

Loweswater Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd March 2018 in Loweswater Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Mitchell (Chair), Astley, Meadley, Todd, Thompson & Robinson.

Apologies: Cllrs. Leck & Annison (ABC).

Also in attendance: David Smith (Clerk), Mike Milner and 11 members of the public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

14.18 Declarations of Interest:

There were no Declarations of Interest.

15.18 Minutes of the previous meeting:

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

Proposed: Cllr. Astley
Seconded: Cllr. Meadley

The Chair duly signed them.

As there were a number of members of the public present the Chair asked everyone to introduce themselves.

16.18 Public Participation:

BT Planning application for erection of 13 poles:

A group of Mockerkin residents had attended the meeting to discuss the response of the Parish council to the recent proposal to erect 13 telegraph poles to carry the superfast broadband cable into the village. Cllr. Mitchell explained that she had been approached by a local farmer who had concerns about the proposal and this had resulted in a letter from the Parish Council as follows:

*Fibre Spine Planning,
BT Pole Objection Team,
6th Floor, Lancaster House ATE,
Old Hall Street, Liverpool, L3 9PY*

13/03/18

Dear Sirs,

Ref: Lamplugh PCP 13 (R5) New Agg Node

I am writing to you on behalf of Loweswater Parish Council to raise concerns with regard to plans to install 13 new poles as part of the roll out of superfast broadband to the village of Mockerkin in Cumbria. The new poles are due to be placed between the A5086 along a single track road to outside 'Westwinds' Mockerkin.

Whilst there is no wish on behalf of the Parish Council to delay the arrival of superfast broadband in Mockerkin, something that we have been waiting a number of years for, the proposed method of bring the cable into the village using poles as opposed to placing the cable underground has raised some concerns as below.

The proposed route is along a narrow tree lined road in an area known for high winds and increasing levels of storms bringing into question the long-term reliability of the over-head cable.

One of the poles, on the lower part of the road (closest to A5086), would make an already narrow stretch potentially more difficult to negotiate with some of the larger farm machinery, which regularly use this road.

The important task of hedgerow and roadside verge maintenance would be impacted following installation of said poles.

Over 20 years ago the telephone poles adjacent to the proposed new route were removed and telephone cable placed underground. It would seem to be a retrospective move to re-install poles, rather than follow a previously used route; especially when neighbouring areas all appear to have cables installed underground. This together with the above mentioned concerns make the installation of 13 poles, possibly appear expedient in the short term, but with ongoing maintenance of poles / wires and real potential for weather damage (including loss of superfast broadband access) a poor long-term solution.

We would ask that the cable is put underground, possibly alongside the route of the current telephone cable/s. This would also have the advantage of averting any potential impact on the surrounding scenery.

In conclusion we would like to reiterate that Loweswater Parish Council does not want to delay or de-scope the project to bring superfast broadband to Mockerkin but would ask you to kindly consider the above points and concerns. Should you require any further information about the above concerns then please do not hesitate to contact me.

A copy of the above letter was sent to the Connecting Cumbria Team who had informed local residents that the Parish Council had 'objected' to the planning application and that this would almost certainly delay the project to bring superfast broadband into Mockerkin.

A number of local residents expressed their concerns that the above letter did not accurately reflect the views of the majority of local residents present, most of whom had been pressing for superfast broadband in Mockerkin for a number of years as they felt that Mockerkin had been forgotten in the roll-out of broadband. It was also stated that they were disappointed that the Parish Council had not consulted more widely with local people to find out their views before sending any letter to BT. Whilst it was agreed that the use of poles to bring the cable into the village is not ideal, a number of those in attendance at the meeting felt that once it was in the village then any problems with the quality of the provision would have to be dealt with by the service provider and this may well include the burying of the cable at some future date. They reported that the most important thing is to get connected.

Whilst everyone present was in agreement that it was important that Mockerkin be connected to superfast broadband there were questions raised about the necessity of using poles which some felt was a step backwards and would leave the cable, and therefore the connection, vulnerable to the elements. It was agreed that the BT telephone cable, which was buried under the road along which the poles are to be erected, was probably not contained within ducting and therefore the superfast broadband cable could not be pulled through the ducting. However, the local farmer said he had no objections to burying the cable under his adjacent field without cost, though there would need to be liaison with the neighbouring farmer in order to bring the cable to Westwinds, and might be able to assist with digging the trench himself. He also explained to the meeting that he too had sent a letter to BT raising his concerns about the planning application.

After further discussions it was generally agreed that:

- More facts were required about the situation regarding the existing buried telephone cable.
- An on-site meeting with BT Openreach and Connecting Cumbria would be helpful.
- A letter should be sent by the Parish Council to reiterate that they did not wish to delay or de-scope the project to bring superfast broadband into Mockerkin, a copy of which should be sent to Connecting Cumbria and the local MP.

ACTION: Clerk to ask for an on-site meeting with BT and Connecting Cumbria.

