

CULGAITH PARISH COUNCIL

Minute of the Meeting Held on Monday 9th January 2017 in Skirwith Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm

1/17 Present

Cllrs: Caroline Richardson (Chair), Pauline Toppin (Vice Chair), Jill Hay, Marjory Helm, Philip Hemingway, Pam Jago, Ken Philipson, Laura Wilson, David Witney and one member of the public.

2/17 Apologies

County Councillor, Mary Robinson and District Councillor, Sheila Orchard

3/17 Appointment of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Chair welcomed John Fleming to the meeting and confirmed the appointment of John as Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer as from the 1st December 2016. The salary being the current Spinal Column Point 17 within the part – time Clerks range in scale LC1 and part LC2 as set out in the NALC 2014 – 2016 National Salary Award and the contract between the Council and John Fleming

The meeting recorded their thanks to Kathryn Binney for her service to the Council during her period of office. The Chair reported that Kathryn had been presented with a gift and flowers, on behalf of Councillors, as a token of their appreciation.

4/17 Minutes

The Chair was authorized to sign the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 7th November 2016, as a true record.

5/17 Declaration of Interests

John Fleming and Caroline Richardson declared an interest in agenda item 11.1/17, the repair/replacement of the bridge at the Mill, Blencarn, as Blencarn residents.

6/17 Public Participation

A member of the public, resident in Blencarn, addressed the meeting regarding the dangerous state of repair of the footbridge at the Mill, Blencarn. The meeting was reminded of the long history of this Permissive path, going back many generations, from the village to the mill, which passed over the bridge in question. The meeting was also reminded that the Parish Council was responsible for providing a new bridge in the early 1970's and that the Council further repaired the bridge in 1990 and 1998; his understanding was that the Parish Council, as a consequence, could be held responsible for its maintenance and he hoped that the Council could consider repairing the bridge.

7/17 County and District Councillors Reports - There were none

8/17 CALC AGM Report

Cllr Caroline Richardson gave a brief report of the meeting; a full set of minutes being available on the CALC web site. www.calc.org.uk. Jill Hay was re-elected to the CALC Executive.

9/17 Finance

9.1/17 The Following Balances were Noted as at 30/12/2016

HSBC Account:-	£ 1,521.67
NSI Account:-	£10,168.63
Vat to be claimed:-	£ 33.20
Total assets	£11,723.50

9.2/17 Interim Accounts

A set of interim accounts were tabled and unanimously accepted.

9.3/17 The Following Accounts were approved for Payment

Mark Binney – Beech Tree Blencarn - £22.50

Metal Star Penrith – Blencarn Notice Board - £42

Kathryn Binney – HMRC - £44.60

Kathryn Binney – Fee – £178.26

John Fleming – Mileage – 32 miles @ 45ppm - £14.40

John Fleming – Telephone/Broadband - £15.

John Fleming – Fee – as per cash book.

9.4/17 Precept and Budget for 2017 /18

9.4.1 In view of the predicted increased costs to be incurred to cover asset maintenance and to maintain support for the community, during the next financial year, a unanimous decision was made to lift the Precept by 5% as from April 2017.

9.4.2 A revised budget was unanimously approved and is on file.

9.5/17 Appointment of an Internal Auditor

As a consequence of the Council's internal Auditor, John Fleming, being appointed Parish Clerk, a unanimous decision was taken to appoint Sandra Harrison FTCA, Langwathby, as the replacement Internal Auditor.

9.6/17 On – Line Banking

Following an in depth discussion in which assurances over financial safeguards and compliance with the Councils Financial Regulations were given and accepted, a unanimous decision was made to adopt On – Line banking.

10/17 Planning

10.1/17 Brook View – Skirwith

The plans submitted regarding Brook View, Skirwith, had been supported.

10.2/17 The Adoption of Electronic Planning Consultation.

