

# **Lorton Parish Council**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th September 2017**

**Present:** Cllrs. Poate (Chair), Deeks, Edmunds & Armstrong.

**Apologies:** Cllrs Postlethwaite, Aitken and Irlam all presented their apologies.

**Also in attendance:** Cllr. Annison (ABC), Cllr. Bowness (CCC), Ricky Crawford (CCC), Dave Smith (Clerk) & 15 members of the public.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **57.17 Declarations of Interest:**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **58.17 Minutes of the previous meeting:**

The minutes of the July meeting were accepted as an accurate record by the Councillors present and the Chair duly signed them.

### **59.17 Public Participation:**

Members of the public raised the following items:

Highways works in the Lorton area: The Chair asked Ricky Crawford, Highways Engineer for Allerdale, to give the meeting an overview on the works that would be happening in the area during the coming months. RC started by saying that the ways things had been undertaken by Cumbria Highways in the past had not always been the best and he was here tonight to try and explain to everyone that CH were going to take back control of the works and they are delivered rather than leaving it to the sub-contractors. The overall aim of the works is to get them done with as little disruption to the lives of local residents as possible and then leave Lorton with a drainage system that works and roads that have been resurfaced to a high standard. He also explained that the funding for the works has come through additional funding provided for the area by central government after the 2015 floods.

Phase 1, High Lorton from the village entrance to just past The Yew Tree Hall, of the works is due to start in on Monday 11th September and every house will receive a letter explaining what will be happening and when. The works will be rolling and there will be extra traffic management workers on duty to ensure that local residents who need help with access receive it. Works will start at around 8.00am and the last tar laying will usually be about 2.30pm. Access before and after these times should be relatively straightforward. Whilst the signs at each end of the road will state that the road is closed there will be access for local residents. the roads will be open over the week-ends. School buses will get through as usual and the kids will be picked up at their normal pick up points. Refuse wagons will also have access. Phase 1 is scheduled to last for five days.

Phase 2, Yew Tree Hall to the cross roads at Low Lorton, will commence on September 18th and also take five days with a similar rolling programme of works. The aim is to ensure that people have access to the shop and the school at all times. Local residents raised the issue of drains on Church Road which will be looked at, a request to leave the pavement as it is outside Kent Cottages. A request that the cobbles outside Rose Barn be left uncovered was noted. In response to a question about the camber of the resurfaced roads RC explained that the camber would aim to keep water away from houses. Other drainage issues raised included flooding at High Mill and a permanent puddle by Fellbarrow. RC noted these comments.

It was explained to RC that in parts of the village the highways drains and the local sewers were linked and perhaps it would better if some of the money available was spent on making sure that the sewers could cope better or separating the two systems. RC explained that they do talk to both United Utilities and the Environment Agency on a regular basis but it can be frustrating trying to deal with outside agencies. The lack of dredging local rivers was a particular concern.

RC stated that once the re-surfacing has been undertaken then no utilities organisation will be allowed to dig up the road for two years unless there is a dire emergency.

The work in the Scales area will commence on the 11th of October and last for approximately three weeks. If farmers have any special deliveries planned they should either get in touch through the Highways Hotline or talk to one of the traffic management workers about it. Letters detailing the work will be delivered on October 6th. Once again it will be a rolling programme of works with access for local residents.

The works on the Whinlatter Road are due to commence on 20th November with phase 1 running from the junction in the village to Scawgill Bridge. Phase 2 will look at the serious drainage issues around Scawgill Bridge and it is uncertain how long this work will last. Traffic lights will be used during these works. All the drains down the Whinlatter Road will be dealt with. Boonbeck road will have Access Only signs at either end and Road closed signs will be placed at the Braiththwaite end of the road. RC confirmed that Tenters Road was not in schedule but he would have a look at it.

Work on the Cockermouth to Lorton Road is scheduled to commence on January 8th and will last for 12 days.

It was confirmed that BT are wanting to undertake works on the road between Fangs Brow and Hopebeck. They have asked to carry out this work in October. Those present felt that January would be a better option so that the works did not interfere with local businesses during half term. RC said he would pass this on.

**ACTION: Clerk to email RC with a list of additional issues as and when provided by local residents.  
Clerk to confirm to Laura McClellan that the preferred time for the BT works would be January.**

Road safety in Low Lorton: Following the concerns expressed at the last meeting the Clerk explained that he had been in correspondence with Philip Groom from Cumbria Highways and Cllr. Bowness regarding the matter. Mr. Groom has agreed that two '*Pedestrians in the road*' signs should be erected in Low Lorton. He has further agreed to look at the viability of placing two '*SLOW*' signs on the road at either side of Low Lorton. He has stated that these works would be undertaken during the upcoming works on the highway in the area. RC provided a further update and stated that the '*SLOW*' signs had been agreed and that there would be new LORTON signs which would have the wording '*WELCOME TO LORTON - PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY*' This news was welcomed by all those present.

#### **60.17 Progress Reports:**

##### **A: The Clerk's Progress Report:**

Actions on the Clerk from the previous meeting:

48.17: Upon receipt of email from school pupil the Clerk will contact Cumbria Highways and raise the concerns expressed. Done and responses received. See agenda item.

48.17: Clerk to inform Cumbria Highways that Councillors had agreed to the work being undertaken on The Pound on the understanding that the area is to be returned to its current state. Done

48.17: Clerk to arrange a meeting with Mr. Williams. Done

48.17: Motion to be on the agenda for the September meeting. Postponed until November meeting due to number of Councillor apologies received.

- 48.17: Clerk to contact the Compliance Officer at the LDNPA for an update re: Low Lorton property: Done and reply received.
- 49.17: Clerk to contact Cumbria Highways with regard to on-road parking at Whinlatter. Email sent
- 49.17: Cllr. Deeks to update the bench schedule: Done and copy given to David Brindle (see below)
- 49.17 :Clerk to ask Councillors for locations of hedges requiring attention: See below
- 49.17: Clerk to complete newsletter and get printed.: Done and delivered.
- 52.17: Clerk to report relevant issues to Cumbria Highways: Done
- 53.17: Clerk to send out all payments: Done and all have cleared through the account

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

<b>Correspondence</b>	<b>For information</b>	<b>For action</b>
CALC Newsletter July/Aug & Sept	X	
Various emails re: road safety in Low Lorton	X	
Report from Allerdale Parishes LDNPA member: July & August	X	
BDO Completion of audit paperwork	X	X
Outcome of Code of Conduct complaint from ABC	X	
Notice of DCC meeting re: Croft Barn application	X	
Letter from issuance company re: new firm	X	
Emails re: Highways works in Lorton area	X	X
Email from Friends of the Lake District re: PC actions	X	X

#### **A: Parish Maintenance Report:**

Parish Benches: The Clerk has now met with David Brindle, re: bench maintenance work, and Mr. Brindle has suggested that benches 2, 8 & 9 are most in need of work. A price of £250 for the maintenance and repair of three benches has been given and the work will done, weather permitting, before the end of the year. Councillors agreed that this work should be undertaken at the price quoted.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform Mr. Brindle to proceed with the work.**

Hedges in the Parish: a number of complaints have been received regarding the need for cutting back of hedges in various parts of the Parish. In most cases it is the responsibility of the land-owner to maintain their hedges. It is understood that the Government have asked farmers and land-owners not to cut back hedges until September. The Clerk suggested that we wait until October before reporting hedges that need cutting back to Cumbria Highways.

**Action: Councillors to provide Clerk with locations of hedges requiring attention, the name of the land-owner.**

#### **B: Report from the Borough Councillor:**

Cllr. Anison reported that he had been working on the Scrutiny Committee recently looking at the proposed budget for the coming year.

#### **C: The Melbreak Communities Report:**

Cllr. Poate informed the meeting that the next meeting was in October and that the recently aquired hydro sacks and snakes were currently being stored in The Yew Tree Hall.

#### **D: The Parish Council Newsletter:**

The Clerk asked Councillors for articles for the winter edition of the newsletter and it was suggested that an article on Neighbourhood Planning would be useful (see below)

**ACTION: Councillors to provide Clerk with copy for the next edition of the newsletter.**

## **61.17 Planning:**

There were no new applications to consider.

One planning application has been dealt with between meetings:

**Ref:** 7/2017/2179  
**Location:** Swinside End Farm, Scales, High Lorton CA13 9UA  
**Proposal:** Roof over livestock handling area  
**Reply by:** 28th August 2017

A response of '**No Objections**' was sent on 23rd of August.

