

Minutes of Allonby Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16th March via Zoom.

Attendance: Mr R Hart (Chair), Mr A Barnard, Mr G Browes, Mr A Jones, Mrs P Jones, Mr J Hanley, Mrs N Wingfield, Councillor Anthony Markley

8 members of the public were present – Ms Susan Anderson, Mr Frank Fleming, Ms Karen Yarney, Mrs Donna Pim, Mark Jenkinson MP, Hannah Dolan (Secretary to Mark Jenkinson), Dean Hanley, Tania Scott

Clerk: Mrs M Walker

Apologies for absence:

Requests for dispensation – none

Declaration of interests – none

To authorise the Chair to sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 16th January 2021 via Zoom – the minutes were agreed by full Council.

Mark Jenkinson MP addressed the meeting to talk about the new planning reforms. Towards the end of last year there was a consultation ‘Planning for the Future’, looking at reforms to the planning system which had been in place for almost 60 years. The reforms are designed to simplify the planning system. At the local plan stage, residents would designate part of their area for growth, renewal and protected areas, if appropriate. Local would then create design codes to help the vision of what they would like to see in their area. These codes would work alongside the Neighbourhood Scheme. He also talked about a bio diversity net gain from all developments that the new planning reforms were working towards. There is also a proposal to introduce a national infrastructure levy that would include affordable housing. The levy would give Councils a greater certainty as to what developments were happening and we would be able to plan with more clarity into the future. After further discussion surrounding the levy, Mark invited questions from those present. Councillor Browes asked what the timescale was for these changes? Mark responded that by the time the consultation went to report and then implementation it was likely to be 2023/24. The Chair asked whether windfarms were likely to be covered by this new legislation? Mark replied that support had moved from onshore developments to offshore. He hadn’t seen anything specifically about windfarms in the reforms and felt that locals would have more input regarding this issue. There was more support for tidal and wave energy than previously. Mark did not envisage seeing any application for large onshore developments. Siddick and Old Side were at the end of their 25 year lifespan and there was some discussion about expansion and replacement. Councillor Wingfield asked Mark if he would give an example of net gain bio diversity that might be applicable to Allonby? He suggested that there might be a 10% net gain from such things as bat boxes, hedgehog runs, linking green spaces etc, Councillor Wingfield was concerned about the loss of hedgerows and lack of planning regarding timing on developers behalf’s. She was concerned that the Environment Bill and the Planning Legislation actually referred to each other so that farmers were given the support that they needed to continue with land management in such a way, particularly on the Solway where we had a unique network of small fields patchwork to help soil erosion and thereby prevent further flooding. As there were no further questions, Mark Jenkinson left the meeting.

Potholes – The Chairman asked Councillor Wingfield if there was any further update from Joe Broomhead at Allerdale. She had not heard anything for a couple of weeks but the likelihood was that the car park next to the playpark would be given priority once sections of the cycle path had been completed and the better weather was upon us. Councillors agreed that in the meantime Simon Ringrose could make a start on some of the other potholes around the village. Councillor Barnard asked who was responsible for the

track from the road to the Surf Bar car park? It was recognised as Allerdale's responsibility and the Chair asked Councillor Wingfield if she could tack this report onto her question when contacting Joe Broomhead at Allerdale. Councillor Hanley brought up the matter of the pothole that was filled in on the back road just past the café. He felt that this had been done swiftly without being discussed between Councillors and he and other residents felt that it was not a priority. The Chairman responded that he had made the decision to get the pothole dealt with immediately on the grounds that it was a health and safety hazard. It was agreed by all Councillors that Simon Ringrose should start on filling the potholes and continue until the job was completed.

Website – Councillor Browes had nothing further to report. The new supplier had been agreed at the meeting in February. Our current suppliers contract ran out at the end of September. The Chairman asked the Clerk to write to our current supplier to let them know that we would not be renewing the contract after this year

Bollards on Cycle Track – the Chair had not heard anything from County and had contacted them again. Councillor Hanley wondered whether we should go ahead and install them. However, although we had their agreement in principle we did not have the paperwork that was necessary before the work could be done. With Easter looming, Councillors felt that the bollards needed installed as a matter of urgency.

Beck & Bridge – the bridge was currently being repaired and should be finished by Thursday at the latest. The beck had been put on the agenda at the request of Lynda and Tommy Higham through Councillor Barnard. Mr and Mrs Higham were considering starting up a Flood Action Group. They had been in touch with the Environment Agency and Mark Jenkinson MP. Once they had all the information to hand they would be contacting interested parties in the village and letting the Parish Council know the outcome. The Chair suggested that they also get in touch with Ian Hind at Allerdale if they were hoping to get a meeting together with County and the Environment Agency.

