

Buttermere Parish Council

Minutes of the annual general meeting of Buttermere Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th May 2020 by Zoom conference platform at 7.30pm followed by May parish council meeting.

For future public record, this parish council meeting was held using the Zoom video conferencing facility. In March 2020 following a pandemic outbreak of Coronavirus, officially named Corvid 19, the UK government had on 23rd March announced a national lockdown on UK citizens with far reaching restrictions. One of which was to ban public meetings of more than 2 people and those participants must maintain a social distancing of 2mt between them. The government in early April brought in legislation which permitted local authorities, including parish councils, to meet using a video conferencing facility. The parish clerk studied the options from readily available Skype, Microsoft Team, and others before settling on a paid for monthly subscription using Zoom. This system will continue in use until such time as the government allows the return of public gatherings and meetings in community buildings.

Video link Meeting opened: - The chairman declared the meeting open at 7.32pm

Present: Cllrs R Beard (chair), Y Kahane, E Beard, L Kyle. J Temple.

District and County Councillors: Neither present.

Clerk: Mike Milner.

Apologies for absence: R Wilkinson (BPC).

161.00 Apologies. As noted above.

162.00 Appoint a chairman and vice-chairman for the coming year.

162.01 Cllr R B announced that having been a parish councillor for 39 years and chairman since 1991 he was now standing down as chairman, but would remain on the Buttermere parish council as a councillor. He asked for nominations for a new chairman. Cllr R B proposed Cllr Y K which was seconded by Cllr E B. No other nominations and all Cllrs approved Cllr Y K as chair. She thanked the Cllrs for their support and thanked Cllr R B for his tenure as chair and remarked that she was glad to discover he was remaining as a Cllr so she would have his experience to call upon.

162.02 Cllr Y K then commenced her term as chair by asking for nominations for a vice-chair and she proposed Cllr E B, which was seconded by Cllr J T. There were no other nominations, so Cllr E B was unanimously approved.

163.00 Declaration of Interest.

163.01 Chair advised that she had already sent personal note of support to LDNP regarding 7/2020/2110 and Cllr J T acknowledged he had provided professional report on Bat survey for 7/2020/2081. These declarations did not interfere with Cllrs involvement at council level.

164.00 To approve and accept the minutes of the last Buttermere parish council meeting held on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 as a true record.

164.01 Cllrs unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd March 2020.

Cllr L K joined the video meeting at 7.37pm.

165.00 Police Matters.

165.01 Clerk advised that the Cumbria Police website at Area Map option came up with Error 404 code. Obviously due to Corvid 19, lack of manpower to maintain the service.

166.00 District and County Councillors Reports. Neither present to make reports.

167.00 Applications for development.

167.01 Chair advised having studied 7/2020/2108 & 2109, Low Hollins, Loweswater she raised no objections. Cllrs agreed unanimously. As property is a listed building such applications require legally a local application and a listed building application.

167.02 7/2020/2118 Bowder Beck, chair advised it covered replacement opening casements, and other windows, Cllrs all agreed no objections.

167.03 7/2020/2081 Cornhow Farm, chair advised that the application was to utilise an existing farm building built in 1990's, cavity wall construction with a tin roof. As Cllr J T pointed out the existing building was to remain, openings and internals to be altered as per plan but roof will be replaced with a slate one. All councillors agreed the change was appropriate and no objections.

167.04 7/2020/2110 Old Vicarage, Buttermere, chair advised it involved the development of a single storey porch extension and change to an existing roof line. She had already written supporting the proposal, Cllrs all agreed an appropriate change to the property, no objections. Clerk would advise LDNP Planning of council's decisions.

168.00 Receive and approve the parish council accounts for financial year 2019/20. Internal auditors report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statement for the year all to be resolved. Bank reconciliation and variance report.

168.01 Clerk advised that he had only been advised on evening of Wednesday 29th April that it was acceptable for the parish council's internal auditor, to provide an internal auditor's report based on historical fact of having completed a previous end of year assessment of the manner the parish accounting system had operated plus the auditor had also completed a physical examination of the accounts after September 2019 half year accounting period. Signed documentary evidence of that audit and they had been accepted by council. Minute note 139.00 December 2019 confirms that criteria, 2018/19 auditors report confirms same auditor as 2019/20. All relevant documentation and accounts had been scanned and forwarded to the auditor, plus all ledger files had been provided. All this material on return had been provided to the councillors.