ACTION: Clerk to send a second letter to the BT Pole Objection Team.

Mockerkin Hall:

A second concern raised by Mockerkin residents related to the continuing disrepair of Mockerkin Hall.

It was noted that over a number of years the building had been left to deteriorate and this had not been helped by the use of the building for illegal activities. However, the current state of the building, which is Grade 2 listed, is of real concern with windows missing, roof tiles missing from the surrounding buildings and debris falling from both the house and the buildings on a regular basis. It was felt that local children and residents were at risk when walking past the building, especially during inclement weather; and other concerns included the negative impact that the building was having on the sale of properties in the village.

The Chair explained that the Parish Council and Councillor Annison had been liaising with the Planning Compliance Team at Allerdale Borough Council over a number of years with regard to the matter and Allerdale had recently issued a Section 215 notice to the owner requiring them to undertake remedial works within a certain time frame (it was observed that this compliance notice only applied to the house and not to the adjacent buildings). However, it was noted that other Section 215 notices had been issued previously but the ownership of the building had changed, albeit within the same family, and this had set back the process of the owners having to undertake the work on the property.

Whilst it was agreed that Allerdale BC were doing what they could within the powers that they had, it was felt that a letter from the Parish Council to the Planning Team, and copied to English Heritage, expressing the wider concerns of the local community should be sent.

ACTION: Clerk to send a letter to Allerdale Planning Department and copied to local English Heritage officer.

17.18 Introduction to the new Clerk:

Mike Milner explained that he would be starting work as the new Clerk to Loweswater Parish Council on April 1st and would be liaising closely with both the existing Clerk and the Chair of the Council before that date. He currently is the Clerk to three Parish Councils, these being Lowca, Outerside & Allerby and Buttermere. He is also taking over the Clerks role at Lorton so eventually he will be Clerk to five Parish Councils. He had discussed with the Chief officer at CALC the idea of taking on five Parish Councils and she had felt that given his experience he should be able to manage the five. Mike went on to explain that whilst each Clerk had a different way of doing things, Councillors would not notice too many changes to the way the retiring Clerk had undertaken his work. However, there was one area where he would like to bring about a change in the new financial year and that would be to initiate online banking for the Council. He also reminded Councillors that the grant of £350 from the Transparency Fund would be put towards a new laptop for use on work for Loweswater and Lorton Councils and that the new data protection laws meant that there would be changes impacting on the Parish Council down the line.

All those present wished Mike well in his new role.

18.18 The Clerk's Report:

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

03.18: Clerk to contact Cllr. Bowness regarding the sign for the end of the Old Mosser road: Done see below

05.18: Clerk to get three quotes for removal of larch trees: Not done (see below)

06.18 Clerk to send PC meeting dates to the Police: Done

08.18: Clerk to send out all payments: Done

11.18: Clerk to write to Cumbria Highways re: gritting of valley road: Done see below

11.18: Clerk to report concerns to Highways Hotline: Done and ref numbers received

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

Correspondence	For information	For action
CALC Newsletter February & March	X	
Report from Allerdale Parishes LDNPA member: Dec, Jan & Feb	X	
Lakes District Communities Fund monitoring form	X	returned
HMRC confirmation of VAT refund	X	
Email from Steph Davis-Johnston CCC re: gritting & sign	X	see below
Notice of Allerdale 3 Tier Meeting: Allerdale House 22/03 at 7.00pm	X	

All relevant emails were forwarded to Councillors.

Thackthwaite Green: It was not possible to obtain three quotes in a timely manner so after discussion with the Chair and in liaison with Councillors it was agreed to accept the quote of £450 as received from Precision Tree Services as was allowed under the Financial regulations of the Council. Paul Livesey from Precision Tree Services has confirmed that he has completed the work and payment has been sent. Cllr. Astley confirmed that he would be able to get a work team on the site between Easter and the end of April.

Notice-boards: Some leakage has been reported, especially on the Thackthwaite board. Reids Joiners have been to investigate and have ordered rubber 'gaskets' for all the board doors which they say will deal with the problem. Councillors were reminded that the boards will need oiling from time to time.

Gritting & Signage: The response from Cumbria Highways stated that the sign requested for Old Mosser Road has now been ordered and is expected to be erected by the end of March 2018. In relation to the lack of gritting of the main road through the valley it was stated that the C2030, the C2030 (junction A5086 Mockerkin, Fangs Brow, Loweswater to the junction of the B5289) is currently on a Third Priority gritting route. This means it is treated in daylight hours only and if sub-zero temperatures are forecasted for more than 72 hours. This has been the situation now for several years. Officers will however be doing a full review of all the existing gritting routes in Allerdale to determine their suitability. Officers will consider if current routes should be extended, reduced, added, deleted, or reprioritised. The outcome of this review will then form part of a Winter Maintenance Paper that will go to Cabinet for decisions about which routes, if any, get adjusted. The concerns of the Parish Council about the C2030 will be incorporated into this review. Cllr. Todd informed the meeting that the salt bins and piles throughout the parish needed replenishing, especially in the Scale Hill area which requires salt bins rather than salt piles.

ACTION: Clerk to request the replenishing of the salt bins and piles in the Parish.

ACTION: Cllr. Astley and team of volunteers to undertake maintenance work on Thackthwaite Green site.

19.18: Chairman's Announcements:

Cllr. Mitchell reported back from the interviews for the Clerk and thanked Cllr. Todd for taking part in them. She informed the new Clerk that she was looking forward to working with him.

Local residents had contacted her regarding the various road closures in the area and the associated poor signage. All road closure notifications are now sent to the Melbreak Communities for placement on their notices section.

A number of hydro sacks and snakes have been delivered to various properties in the parish.

The Loweswater Care Programme held a meeting recently which the Chair attended and should anyone require an update on the activities of the group she had an additional copy of the summary report.

20.18: Update from the Borough Councillor:

Cllr. Annison had sent his apologies to the meeting but it was noted that, after his request, a new waste bin had been placed in the Waterend Lay-by. Councillors asked the Clerk to thank Cllr. Annison for his work on this issue.

ACTION: Clerk to thank Cllr. Annison.

21.18: Finance:

The Clerk informed the meeting that the balance of the main account as of the most recent bank statement dated 15th March 2018 was £2,634.81p with all payments agreed having cleared through the account. The balance in the reserve account was £2,362.45p thus giving a total balance of £4,997.26p

The Clerk reported that the following payments had been made prior to the meeting to ensure that they cleared through the account before the end of the financial year:

i. D. Smith - Salary Qtr 4:	£293.20p
ii: HMRC PAYE Qtr 4:	£63.20p
iii: D. Smith - Expenses Qtr :	£72.00p
iv: Precision Tree Services (Paul Livesey):	£450.00p

As all the above payments have now cleared through the main account, the total reconciled balance of the two accounts as of 22nd March 2018 is £4,997.26p as stated above.

The Clerk talked Councillors through a draft version of the End of Year Accounts explaining that the reduction in the end of year balance by some £2,000 from the previous year was solely related to the expenditure and fund raising related to the notice-boards. It was also stated that the Council had around £2,000, once current expenditure commitments were taken into account, that they could allocate to community projects should they wish to.

ACTION: Clerk to take End of Year Accounts to the Internal Verifier.

22.18: Planning:

There were no new planning applications to consider.

Two planning applications have been dealt with between meetings:

Ref: HOU/2018/0012
Location: Arendale, Fangs Brow, Loweswater
Proposal: Bedroom and garage extension
Reply by: Feb 8th 2018

A response of '**No Objections**' was sent to Allerdale BC Planning Department on February 7th.

Confirmation has been received that the application was granted permission.

Ref: 7/2018/2007
Location: Damson Ghyll, Loweswater CA13 ORR
Proposal: New entrance to existing house
Reply by: Feb 15th 2018

A response of '**No Objections**' was sent the LDNPA Planning Department on February 15th.

Confirmation has been received that the application was granted permission.

BT application for 13 poles:

The Parish Council was not a statutory consultee but after an approach from a local resident (see above) a letter expressing concerns was sent to BT, a copy of which has been sent to Councillors and Connecting Cumbria.

23.18: Report from the Police:

The Clerk reported that the police website there had been no reported incidents in the parish recently, though the website had not been updated since the end of January.

24.18: Highways issues:

The Clerk took Councillors through the list of actions previously reported and it was agreed that the majority of them had been completed. The exceptions were:

1. Various pot holes along the minor road by Muncaster House. It was agreed that this work had probably been put on hold until the building works in the vicinity were completed.
2. On the lane to Iredale place there is a blocked drain a little way along it. No one was aware if this work had been undertaken or not.
3. Ongoing drain repairs halfway along the Sosgill Road - works update required

Four new issues was raised:

4. Two pot holes on the minor road between Godferhead and the Thackthwaite Road.
5. Street lamp out in Mockerkin No. 8 just beyond Stubbs Ghyll.
6. Salt bin (AL579) in Mockerkin needs replenishing (plus the others in the Parish - see above)
7. Drains along the road by Mockerkin Hall are blocked.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up and report the above to Cumbria Highways and Allerdale Borough Council.

25.18: Melbreak Communities Update:

It was reported that the group had recently received an award of £1k from the Cumbria County Council reducing waste fund. This money was going to be used to deliver a series of workshops which intended to show people how to reduce clothing waste. The Coffee Mornings are continuing to be very successful and the most recent one was held on the 17th March by Lorton Garden Club.

The Melbreak Communities AGM is to be held on May 15th.

26.18: Date of next meeting:

Thursday 3rd May 2018 at 8.00pm.

Signed: _____

Chair

Date: _____

David Smith, Clerk to Loweswater Parish Council Tel: 016973 23296 Mob: 07742 224775 Email: loweswaterparishclerk@gmail.com