Toilet Block re-rendering – the re rendering and signage for the toilet doors are in hand and due to be carried out. The door that was kicked in last week has been repaired by Simon Ringrose and just needs re-painting. Councillor Pam Jones asked whether we had done anything to get any kind of financial backing to help us run the toilet block? Councillor Markley said that it was extremely unlikely that there were any pots of money available at Allerdale for help in running the toilets. He suggested that we could try asking the question to Community Development Officer at County – Lizzie Shaw. It was agreed that the toilet block should re-open one toilet in time for the Easter holidays and that Louise Richardson would clean again in line with Covid 19 regulations.

Police Report – nothing other than the usual Covid updates which all Councillors are aware of.

Grass Cutting – Andrew Sim had been in touch with Councillor Hanley and asked when we were thinking of having the grass cut again. The first cut is usually mid to end of April and then one a month from May. Councillor Wingfield had received a phone call from Anna at Get Cumbria Buzzing who was still very keen to get Allonby involved in the project if residents felt that they wanted to. The project still had money available and she suggested potentially doing a presentation on Zoom in two weeks time answering any questions that residents might have that could be collected via the PC Facebook page prior to the event. We also needed to consider that when we take over the greens in two or three years time, currently Allerdale are able to benefit from Higher Level Stewardship (HLS). In order to continue benefitting from this grant, we would need to be seen to be doing some work that complemented biodiversity. Karen Yarney was concerned that two weeks was not long enough to canvas the views of the whole village. Also she was concerned that not everyone has the internet/uses FB etc so we need to find a way to get in touch with everyone in the village. Councillor Pam Jones suggested as well as using social media that we use the ABC. She could not remember a time when all householders were leafleted. It was agreed that social media, the ABC and word of mouth were the three best ways of communicating this information. The

Chairman suggested contacting Viv Patterson at the Times and Star who was willing to promote the activities of the Parish Council. Councillor Wingfield agreed to write a piece for the ABC April edition.

Councillor Pam Jones at this point brought up the development of gardens on west green. She felt that the Parish Council should be making our view known. However, at the moment as we do not own the greens the Chairman responded that it is not our concern, but rather the concern of Allerdale Council. The Council do not have a policy on this issue and have had to put the matter in the hands of their legal department. The Estate Manager has been out to see the encroachments for himself.

Councillor Pam Jones also asked if the Parish Council could help out financially with the funding for cutting the grass in the graveyard as it was a parish facility. The people from Sedexo that normally cut the grass did not know when they would be able to next come out due to the pandemic and the graveyard was starting to look very unkempt. Karen Yarney volunteered to help cut the grass and it was agreed that a message be put out on FB to ask for further volunteers. If volunteers were not forthcoming, the Chairman suggested a £100 donation to go towards a professional grass cut.

Street Lighting – nothing to report, still in abeyance. The Chair would keep Councillors informed if there was any change.

Correspondence – the Clerk read out a copy of a letter that was sent to the Head of Legal Services at Allerdale regarding the gardens that had appeared on West Green. The letter was from Ian Gilmore of Garden Lane.

Reports from Committees – nothing to report as Committees had not been meeting.

Planning – the Clerk had not received anything. At this point, Dean Hanley asked if he could inform us that he was intending to set up a small business, a coffee van parked opposite Twentyman's in the car park. He had canvassed both Twentyman's and Jacks Surf Bar to make sure that they were not opposed to the idea and as he was serving espresso coffees etc. that neither business offered, they were quite happy with his proposal. The Chairman suggested that it would be helpful if he could have the two businesses comments and approval in writing.

Finance – The Clerk shared a document that showed all payments that had been made since the last meeting. Total paid out - £1,146.35. Balances 7/3/2021 c/a £7,515.24 Business Money Manager £20,189.97.

There had been a request for a donation towards the production of the ABC. The Chair suggested a donation of £100.00 and this was agreed by the Council.

The Chair remarked that he had noticed that there had been a 10.3% increase in the Council Tax which members may have seen when they received their Council Tax Notifications. He had sent an email to the finance section at Allerdale asking why there had been an increase when we had decided last year to keep our precept the same. He was awaiting a response.

Items for next agenda: Potholes, Bollards on cycle track, the beck, toilet block re rendering, grass cutting & the Get Cumbria Buzzing project.

Date and time of next meeting: It was agreed for the time being that we revert back to monthly meetings. Therefore the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 20th April at 7.30p.m. via Zoom.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45p.m.