168.02 Certificate of Exemption, AGAR 2019/20 Part 2. This confirms that the parish has neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25k. Inspected by councillors and to be signed by clerk and chair, social distancing meeting to be arranged for wet signature.

168.03 clerk had circulated the signed Annual Internal Audit Report. Internal audit had taken place 11/10/19 and 20/05/20. All boxes correctly ticked, and no issues or recommendations raised.

168.04 Annual Governance Statement. Councillors had read the content of the 9 boxes on the form and at each statement to be ticked Yes box with Cllrs approval. Form then to be receive wet signature by chair and clerk, per 168.02.

168.05 Finally the accounting statement, which had been circulated was approved by councillors and again will be duly receive wet signature as 168.02 by RFO and chair.

168.06 Clerk confirmed that he would make the appropriate returns to the external government auditor, placing necessary document required for the appropriate periods on the parish council website pages.

169.00 Parish council renewal, Zurich Insurance

169.01 Clerk confirmed the parish insurance was due for renewal on 1st June 2020, 3 years ago clerk had agreed a 5-year deal and clerk confirmed that for the third year the premium was £144.59. Cllrs resolved that the clerk pay the premium.

170.00 Clerk's Progress report.

170.01 Clerk explained that due to Corvid 19 pandemic physical parish council meetings as a public meeting of more than 2 people were banned. Clerk had looked at Governments guidelines on use of video conferencing platforms and finally decided on using a subscription version costing £14.39 pcm and split between 5 parish councils was £2.88 per meeting, considerably cheaper than the clerk's mileage allowance to attend meetings. The software was set up on the Lorton parish council laptop as hardware was highest spec of all parish laptops. He thanked councillors for embracing the format, it would keep Buttermere parish council matters proceeding for the benefit of the community.

170.02 Coronavirus has reduced Highways ability to carryout road repairs due to employees being off with the virus or having to self-isolate.

170.03 Cllr E B raised the issue of a very large pothole across the carriageway on the exit of the village. Clerk established precise location and promised to report it to Highways that evening.

170.04 Clerk had written to M B C about their insurance request from the parishes in Melbreak Valley, he advised that it was not possible. He understood that following his input M B C have taken out insurance with Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, at no charge.

170.05 Clerk was investigating how government was proposing village halls be reopened for use. Currently advise only governed use as school rooms for nursery activity. Social distancing and entrance and exit through single doorways, plus toilet facility and ensuring all surfaces are free of contamination, who would be responsible? The property owner or the user?

170.06 Lancaster Uni have suspended the project on the traffic survey due to the pandemic.

170.07 Clerk had renewed the McAfee Anti-Virus on the parish laptop, he had bought it from Argos, excellent price of £9.99 but as Argos closed to personal shoppers, he had used home delivery courier and that had cost £3.95, but no alternative.

171.00 Buttermere Councillors reports, no reports

172.00 Correspondence

172.01 Clerk had received a letter of resignation from the parish council from Cllr M R. Resignation due to him leaving the village and moving outside the three-mile limit which would have enabled him to continue.

172.02 Also received a resignation email from Cllr A B, due to pressure and commitment of work.

172.03 The two resignations prompted a discussion by Cllrs about filling the 2 vacancies. It was agreed that one local resident would be approached, by Cllr L K, the resident concerned had indicated a keenness to join the council. Cllrs to consider other potential councillor candidates.

172.04 Clerk had received the annual subscription from Calc, it was £86.26. Clerk recommended that the parish continued its membership as Calc and Nalc were an important source of information and guidance to the clerk. There are only 97 electors in the parish of Buttermere. Cllrs resolved to continue the Calc subscription.

172.05 Clerk had received numerous emails and phone calls from Allerdale, Cumbria CC and other agencies involved with the Corvid 19 lockdown imposed from 23rd March. Were appropriate he had forwarded them on.

172.06 Clerk received a letter from HSBC concerning the new interest rates payable on the parish councils savings account, the £1052.11 deposit had earned £2 last year, new rate is 0.01%, clerk recommended Cllrs to consider how next year's 2p interest could be spent.

173.00 Payments for Approval

Intpay43, M Milner salary 2 months April/May £144.48, Exp' £19.70 total £164.18

Intpay44 HMRC, PAYE 2 months, £36.00

Intpay45 Zurich Insurance £144.59 parish annual insurance

Intpay46 Calc £86.26 annual subscription

All approved

174.00 Date and time of the next meeting.

174.01 The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st September 2020 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8.04pm