

CROSTHWAITE AND LYTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on Monday 12 June 2023 at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Room, Crosthwaite

Present: Cllrs. Andrew Metcalfe (Chair), Matthew Dobson, Mary Harkness, Edward Sharp, Robert Sykes,

In Attendance: Cllr. S. Bavin (Westmorland & Furness Co.), Martin Curry (Clerk), Malcolm Richardson (RFO). No members of the public were present.

21/23 Apologies: The Clerk reported that apologies had been received from Cllrs. A. Dobson and H. Young.

22/23 Minutes: It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 22 May 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair. Having been elected as Vice-Chair to the Parish Council at the Annual Parish Meeting in May, Cllr. Harkness signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

23/23 Declarations of Interest: No interests in matters on the Agenda were declared.

24/23 Requests for Dispensation: No requests for dispensation had been received.

25/23 Chair's Announcements: The Chairman had no announcements to make.

26/23 Public Participation: There were no questions or comments raised from the floor.

27/23 Reports

a) Westmorland & Furness Council: Cllr. Bavin reported as follows:

- i) Following the approval of an engineering solution for the subsidence on the Lyth Valley Road, work is provisionally scheduled for the week commencing 11 September. It is possible that the road may have to be closed for approximately one week.
- ii) Work on potholes is making good progress and attention is also being given to drainage issues and culvert repair. A recent incidence of fly-tipping was noted. Parishioners are encouraged to continue to report highways matters through the W&FC website.
- iii) He was pleased to report that consideration is being given to a new policy to enable Parish Councils to more easily secure approval for 20 m.p.h. speed zones in appropriate locations.
- iv) Cllr. Bavin reported that the number of adults in need of social care has been significantly reduced but urged parishioners advise him if they are aware of care needs locally.
- v) In respect of the government consultation on whether new holiday-lets should be required to secure Change of Use consent under planning regulations the Clerk reported that representations had been submitted by the due date.

b) Crosthwaite and Lyth Eco Action Network (CLEAN): The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's submission to the CLEAN Group had been posted on the website. In liaison with Pat Howarth it had been agreed not to post the Minutes of the recent meeting on the website as the Group was only in the very early stages of formation.

c) Police: A recent edition of Focus had been published, otherwise no specific report had been received.

28/23 Planning

a) Councillors noted the following planning applications received from LDNPA and circulated to Members of the Council since the last meeting:

- i) **7/2023/5307 and 7/2023/5308: Mireside Farm, Crosthwaite LA8 8BT:** Alterations to farmhouse, conversion of traditional barns into three dwellings with local occupancy and other proposals. The Chair outlined the proposals, and it was noted that the plans were for conversions rather than new build. This was felt to be in keeping with the property and the conversion of a barn into three dwellings with local occupancy was welcomed. It was **Agreed** that there was no objection to these applications and the Clerk was requested to convey this to the planning authority.

b) To note any planning applications received and circulated to Members of the Council after publishing the Agenda – None had been received.

c) To note responses submitted to LDNPA: None had been required as a result of the May meeting.

d) To note decisions on the following planning applications as notified by LDNPA since the last meeting: No planning decisions relevant to Crosthwaite and Lyth had been received since the previous meeting.

e) To Note any other Planning Matters:

- i) **Sheds:** The Clerk confirmed that the Schedule of Sheds considered at the previous meeting had been submitted to LDNPA with a request to consider the status of those buildings in respect of planning consent. Matters at the Lyth Valley Hotel will be reviewed at the next meeting.

29/23 Highways and Footpaths

a) Highways matters:

There were no other highways matters other than those that had been dealt with under Cllr. Bavin's earlier report.

b) **Footpaths / Tracks Matters:** The Chair reported that Chris Smith has done a lot of verge strimming and cutting back hedges for which he was thanked. It appears that LDNPA has not so far cleared the footpath from the Church to Clapper Mill which is usually done by their volunteers. The Clerk was asked to write to the Authority to ask that this path and others be attended to.

c) **Invasive species:** Councillors noted that a report of Japanese knotweed referred to at the previous meeting had been confirmed and was being attended to. It was **Agreed** to monitor the appearance of invasive species and to consider responses where appropriate.

30/23 Trees, Woods, Hedges and Grass: There were no matters raised under this item.

