

# Lorton Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1st November 2017

**Present:** Cllrs. Poate (Chair), Postlethwaite, Aitken, Irlam, Deeks & Edmunds.

**Apologies:**

**Also in attendance:** Cllr. Annison (ABC), Olivia Harrison (Lorton School), Derek Poate (Yew Tree Hall), Dave Smith (Clerk) & 8 members of the public.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and undertook a round of introductions.

**68.17 Declarations of Interest:**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**69.17 Minutes of the previous meeting:**

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

**70.17 Public Participation:**

The Chair welcomed Olivia Harrison, the Head Teacher at Lorton School and asked her to provide the meeting with an update on the plans for an adventure playground situated on the Parish Field. Olivia explained that the process of developing the adventure playground project had been stalled for some eighteen months due to the school becoming part of an academy trust. However, things were now progressing again and the school had been working with a bid writing company who will be putting together a bid for £10k to go to the Awards for All grant funders. There has also been a revised plan for the adventure playground, one that will see it sited in a slightly different part of the Parish field and one that will leave the swings where they currently are. The total cost of the new playground is estimated to be £25k, minus the cost of the fencing, about half of which has already been raised. Olivia went on to explain that the main reason that she was at the meeting was to seek the approval of the Parish council for the re-siting of the playground on the Parish Field.

There followed some discussion regarding how close to the tennis courts the new site would be, the use of the various entrances onto the Parish Field. Cllr. Edmunds suggested that it would be a good idea for the school to have a conversation with the Tennis club before any final decision was made regarding the footprint of the adventure playground.

Cllr. Poate asked Olivia what she wanted from the parish Council at the meeting and Mrs. Harrison stated that she would like ensure that the school still had the support of the Parish Council given that there would be a new footprint for the playground. Councillors agreed that they still supported the development of an adventure playground on the Parish Field.

Following a question about school numbers, Mrs. Harrison explained that the number of pupils currently stood at 61 but come September she expected this number to increase.

**ACTION: Mrs. Harrison to keep the Parish Council updated on the progress of the Adventure Playground.**

**ACTION: The Academy trust solicitors are to contact the Clerk regarding a new agreement for the use of the Parish Field when the plans have been finalised.**

Derek Poate from the Yew Tree Hall committee updated the meeting on the recent works at the hall. He explained that the new toilets were now operational and that the committee was in the process of applying for a full, permanent licence for the hall that would, if granted, allow the hall to sell alcohol and show films without having to apply for a one-off licence. This would make the hall more attractive as a venue for a wide range of activities.

Following on from an initial discussion at the September meeting, Cllrs. Deeks and Edwards, together with Nick Young, had been undertaking some initial research on Neighbourhood Development Plans.

There have been a number of NDP's undertaken in Cumbria, some of which have yet to be completed. All the plans concentrate on planning for housing, affordable housing, small scale businesses and protection of historic environments and buildings. The NDP process can take over three years and there are a number of stages to go through, including at least two rounds of community consultation, the approval of the plan by an independent inspector and the holding of a local referendum at which over 50% of people voting have to support the plan. There is funding available to pay for a wide variety of works associated with the NDP.

Once in place, a neighbourhood plan gives the community more control over the way in which the local area develops. The NDP will become part of the Local Plan, formerly known as the Local Development Plan, which is used by the planning authority (LDNPA) when determining planning applications.

A number of questions were raised by those present and these included:

Q: Why bother doing this?

A: As a result of a couple of recent planning applications there was a feeling that the Parish Council was not in touch with the views of the local community.

Q: There is already a system in place for people who wish to object to a planning application, how will having a NDP help?

A: When completed the NDP will ensure that the planning authority have a better understanding of what the local community wants and doesn't want in terms of development in the local community. There will be more local control.

It was agreed that the two Councillors and one member of the public should report back to the January meeting once more information had been gathered.

**ACTION: Clerk to place Neighbourhood Development Plan on the agenda of the January meeting.**

**ACTION: Cllr. Deeks to provide a short introduction to Neighbourhood development Plans for the Winter newsletter.**

### **71.17 Planning:**

There was one new application to consider.

