

CROSTHWAITE AND LYTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on Monday 22 May 2023 at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Room, Crosthwaite

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

In Attendance: Cllr. S. Bavin (Westmorland & Furness Co.), Martin Curry (Clerk) and no members of the public.

Cllr. Metcalfe welcomed all present to the Annual Parish Council Meeting of the Crosthwaite and Lyth Parish Council and stood down from the Chair. In the absence of the Vice-Chair (Cllr. Harkness – apologies received) Cllr. Sharp took over the Chair for the first item.

01/23 Election of Chair: Cllr. Sharp asked for nominations to the Office of Chair for the 2023-24 Parish year. In response to a question, Cllr. Metcalfe indicated his willingness to stand and he was proposed by Cllr. Sykes, seconded by Cllr. M. Dobson. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Metcalfe was elected unanimously. He signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair.

02/23 Election of Vice-Chair: On behalf of Cllr. Harkness (absent), Cllr. Metcalfe confirmed that she had indicated a willingness to stand and she was proposed by Cllr. Sharp, seconded by Cllr. M. Dobson. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Harkness was elected unanimously. The Clerk undertook to procure her signature on the Declaration of Acceptance of Office within the prescribed time.

03/23 Apologies: The Clerk reported that written apologies had been received from Cllrs. M. Harkness and A. Dobson and from M. Richardson (RFO).

04/23 Minutes: Following a representation from Cllr. S. Bavin (W&FC), it was **Agreed** to amend Minute 235/22(a)iv of the meeting held on 17 April to replace 'second homes' with 'holiday lets.' With the amendment made it was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 17 April 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

05/23 Declarations of Interest: No interests in matters on the Agenda were declared.

06/23 Requests for Dispensation: No requests for dispensation had been received.

07/23 Chair's Announcements: The Chairman had no announcements to make.

08/23 Public Participation: There were no questions or comments raised from the floor.

09/23 Reports

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

- i) Considerable work had been done on potholes with approximately two thirds attended to recently.
- ii) An alternative engineering solution has been approved for the subsidence on the Lyth Valley Road reducing the cost from an estimated £650K to £150K. It is anticipated that work will start in the Autumn. An abandoned red car on the roadside has been removed.
- iii) The next stage of consultation on proposals for improvements to the A590 will begin in the following week.
- iv) Highways are aware of Japanese knotweed in the locality and they will commence a 2-year eradication programme. Himalayan balsam is also present but not on areas for which Highways are responsible.
- v) He has spoken to United Utilities about fluctuating water pressures but has had no response as yet.
- v) He reported that there is currently a government consultation on whether new holiday-lets should be required to secure Change of Use consent under planning regulations. The consultation finishes on 07 June. Councillors agreed that the Parish Council should make a contribution. The Clerk was asked to explore the scope of the consultation and circulate possible responses for approval.

b) Crosthwaite and Lyth Eco Action Network (CLEAN): Councillors noted the recent meeting of the newly created CLEAN group on 11 May and that Minutes of the meeting had been circulated. The report on Council initiatives prepared by Cllr. Harkness and submitted to the Group was approved and it was **Agreed** that it should go onto the website.

c) Police: No report had been received.

d) Declarations of Financial Interest: Councillors noted the recommendation from the Clerk that they should check their respective Declarations of Financial Interests on the W&FC website.

10/23 The Annual Parish Meeting

Councillors confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 May had been a successful event and thanked contributors for their various reports. The Clerk had prepared and circulated draft Minutes and summarised matters requiring further Parish Council consideration as follows:

- a) The question of invasive plants (Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and hemlock) - to be considered as a future agenda item.
- b) A question from the floor had referenced the status of a grant from the Parish Council to the Great North Air Ambulance. Councillors confirmed that it had been agreed not to make a grant in this financial year as recorded in the Minutes of December 2022 at 187(d)(i).
- c) In response to a question from the floor, the Treasurer of the Recreation Field had confirmed that a grant of £500 had not yet been received from the Parish Council. The Chairman had indicated the intention to make this payment. Councillors revisited this matter with particular reference to a strongly expressed view which advocated that the Council should not pay out a grant without a proper written grant submission in which the applicant specifies what the money is needed for, and that it should require evidence on how it has been delivered. The RFO had supported this view in an email circulated to all on 17 May. Councillors present **Agreed** this approach and it was **Resolved** that the Clerk should draft a policy regarding the award of all future grants from the Parish Council, including criteria to be addressed by applicants. In the debate that ensued, it was noted that non-specific grants had been made in the past and there was a view expressed that, rightly or wrongly, an annual grant to the Recreation Field had been awarded almost as a matter of course for maintenance purposes. As a counter-point, it was acknowledged that a previous grant had been awarded to the Recreation Field for a specific purpose, but apparently not applied in the way intended. Councillors agreed that this would need to change in the future in accordance with protocols to be adopted. In the current circumstances, however, including Minute 187(d)(ii) (December 2022), and the public affirmation at the Annual Parish Meeting that the grant will be paid this time, Councillors confirmed the proposal to make a grant of £500 and with the support of all, the Chairman asked the Clerk to procure a cheque for £500 from the RFO for this purpose.
- d) On the question of grants, the Chairman reminded Councillors of the positive report from the Playgroup and floated the idea that grant support to it might be considered in the future.
- e) The possibility of providing a small skateboard circuit for the children of local residents had also been raised from the floor. At the Annual Parish Meeting and in the Parish Council meeting Councillors were enthusiastic about what was considered to be a worthwhile idea to provide a safe environment for local young people. It was noted that this would be driven from outwith the Parish Council and that the Cumbria Foundation would be a key supporter and funder of this initiative. It appeared that the Landowners of Crosthwaite and Lyth were expressing support for the scheme, and it was **Agreed** that the Parish Council should also offer its support in principle. It was noted that the Recreation Field has the potential to host such a facility and it was agreed to ask John Holmes to raise this with fellow Trustees and feedback on their views.