The Clerk drew the attention of councillors to the following email recently received from Friends of the Lake District and copies of which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting:

*I am writing to you as Clerk of Lorton Parish to convey our disappointment and concern that the above application was granted approval by the Lake District National Park Development Control Committee contrary to Officer recommendation this morning.*

*Instrumental in the decision to go against the recommendation and support the development was the lack of substantive position from Lorton Parish Council having returned a comment of 'no objection.'*

*Knowing as I do, having spoken to residents and scrutinised the planning file relating to this case, that there was an overwhelming level of objection from within the Parish (in the region of 3:1 objecting) I cannot comprehend how the Parish Council reached their decision of no objection. The role of the Parish Council is to reflect local feeling and I do not believe that this role has been fulfilled adequately on this occasion.*

*Given that a number of Parishioners have now lost faith in the current Parish Council, I would ask you to carefully consider this going forward in representing the community.*

*I understand that the Parish Council are to meet tonight. I respectfully ask that this issue is raised and I would be interested to hear what action the Parish Council intend to take to re-engage the community as a whole and to ensure that future debates around Parish life, including planning applications, truly express the views of Parishioners.*

*The 'affordable' element has been tacked on to the proposal as a way of getting it through the planning system. Given that there was no evidence of how this would be delivered in the application it is difficult to believe that there is a clear and true commitment to deliver affordable housing through this development.*

*Given that 'affordable housing' can mean up to 80% market value and that a similar property has just sold in Lorton for £450,000 it is reasonable to question for whom these houses would be affordable. Certainly not the 'young family' demographic which has been used as a major plus point for the development.*

*I fully support the desire to create and maintain vibrant sustainable communities, however, this application never demonstrated how it would contribute to that vision. Anyone moving in to the area will have to have access to a car to access employment and other services.*

*Having attended the Committee this morning I feel that the Community of Lorton have been let down by the Parish Council and that a dangerous precedent has now been set for future inappropriate development in the Parish.*

This generated much discussion and it was generally agreed that some valid points had been made. Mr Young suggested that the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Lorton might be a good way forward for

the community in that it would allow everyone the chance to consider what developments they would like to see happen and where in the village. The view was expressed that the Melbreak Communities Group and the Community Plan that was developed in 2011 might be the best vehicle for neighbourhood planning. Some concerns were expressed that the Melbreak Communities Group cover too wide an area and that neighbourhood planning issues in one of the four parishes might not be of concern in the other three. After some debate, it was agreed that a sub-group comprising two Parish Councillors, Deeks and Edmunds, together with Mr. Poate from the Melbreak Communities Group and Mr. Williams and Mr. Young should look into the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Lorton Parish and report back to the November meeting as to what is required, timescales, costs etc.

**ACTION: Neighbourhood Planning to be a separate agenda item at the November meeting.**

**ACTION: Clerk to respond to Laura Fiske from FOLD**

#### **62.17 Report from the Police:**

The Clerk reported that the most recent incidents on the Police website related to June 2017 and there were two incidents reported for Lorton Parish, both of which were described as being on or near the B5289. One incident was described as 'vehicle crime' and one as 'other theft'. Once again, both Councillors and members of the public expressed concerns about the style of the Police reports to the Council, the lack of information and the outdated nature of the information available.

#### **63.17 Highways issues:**

It was agreed that all the highway concerns had been expressed during the above agenda item with Ricky Crawford from Cumbria Highways.

#### **64.17 Finance:**

The Clerk reported that he had now received the End of Audit Report from BDO and that no items of concern had been raised.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the balance of the account as given in the most recent bank statement dated 15th August 2017 was £8,452.94p with all the payments agreed at the last meeting having cleared through the account.

The Clerk reported that the following payments were outstanding:

i: D. Smith Salary Qtr 2 (17/18):	£356.50p
ii: HMRC PAYE Qtr2 (17/18):	£89.00p
iii: D. Smith Expenses Qtr2 (17/18)	£87.00p
iv: R. McCree - grounds maintenance July & August:	£330.00p
v: Firpress Printers - Summer newsletter:	£99.00p

All councillors present agreed to these payments.

Taking the above payments into account, the reconciled balance of the PC account as of 6th September 2017 is £7,491.44p.

**ACTION: Clerk to send out all payments.**

#### **65.17 Reports from other meetings:**

Councillors had not attended any meetings since the last Parish Council meeting.

#### **66.17 Items for the next meeting:**

- Motion regarding Parish Councillors considering planning applications from other Parish Councillors
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Draft budget 18/19

**67.17 Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 1st November 2017 at 7.30pm**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

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