Reported that CALC was undertaking a consultation process, on behalf of EDC, over the wish of the Planning Department to move, totally, to Electronic Planning Consultation from 1st April 2017; whilst some Councillors were comfortable with viewing smaller sets of plans On - Line, reservation were expressed over the ability to comprehend a plans full impact and implications, when viewed on a small laptop screen. It was also noted that there was no Wi-Fi facilities in the Council's, village hall, meeting venues and this would make it impossible to consider a larger development requiring a full Council consultation at a meeting. To view E Mailed plans would require a Laptop projector and screen.

Decision – To explain the Councils concerns to the Planning Department, via CALC, and to request that the Parish Council continued to a paper copy in addition to the E Mailed version.

11/17 Highways and Land Matters

11.1/17 Repair of the Footbridge – Mill – Blencarn.

Following the discussion of this matter at the November meeting; further information was tabled in the form of a legal opinion from the NALC Solicitor (Copy on file) To summarize, this opinion confirmed the Councils original understanding that it was the landowners

the path, and not the Parish Councils; however as the Council has erected a bridge and has records identifying that it has maintained it in the past, it could be suggested that it already has a responsibility to continue with its maintenance and would query whether the Council has in place insurance in the event of unforeseen consequences or risk.

Decision – Following an in depth debate, in which an estimated quote for replacing the bridge was tabled, a decision was made to discuss the issue again at the March meeting, with a view to consider replacing the bridge, at the Councils expense, following receipt of a second quote, providing written consent was received from the landowners involved. It was also suggested that Newton Rigg College be approached to enquire if they would be interested in being involved with the renovation/replacement of the bridge, as a student project. It was also decided to add the bridge to the Asset Register, for insurance purposes.

11.2/17 Picnic Bench – Kirkland

The condition of the picnic bench, located on the village green at Kirkland, was discussed and accepted as past repair. It was recognised that this feature was a pleasant amenity that was enjoyed and was of value to the community and passing walkers.

Decision – It was decided to consider a replacement, with prices being sought, with a view to making a decision at the March meeting.

11.3/17 Tree Pruning – Adjacent to the Bus Shelter at Skirwith

It was noted that planning Permission had been granted (17/0019) to remove the two branches that were causing damage to the bus shelter roof and gutter.

Decision – Agreed to ask Chris Wakefield to remove and dispose of the branches in question.

11.4/17 Repair of Roof and Gutter of Skirwith Bus Shelter

As a consequence of the above branches being pruned.

Decision – To ask Alan Kitchen for an estimate to carry out the work required.

11.5/17 Roadside Verge – Culgaith Back Road.

It was reported that a large hole had developed on the verge approaching the right hand corner from the east. If masked by being full of water, it could seriously damage a vehicle if a driver pulled off the carriageway to avoid an oncoming vehicle.

Decision – Jill Hay to report to the Highways Department.

11.6/17 Tarn Drainage

Reported that drains had been cleaned and jetted. It was decided to monitor the situation, with Councillors reporting back to a subsequent meeting, if necessary.

11.7/17 Blocked Drains on the Skirwith/Langwathby Road

It was reported that the Highways Department had previously been made aware of the issue opposite the entrances to Abbey Farm; however a problem still existed with a lot of surface water standing on the roadside, this being particularly hazardous in icy conditions.

Decision – Jill Hay to report to the Highways Department with a view to arranging a site visit to involve herself and Laura Wilson.

11.8/17 Beech Tree Blencarn

It was reported that the surrounding protective fence had been removed and disposed of and the work completed satisfactorily to a high standard.

11.9/17 Blencarn Notice Board

Reported that the repair and re – installation was in hand.

11.10/217 Blencarn Light No. 4

Reported that this light had failed and as per EDC policy, would not be replaced.

12/17 Skirwith Playground

12.1/17 Committee

It was reported that a new committee of volunteers was being formed to manage this facility. Cllr Philip Hemingway to confirm with the Clerk their contact details, when they are available.

12.2/17 Insurance.

It was reported that Came and Company, the Council's insurers, would charge an extra £115.75 per year, commencing 1/6/2017, to cover the Play Ground, under the Council's existing policy. This being a saving on the current policy held by the Playground Committee. It was confirmed that the Council already covers this sum under its annual grant to the playground Committee.

Decision – To move the Playground Insurance to Came and Company as from the 1/6/2017. Steps being taken to ensure that the cancellation date of the existing policy coincides with the commencement date of the new cover.

13/17 Community Emergency Plan

Reported that the compiling of this plan was still ongoing and that a draft would be presented to the Council at the March meeting.

14/17 Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications.

14.1/17 Royal Garden Party

A nomination was sought by CALC for the 23rd May event being held at Buckingham Palace.

Decision – To nominate Jill Hay.

14.2/17 Cumbria Rural Forum

A 'Review Of the Cumbria Rural Forum' document has been received from 'ACT'.

14.3/17 Cumbria Walks and Talk Leaflet.

Reported that the Clerk had produced copies of this poster for distribution by the organisers, with a copy being posted on the four Parish Council notice boards.

14.4/17 NALC Login Details.

Reported that the Login Details for the NALC website have been issued. The Clerk would E Mail these to Councillors.

15/17 Councillor Matters

15.1/17 Poor Mobile Phone Reception in Sections of the Parish.

Concern was expressed that the poor or non-existent reception in certain areas was an emergency health issue, especially as there were no operational BT phone boxes in the Parish. In addition Government policy was for 'Smart' electricity meters to be installed throughout the country by 2020, these relied on a good mobile phone signal, it was reported that where a signal was weak in the Parish, such installations were not possible.

Decision – To take the matter up with, initially CALC and ACT and also with Rory Stewart, with a view to exerting pressure to bring about improvement.

15.2/17 Green Bins

A request had been received from a Kirkland parishioner that Green Bins be provided, as in other parishes, for the 2017 summer season.

Decision – To discuss this provision, again, with EDC following the signing off of the District Council budgets in March.

15.3/17 Footbridge – Kirkland Village Green.

It had been reported to the Council that the footbridge across the beck at Kirkland, by the entrance to Glebe Farm, was in need of repair.

Decision – It was agreed that the Council would consider repairing the bridge following two estimates being sought; a final decision being taken at the March meeting.

5.4/17 Road Drainage White Hall Corner, Blencarn.

It had been reported to the Council that excessive road drainage water was not being caught by the existing drains and was entering 'Ticklebury' Lonnen, causing an erosion problem.

Decision – Jill Hay to report the matter to the Highways Department.

15.5/17 Potholes Blencarn - Kirkland Road

Reported that a number of potholes were appearing on the Blencarn – Kirkland road.

Decision – Jill Hay to report to the Highways Department.

15.6/17 Defibrillator Signs

It was reported that should a Council require small signs, attached to the post of a village name sign, to inform passing traffic of the existence of a Defibrillator in the area, then it could be possible for the Highways Department to manufacture these at approximately £16 each + Vat, with them being installed at no cost. (eg **Defibrillator – Located outside Village Hall**); such signs being aimed specifically at non locals in the area.

Decision – For the Clerk to investigate the provision of six signs, two for Blencarn and four for Skirwith, being financed, if possible by grant aid; progress to be reported to the March meeting.

15.7/17 New Footway Lighting Culgaith.

Reported that the new lights that had been agreed have still not been installed. The Clerk would approach EDC for a progress report.

The member of the public left the meeting.

16/17 Grass Cutting Contract

The Grass Cutting tenders were opened and discussed.

Decision – To award the 2017 contract to Mark Binney Landscaping and Stonework as the most competitive tender.

17/17 Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

Monday 6th March 7.30pm 2017 – Blencarn Village Hall

Monday 8th May 7.30pm 2017 – The Annual Parish Meeting, followed by the AGM and May Council Meeting. – Culgaith Victoria Institute.

There being no further business the Chair thanked Councillors for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.30pm.