11/23 Planning

- a) **Councillors noted the following planning applications received from LDNPA** and circulated to Members of the Council since the last meeting:
 - i) **7/2023/5107: Espford Farm, Crosthwaite LA8 8BS – Notice of Intent (Agricultural) – erection of steel framed timber clad barn.** There were no strong views expressed and it was noted that there was no provision for consultation of this class of application.
- 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 April 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:** A list of sheds erected at various locations without planning permission and circulated by the Clerk was **Approved** for submission to the National Park Authority.

12/23 Highways and Footpaths

- a) **Highways matters:**
These had been dealt with under Cllr. Bavin's earlier report.
- b) **Footpaths / Tracks Matters:** Cllr. Young raised an observation about the grass that had not been cut around the edges of the entrance to the Parish Room and it was agreed to monitor this.

13/23 Trees, Woods, Hedges and Grass: There were no matters raised under this item.

14/23 Parish Land

- a) **Letting of Vacant Parish Land:** The Clerk confirmed that the letting of Hubbersty Head and Cowmire Quarry was progressing. It was **Agreed** to advise prospective tenants that insurance, including public insurance, was their responsibility.

- b) **To consider the Procurement and Siting of a Memorial Bench:** The Clerk confirmed that Highways had responded to a query about the suitability of sites at Totter Bank and Hubbersty Head, but whilst making positive suggestions about the latter, they had not commented on the former. The Clerk was asked to write back and get views on the suitability of Totter Bank as originally proposed. Councillors reviewed several options with benches made from plastic or wood. A vote **Agreed** by a majority of 4 in favour, none against (one abstention) that a bench made from re-cycled plastic is preferred. The Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Seat with a plaque from NBB Recycled Furniture at £345 + VAT was **Agreed** and the Clerk was instructed to make arrangements for procurement.

15/23 Neighbourhood Plan: The Chairman reported that work has continued and asked the Clerk to summarise progress. The Clerk gave a Report on work undertaken since his last report in April. His May report will be posted on the website (<https://www.crosthwaiteandlythpc.co.uk/>) as part of these Minutes.

16/23 Emergency Planning Group: In the absence of Cllr. Dobson, Cllr. Young agreed to continue to liaise with her in order to help with the progress on this initiative.

17/23 Finance:

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| a) The following receipts since the last meeting were noted: | |
| i. VAT refund to 31 March 2022 | £2,057.59 |
| ii. VAT refund to 31 March 2023 | £1,194.86 |
| iii. Westmorland & Furness Council – Precept 2022-23 | £11,695.00 |
| iv. Westmorland & Furness Council – Precept grant 2022-23 | £238.56 |
| b) The following payments made between meetings were approved: | |
| i. M R Curry – Salary and expenses April 2023 | £331.67 |
| ii. I Jones – Parish Room entrance lighting | £447.30 |
| iii. Alan G Fawcett – Roadside cutting | £408.00 |
| c) The following payment to be made was approved: | |
| Zurich Municipal – Annual insurance to 31 May 2024 | £512.06 |
| Councillors noted the new reduced 3-year deal negotiated by the RFO. | |
| d) The reconciled bank balance at 30 April 2023 was noted as: | £28,262.90 |
| e) Annual Governance and Accountability Return: It was noted that the RFO will present the 2022-23 AGAR for approval at the June meeting. | |

18/23 Correspondence: Items of correspondence listed on the Agenda were noted with particular comment as follows:

- a) 24/04/2023: Forestry Commission: The proposed planting at Pool Bank was noted with interest but without additional comment.

19/23 Items 'for Information': No additional items for information were raised.

20/23 Councillors' Issues to be Raised

No matters other than current open actions were raised.

Date of next meeting – The next two Parish Council Meetings were confirmed as to be:

Monday 12 June 2023: This meeting will be held primarily to approve the 2022-23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return to be presented by the RFO. Otherwise the Agenda may be limited to other essential items only.

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 9.10 p.m.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: