robinson

Seconded: Cllr. Walker

Action: Clerk to inform Allerdale BC that there would be no increase in the precept.

79.16 Finance:

The Clerk informed the meeting that the balance of the main account as of the most recent bank statement dated 15th October 2016 was £2,762.25p with all payments agreed at the last meeting having cleared through the account and the second tranche of the precept having been received from Allerdale BC. The balance of the reserve account was £2,360.80p thus giving a total balance of £5,123.05p

The Clerk reported that there were no payments outstanding.

The Clerk referred Councillors to two letters received. The first from the Great North Air Ambulance seeking a donation. It was agreed to hold off giving any donations to outside bodies until it became clear how much of the Council's funds would be required for the new notice-boards.

The second letter was from HSBC informing the Council that it was to close the Cockermouth branch in January of next year. The nearest branch would then be Workington. After some discussion it was agreed to keep the Parish Council accounts with the HSBC.

80.16 Planning:

There were no new planning applications to consider.

81.16 Report from the Police:

It was noted that there was a new PCSO, Clare Parker, covering the Parish. She had submitted her apologies for the meeting.

Further to the comments made by Cllr. Annison above, Councillors agreed that the new format of Police Report issued by the local PCSO's was not fit for purpose as it did not give an accurate, up to date view of incidents reported to the Police in the Parish.

ACTION: See above

82.16 Highways issues:

Cllr. Todd reported that the Gully cleaning wagon had undertaken work in the Church Bridge/Kirkstile area as requested at the September meeting but had missed two gullies.

The Clerk reported that an order for the re-painting of the SLOW signs on the road by Waterend had been placed and the work would be undertaken within the next two months.

Issues raised but still not addressed include:

1. Uneven road surface beyond Thrushbank
2. Breaking away of the road edge and associated pot holes on the Mockerkin to Fangs road
3. Flooding in the Pinfold area due to blockages
4. Despite a number of requests, the wheelie bin that was placed in the car park/lay-by between Waterend and Loweswater Hall has not been returned. Allerdale BC to be contacted again.

A new concern regarding large lorries negotiating the narrow section of road in Mockerkin has been raised. Some damage has occurred to adjacent buildings. This issue has arisen due to the use of ever larger vehicles for deliveries. There is a suitable diversion that could be used and this will be raised with the Area Engineer.

ACTION: Clerk & Chair to meet with the Area Engineer from Cumbria Highways.

ACTION: Clerk to contact cleansing at Allerdale BC and request the return of the bin and copy in Cllr. Annison.

83.16 Melbreak Communities Update:

Cllr. Leck reported back from the most recent meeting at which it had been agreed to award Loweswater PC £300 towards the new notice-boards.

The issue of insurance cover for the group had been raised and the Clerk referred to the briefing note from Mr. Poole of the Melbreak Communities in which he stated that he felt the community group should be covered under the current insurance arrangements that the four Parish Councils have. The Clerk then read out the response from the Parish Council's insurer:

In response to your below query, public liability would only extend to cover the community action group if they are an official sub-committee of the council.

In order for sub-committees to be covered under the above Parish Council Policy the following Criteria has to be complied with:-

1. *The minutes of the meetings of the Committee form part of and are incorporated into the minutes of the Parish Council.*

2. *Meetings of the Committee are open to the public in the same way as Parish Council Meetings.*

3. *Any accounts of the Committee form part of the accounts of the Parish Council and are subject to the Council's audit.*

If the above Criteria are complied with the Public Liability Section of the Policy would extend to include the Official Sub Committee, subject to the terms, conditions & exclusions of the Policy.

If not they will be required to have their own insurance.

The Clerk stated that two of the above criteria, 1 and 3, were not met by the Melbreak Communities Group and as such they would be required to find their own insurance cover. Councillors agreed that this was the best way forward. The Clerk confirmed that this response had been sent to Mr. Poole.

Cllr. Leck reported that there would be a Coffee Morning in the Loweswater Village Hall at the weekend and that the one to be held on December 10th in Lorton would focus on sustainable energy.

Upcoming meetings are: January 17th: Cllr. Robinson is to attend on behalf of the Council.

84.16 Date of next meeting:

Thursday 5th January 2017 at 8.00pm.

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____

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