31/23 Parish Land

a) **Letting of Vacant Parish Land:** The Clerk confirmed that he had written to both prospective tenants of Hubbersty Head and Cowmire Quarry in order to finalise the respective leases and was awaiting a response.

b) Other Land Related Matters

i) Bench to commemorate Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II:

- The revised price of £370 + VAT for the selected bench was approved subject to confirming whether there was a delivery charge;
- On location, the Clerk reported on a less positive response from Highways to a query about the suitability of Totter Bank vis a vis Hubbersty Head. This led to debate which concluded with a proposal from Cllr. Sykes that the Queen's bench agreed upon should be installed at Hubbersty Head. The proposal was **Approved**.

ii) **Proposed skate-board circuit:** It was **Agreed** to write to Chris Tomlinson (a promotor of the scheme) to advise her that the Parish Council supports the idea. On place, the view was expressed that the Recreation Field would be the most appropriate location and Cllr. Harkness **Agreed** to liaise with Chris T to confirm that she shared this opinion and if so then the idea should be put to those representing the facility. This led to discussion about the grant of £500 from the Parish Council to the Recreation Field Trust previously discussed and agreed. Concern was expressed that previous grants had been awarded without reference to a grants policy, and that conditions attached to a previous grant regarding football posts and nets had not been discharged. It was noted that consideration of a draft Grants and Donations Policy was the subject of a later Agenda item, but in the absence of one at present the RFO advised Members that the proposed grant contravened Financial Regulations and could be challenged in a future Internal Audit. Councillors considered the point that previous grants had been made without reference to a policy; without calling for accounts and without specific conditions and whilst acknowledging that these precedents did not justify future awards per se, Councillors also took into account that agreement in public to the current award had been made on several occasions. In conclusion, it was **Resolved** to send the cheque for £500 as a grant to the Recreational Field Trust together with a letter stating that the grant was made on condition that the Trustees provide copies of the current accounts and advise the Parish Council about how the award is to be spent. The Clerk was asked to draft a note to this effect for approval.

32/23 Neighbourhood Plan: The Chairman reported that work has continued and asked the Clerk to summarise progress. The Clerk reported that he had tried to set up an informal meeting with LDNPA in May to discuss Version 4 of the draft Plan but had not succeeded. He has subsequently written again to set this up. This Minute will be posted on the website (<https://www.crosthwaiteandlythpc.co.uk/>).

33/23 Emergency Planning Group: In the absence of Cllr. Dobson and Cllr. Young this item was deferred to a future meeting.

34/23 Finance:

- The RFO reported that there had been no receipts since the last meeting (other than investment income).
- There had been no receipts since publication of the Agenda.
- The following payments were **Approved**:
 - Jean Airey: Fee for Internal Audit £ 75.00
 - M R Curry: Salary and expenses May 2023 £342.43
 - HMRC: PAYE for April & May 2023 £150.60
- No payments had been made that required approval since publication of the Agenda
- Receipts and Payments Report for the year ended 31 March 2023: The RFO presented the Receipts and Payments Report for the year ended 31 March 2023 and advised Councillors that as payments in the

year were over £25,000 then the threshold for exemption from a limited assurance review had been exceeded. As a result, the accounts would need to go to external audit for which a fee will be payable.

- f) Asset Register as at 31 March 2023: The RFO presented the Asset Register updated to include the filing cabinet and alterations to the Parish Room. The Asset Register in the value of £142,100 was received and **Approved**.
- g) Annual Internal Audit Report 2022-23: The RFO presented the internal auditor's Report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and which recorded a satisfactory conclusion to the audit. Councillors **Approved** the contents of the Report and congratulated the RFO on the outcome.
- h) The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23: The RFO presented the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 which recorded the satisfactory discharge of governance requirements as confirmed by the Internal Audit Report. The Risk Assessment is currently being updated and will be presented for approval at the next meeting. Councillors **Approved** the Statement which was signed by the Chairman.
- i) The Accounting Statement 2022/23: The RFO presented the Accounting Statement for 2022/23 which was **Approved** by Councillors and signed by the Chairman.
- j) Councillors received and **Approved** the Notice of the period for the Exercise of Public Rights which will run from the 14 June to the 25 July 2023.
- k) The RFO confirmed the bank balance at 31 May 2023 as £26,610.43 and Councillors authorised the Chairman to counter-sign the bank statement.

35/23 Policies and Procedures

- a) Governance Documents: The RFO confirmed that Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Code of Conduct were all up to date and advised that Councillors could approve them as written. It was agreed unanimously that they be **Approved**.
- b) Grants and Donations Policy: The Clerk presented a draft Grants and Donations Policy updated with proposed amendments from Cllr. Sykes and the RFO. It was **Resolved** to adopt the amended version and place on the website.

36/23 Correspondence: The following items of correspondence were noted:

- a) 01/06/23: L M E Cartmell: The Clerk had provided a response to an enquiry confirming that there were no plans to include the correspondent's land as a potential green space in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) 04/06/23: J. Waldron: Notification about a patch of Japanese knotweed had been received and acknowledged.

37/23 Items 'for Information': No additional items for information were raised.

38/23 Councillors' Issues to be Raised

It was Agreed to put the following items on the Agenda of the next meeting:

- a) Update on the Shed Schedule
- b) Risk Assessment
- c) Budget comparisons for the 2022/23 financial year.

Date of next meeting – The next full Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 10 July 2023**

It was noted that following the disruptions to scheduled meetings caused by Easter and various Bank Holidays, the normal practice of meeting on the first Monday of the month will resume from the date of the September meeting.

The meeting finished at 8.43 p.m.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: