

Lorton Parish Council

Minutes of the parish council meeting held on Wednesday 4th May 2022 Which commenced with parish council AGM

Present: Cllrs, Chris Poate(chair), Glenis Postlethwaite (vice-chair) Peter Deeks, Pam Jaques, Steve Irlam, Julian Cruickshank, Tanya St Pierre. 1 members of the public.

Clerk, Mike Milner.

Apologies, Cllr Alan Bowness (CCC).

463.00 Apologies for absence, as noted above.

464.00 To appoint a chairman and a vice-chairman for the coming year.

464.01 Cllr P D proposed that Cllr C P continue in the chair, Cllr P J seconded. Cllr C P confirmed her willingness to serve as chair. Returned as chair unanimously.

464.02 Cllr S I proposed that Cllr G P be re-elected as vice chairman seconded Cllr P D. Cllr G P confirmed she would continue. Returned unanimously.

464.03 The clerk got the two successful appointees to sign their declaration of office forms.

465.00 Declaration of Interest. None

466.00 To approve and accept the minutes of the last Lorton Parish Council held on Wednesday 2nd March 2022, as a true record.

466.01 Councillors unanimously resolved to approve the minutes.

467.00 Public Participation.

467.01 The member of the public present had no representations to make. Clerk had no reports from last meeting.

468.00 Police Matters.

468.01 Clerk advised he had circulated the police e-newsletters, no other report.

469.00 Matters concerning District and County Councillors. neither present

470.00 Applications for development.

470.01 No applications to consider, but clerk confirmed that 7/2022/2061, Kent Cottage, Lorton Cllrs had considered via email and raised no objections to its proposed new porch, so planning advised accordingly 15th March 2022.

471.00 Receive and approve the parish council accounts for financial year 2021/22. Internal auditors report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statement for the year all to be resolved. Bank reconciliation and variance report.

471.01 Clerk had circulated all the necessary documentation prior to the meeting, and he then proceeded to go through each section with the councillors.

471.02 Certificate of Exemption, AGAR 2021/22 Part 2. This confirms that the parish has neither income or expenditure exceeding £25k. Document duly signed by chairman and parish Responsible Finance Officer, the clerk.

471.03 clerk presented the signed Annual Internal Audit Report. Internal audit had taken place 8/10/21 and 25/04/22. All boxes correctly ticked, and no issues or recommendations raised.

471.04 Annual Governance Statement. RFO read out the content of the 9 boxes on the form and at each statement ticked the Yes box with Cllrs approval. Form then duly signed by chair and clerk.

471.05 Finally the accounting statement, which had been circulated was approved by councillors and duly signed by RFO and chairman. Cllr P D noted that boxes 1-4 were identical for 2020/21 and 2021/22. Clerk confirmed that was a fact but coincidence, it just happened income and expenditure in both years were identical for those figures.

471.06 Clerk confirmed that he would make the appropriate returns to the external government auditor, put necessary document required in the village noticeboard for the appropriate period and ensure they are displayed on the parish council website pages.

472.00 Parish council renewal, Zurich Insurance

472.01 Clerk had received the annual parish council insurance renewal documentation. The Parish Council are entering their last year of 5 year contractual agreement with Zurich. This year's renewal figure is £205.08, last year it was £203.32. Councillors resolved to accept the renewal terms.

473.00 Parish Platinum Jubilee celebration update

473.01 Chair updated the councillors on the successful work with positioning and filling or refilling of new and existing flower tubs around the village to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. The next challenge, which was in hand, was the purchase and planting of bedding plants in the tubs.

473.02 There was to be a celebratory afternoon tea at Yew Tree Hall on Friday 3rd June and the official opening of Platinum Jubilee Garden at Yew Tree Hall.

474.00 Grass verge wild flowering project, Lorton restoration plan and parish field update.

474.01 Prior to the meeting the clerk had circulated Cllr T St-P's very comprehensive restoration plan and she explained the tasks undertaken since the project started and what was planned before the funding would run out in April 2023. She said that the parish had approx. £507 left in the £2600 grant allocated.

474.02 Councillors discussed how to use remaining funding. There were two ideas, the relaying of the hedge behind the BT building by the parish field, or the creation of a map, on public display for residents and visitors, as an information tool as to what was happening and where in the parish with regard to the environment. Cllr P D pointed out there would be copyright issues with certain maps. Cllr P J suggested a map along the lines of the 100 Acre Wood in Winnie the Pooh. Cllr J C was keen to see the map as an information tool to spread the progress of "nature recovery" in the parish. More discussions would be needed.

474.03 Clerk had brought along some printed images of signage to cover no parking on the grass verges that have been part of the wild flowering project, and also "No Dogs" signs for the Parish Field, which as a children's play area should be dog free. After a discussion clerk to obtain signs made with a reference to "Lorton Wildflower Project. Please don't park on the verge." Also obtain some no dogs signs for the gates at entrances to the Parish Field.

475.00 Dark Skies, additional funding refusal.

475.01 Cllr S I briefly outlined the refusal by Cumbria CC to provide a further £1980 grant to replace more Lorton footpath lights to the latest LED units with automatic dark periods during the night. It all revolves around who actually owns the lights. Cllr S I with clerk and the FOL Dark Skies team would keep exploring funding options.

476.00 Lorton Parish Council, charitable status at Charity Commission.

476.01 Cllr P D advised he had been contacted by charity commission as a named trustee of the Lorton Parish, with Cllrs C.P, S.I and G.P. The charity commission are stating that the parish council have made no financial returns for the past 4 years.

476.02 Clerk was unaware that it was a registered charity, he cannot understand why it was registered back in 2006. He had contacted the charity commission using his personal email and had been given some information, but no way to enter the system, just a plan to contact the commission and jump through hoops to deregister.

476.03 Member of public present advised she had no recollection of the charity commission status when she had been parish clerk. Chair to make further enquiries of former parish councillors.

477.00 Progress report, clerk.

477.01 Clerk explained that in July 2018 when he bought the parish laptop which they share with Loweswater, he had installed Office 365. At a cost of £59.99 a year. What he had not noticed was that, via one of his personal email accounts for Microsoft, he had been billed annually in 2019/20/21 and deducted via a credit card. £59.99 per year, a total of £179.97 which he would therefore be claiming back or 50% of it £89.99 on this months expenses. He had cancelled the 365 subscription and purchased Office 2021 for £119.99 and would be claiming £60 of that in his expenses. He apologised for his lack of observation on the matter, but situation resolved, and he didn't have to bother about reoccurring annual charges. He would reclaim balance from Loweswater Parish Council.

477.02 Clerk is still chasing Highways for the repainting of the SLOW sign on the road as you enter High Lorton.

477.03 The new outdoor table tennis table was in situ, in Parish Field, and officially open for use to public on 30th April. Trainer prints had been seen on table top playing area, should signs be put on table to discourage that activity of climbing on the table? Decided no action.

477.04 Councillors agreed to purchase a rake to maintain the wood chipping at either end of the players area. However, concerns were raised about its storage location. That location to be considered.

477.05 Clerk has requested a quote from Zurich to insure the equipment.

477.06 Clerk advised that he had been made aware of fly tipping on private land, after a discussion councillors agree clerk to involve Environmental Health department.

477.07 Clerk had been asked about who would pay for the repairs at the gully between Shotton Hall and Armaside Farm. He could not answer the question, but Highways responsible for gully under the road.

478.00 Lorton Councillors reports.

478.01 Chair reported that there had been a Ukrainian Refugee meeting for a small working group, as local individuals were going to embrace the issue.

478.02 Cllr P D reported he would inspect all the benches and compile an up to date report. During the tub planting exercise, the state of the bench by Low Lorton bus shelter had been noted and immediately sanded down and a coat of linseed oil applied and it was now looking in excellent repair. Cllr P J did wonder if the Whitehaven "Men in Sheds" group would be interested in assisting in a maintenance programme?

478.03 Cllr P J raised the issue of a footpath audit, the paths are the responsibility of the NT, but could not Lorton councillors who were regular footpath users, create a picture of the state of the local PROWs in their immediate vicinity, to ensure the pathways and stiles were maintained where appropriate?

478.04 Chair reminded councillors that the next meeting was 6th July, consideration should be made of content for the next newsletter. It was agreed the copy deadline to the clerk would be 11th July.

479.00 Correspondence.

- 479.01 Pension Regulator had been in contact about renewal of the 3 year re-enrolment requirement. All duly completed online and acknowledged by Regulator.
- 479.02 Calc annual subscription renewal letter received £131.52, was £123.31 last year.
- 479.03 Invoice received from Printpoint for Easter newsletter £58.00.
- 479.04 Clerk had circulated the NT Traffic and Tourist Plan.
- 479.05 Invoice received from Bigfoot for April £211.00.
- 479.06 Received and circulated a road closure email for Whinlatter Pass. From 9th May for 3 days.

480.00 Payments for Approval

- M Milner Intpay108, £333.79, salary April £147.00, exp £186.79 see minute 477.01
- HMRC PAYE Intpay109, Clerks tax £36.60
- Calc Intpay110, £131.52, Annual subscription
- Printpoint Intpay 111, £58.00, Easter newsletter.
- Zurich Insurance, Intpay 112, £205.08, annual parish insurance.
- Bigfoot Intpay 113, £211.00 April ground maintenance.
- C Poate Intpay 114, £74.61 village plants
- S Irlam Intpay 115, £11.98 village plants
- P Jaques Intpay 116, £21.36 table tennis bark rake
- P Jaques Intpay 117, £12.78 village plants
- Direct charge by HSBC £8 monthly account charge.

All Payments approved
Meeting closed 9.15pm

481.00 Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 7.30pm, the meeting will be held in Yew Tree Hall.

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