**Ref:** 7/2017/2262

**Location:** High Gilbrea, High Lorton CA13 9TX

**Proposal:** Proposed extension including demolition and re-build of existing attached stone building, part demolition of a lean-to outbuilding and erection of a new porch

**Reply by:** 9th November 2017

The applicant was in attendance and explained that he was presently living at Shatton Lodge but wished to moving into High Gilbrea once the extensions described in the application had been undertaken. He had bought both the High Gilbrea Farm and Cottage and had now sold the Farm and let out the 300 acres of farm land to local farmers. There would be a farm office in the developed building as the applicant owned other agricultural holdings elsewhere in the country. The nearest neighbours to High Gilbrea were also in

attendance and they stated that they were happy with the application and they were sure that the work to be undertaken would be of a high standard.

Councillors agreed that they had 'No Objections' to the application.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform the LDNPA of the views of the Council.**

**72.17 Progress Reports:**

**A: The Clerk’s Progress Report:**

Actions on the Clerk from the previous meeting:

59.17: Clerk to email Rikki Crawford with a list of additional highways issues as and when provided by local residents.: Done and response received.

59.17: Clerk to confirm to Cumbria Highways that the preferred times for the BT works on the highway would be January 18. Done and response received.

60.17: Clerk to confirm to Mr. Brindle that the price has been agreed and that the work should be undertaken on the benches: Done

60.17: Councillors to provide clerk with locations of hedges that require attention together with name of land-owner: None received

60.17: Councillors to provide clerk with copy for next edition of newsletter: One article received.

61.17: Clerk to inform the LDNPA of the views of the Council: Done

61.17: Neighbourhood Planning to be on the agenda of the next meeting: Done

61.17:Clerk to respond to Laura Fiske from FoLD: Letter sent

64.17: 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 September & October                         | X                      |                   |
| Report from Allerdale Parishes LDNPA member: August & Sept  | X                      |                   |
| Various emails regarding highways works in Lorton           | X                      | X                 |
| Letter from local police Inspector re: meetings with PCSO's | X                      |                   |
| Letter from Clerk re: resignation                           | X                      |                   |
| Email re: Lorton 10k road race - 10/3/18                    | X                      | X                 |
| Letter from Eden Housing re: vacancy Vale Cottages          | X                      |                   |
| Letter from Carol & John Priestley re: tree felling         | X                      |                   |
| Letter from the Great North Air Ambulance re: donation      | X                      | X                 |

**A: Parish Maintenance Report:**

Parish Benches: The Clerk reported that the bench situated by the side of the B5289 at Whitbeck Bridge is missing, presumed stolen. It was agreed that there should be no claim made to the insurance company to replace the bench, the Clerk having explained that there would be an excess of £150 payable by the Council. Councillors asked the Clerk to put together a short article for the Winter newsletter to see if any local resident would like to provide a new bench.

**ACTION: Clerk to place article in Winter Newsletter .**

Hedges in the Parish: The Clerk informed the meeting that he had yet to receive any information from Councillors regarding hedges that needed cutting back, though he had been in receipt of some information from local residents.

Recruitment of a new Clerk: The Clerk informed those present that the advert for the Lorton and Loweswater posts had appeared in the latest edition of The Link magazine but as yet he had had no enquires regarding the vacancy. Once the new hourly rate for the Clerk has been agreed, see below, then the advert will be sent to CALC for placing on their website and in the newsletter.

**ACTION: Clerk to send copy of revised vacancy advert to CALC**

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

Cllr. Annison reported that he was no longer working on the Scrutiny Committee but was now on the Audit Committee, the development Control Committee and the Licensing Committee all of which were very busy at present.

**C: The Melbreak Communities Report:**

Cllr. Irlam reported that the timetable for Coffee Mornings for 2018 was now complete and that the insurance concerns raised by those members of the group working on the Emergency Plan had now been addressed. Some of the recently purchased Hydro Snakes had been used during the recent heavy rain and had worked well.

**D: The Parish Council Newsletter:**

The Clerk asked Councillors for articles for the winter edition of the newsletter and gave a deadline for receipt of November 30th.

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

**73.17 Motion for consideration by the Council:**

The motion below was considered by Councillors:

***'It is proposed that, in the interests of transparency, Lorton Parish Council will not consider any future planning applications submitted to the Planning Authority by any member or employee of the Parish Council or their spouse/partner'.***

The Clerk provided Councillors with the following information:

At the July meeting of the Council a member of public asked the Council to consider not giving an official view on any planning application submitted by a member of the Council. The reason given was that as Parish Councillors met each other at the six Council meetings per year, and numerous other community events, the interpersonal relationships developed over time between Councillors should be recognised and should lead to all Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest, due to friendship, in any application submitted by another Councillor. It was further suggested that a motion (see above) to this effect should be put to the Council and that for the sake of clarity and transparency this motion should be adopted by the Council. Councillors agreed that such a motion should be considered by the Council.

As with all planning applications, it is up to individual Councillors to decide whether they should or should not declare an interest. They do not have to give reasons for their decision but, as happened on three occasions recently, they may have to justify their decision to the Standards Committee at Allerdale Borough Council should a complaint be made against them. Over recent years there have been three planning applications submitted by Parish Councillors and, other than the individual Councillors concerned, no other Parish Councillors declared an interest in these applications.

There followed some discussion on the motion and the issues raised. Cllr. Deeks felt that if the motion was supported then it would lead to the Council effectively being inquorate in the event of a planning application

being submitted by a Parish Councillor. This would in turn mean that members of the public would not be able to have their say on the application in a local forum. He felt the ability of local people to have their say locally on any given planning application was important and that was why he would not be supporting the motion.

The Chair asked those councillors present to indicate whether they supported or opposed the motion. Five opposed the motion and one abstained.

#### **74.17 Report from the Police:**

The Clerk reported that the most recent incident on the Police website related to August 2017 which was described as 'other theft' being on or near the B5289. One incident as 'other theft'.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that they had been invited to a meeting with the PCSO for the area on November 9th at 7.00pm in Cockermouth Police Station with PCSO Todd Stuart.

**ACTION: Cllr. Postlethwaite to attend the meeting.**

#### **75.17 Highways issues:**

It was noted that much of the resurfacing work that had been discussed at the September meeting had now been undertaken and it was also noted that both the contractor and Cumbria Highways had taken onboard the concerns of local people and worked them. It was further noted the additional resurfacing works are to be undertaken before Christmas.

Concerns raised by those present included:

- The camber on a stretch of road recently laid in High Lorton between Lorton Hall and the road up to the Whinlatter Road does not seem to taking the rain away from adjacent houses.
- A number of drains are blocked along the B5292 between the entrance to High Gilbrea and Terrace Farm.
- A number of drains are blocked along the B5289 between the Wheatsheaf pub and Winder Hall
- Fallen leaves in the village are causing some drain blocking problems.

**ACTION: The Clerk to report the above to Cumbria Highways and request a visit from the leaf sweeper from Allerdale BC.**

#### **76.17 Draft Budget 2018/19:**

The Clerk had previously circulated the proposed draft budget for the financial year 2018/19. He highlight the two major changes to the current budget, these being an increase in the hourly rate paid to the Clerk from £9.90 to £11.05, this being SCP 23 on the Local Government pay-scale, and an increase in the training budget to £100 should the new Clerk require any training to undertake his/her role. No increase in the precept was proposed.

Councillors accepted the draft budget as proposed and agreed that there should be no increase in the precept.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform Allerdale BC that there would be no increase in the precept for 18/19.**

#### **77.17 Finance:**

The Clerk reminded those present that they had received a request from the Great North Air Ambulance for financial support for the coming year. Councillors agreed to provide £150.00p.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the balance of the account as given in the most recent bank statement dated 15th October 2017 was £10,241.43p with all the payments agreed at the last meeting having cleared through the account and the second instalment of the Parish Precept, £2,749.99p, having been received.

The Clerk reported that the following payments were outstanding:

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| i: R. McCree - grounds maintenance September & October: | £330.00p |
| ii: Great North Air Ambulance:                          | £150.00p |

All councillors present agreed to these payments.

Taking the above payment into account, the reconciled balance of the PC account as of 1st November 2017 is £9,761.43p.

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

**78.17 Reports from other meetings:**

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

**79.17 Items for the next meeting:**

- Neighbourhood Planning

**80.17 Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 3rd January 2018 at 7.30pm**

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

David Smith, Clerk to Lorton Parish Council Tel: 016973 23296 Mob: 07742 224775 Email: [lortonparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:lortonparishclerk@gmail.com)