

Minutes of Allonby Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17th November 2020 via Zoom.

Attendance: Mr R Hart (Chair), Mr A Barnard, Mr G Browes, Mr A Jones, Mrs P Jones, Mr J Hanley, Councillor Anthony Markley

Clerk: Mrs M Walker

Apologies for absence: None

Requests for dispensation – none

Declaration of interests – none

To authorise the Chair to sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 15th September via Zoom – the minutes were agreed by full Council.

Matters arising –

Railings at West End Green – The Chairman reported that Simon Ringrose had been to inspect the railings. He reported that they may need replacing at some point, but for the moment he has made them safe. The Chair reminded Councillors that technically they were not our responsibility as they had been erected by the AONB.

Andy Barnard referred back to the minutes of September and wondered if the Chair had been in touch with Stobbarts regarding the signs on the toilet block doors. The Chair had been in touch with Stobbarts who thought that this had been done and as it had not, promised to look into it.

Budget for 2021/22 – The Chair had forwarded all Councillors a rough outline proposal for the budget which was coming out at £11,500/£12,000. He questioned whether the precept for next year should be set at £12,500 as there was still the possibility that we may have to foot the bill for foot lights. The Chair has a meeting in early December with Allerdale and County Council that would cover this topic. Mr Barnard queried the cost of the toilet block which seemed high given that the fact that it was a new build. Mr Jones reported that Tony Markley had advised us to try and get some funding from Allerdale to keep the toilet block open for extended periods of time. He felt that it would be impossible to keep even the disabled toilet open for extended periods of time and be able to afford the cleaning regime that was necessary, particularly at this period of time with the limited budget that we had. Mr Barnard asked what the figure of £1,800 covered, if it covered the salary for the cleaner. The Chairman said that it did in part.

Mr Hanley offered a possible solution to generate extra income for our budget. He wondered if we were able to obtain control of the green opposite the Baywatch, as he knew someone that would be interested in renting out part of the green for a considerable sum per year to use for a bouncy castle and other entertainment. Mr Hanley realised that we would need to own the green first. At this point the Clerk reminded Councillors that we had over £30,000 in the Business Money Manager account which was a significant sum. The Chair responded that it was and he suspected that some of that money originally was put there for the rebuilding of the village hall and he wasn't sure if there were any restrictions on that money. With regard to Mr Hanley's proposal, the Chair reported that the transfer of the greens as a whole was still a live issue and something that was being considered by Allerdale. However, at the moment they

still have a management agreement with the AONB which has twelve months to run so nothing could be considered until the agreement had ended. The Chair felt that insurance and other H & S matters would also need looking into very carefully.

Mrs Jones felt the only reason that we had a good reserve in the Business Manager account was because we had been prudent over the years, but said that perhaps now was the time to re-invest some of that money in the village. Mr Browes felt that if we did not start to use some of the money, villagers may wonder why the Council Tax had gone up. Some of the money had been earmarked for the toilet block which in the end we did not need to use. Our finances now would be mainly tied up with the maintenance of the park, replacing equipment and gates etc. After some discussion, it was agreed to keep the precept at £12,000.00, The Councillors also felt that we needed to start spending some of the reserve.

Potholes – Mrs Jones felt that the potholes on some of the byways and unadopted roads around the village were a disgrace and needed to be sorted out for the residents. Everyone agreed that this was a matter that required urgent attention. The Chair reported that there was a chance that some of the pothole problems may be sorted out before Christmas. Having met with Allerdale councillors, he was informed that if there was an underspend on the cycle path, it was likely that the contractors would be able to do the work for us, giving precedence to those places where car parks gave access to the cycle path itself – particularly the one opposite Twentymans and the one by the playpark. Mr Barnard was worried that this issue would not get sorted by January and felt that if there was any underspend that Allerdale probably had other ideas about where they wanted to spend their money. Councillor Markley joined the meeting at this moment and informed the meeting that it was not Allerdale money that was creating the Cycle path but rather lottery funding. He further reported that Allerdale do not fix potholes, unless the land is owned by them. The car park opposite Twentymans was Allerdale land but Councillors were unsure about the access leading up to the cycle path by the Codfather. Councillor Markley reported that the Council had three projects in mind at the moment. One was to improve a car park at Silloth, another was to improve the car park opposite the Baywatch and the third project was to hard core the remaining part of the cycle path between Allonby and Maryport. Mrs Jones felt that if Allerdale cannot or will not help us out then we should use some of our budget to sort this out. Councillor Markley pointed out that once you take over that responsibility, you then become liable for any accidents that may happen as a result. And once you take over the maintenance you have to continue with it. After much discussion, it was agreed that Mr Browes would put a note in the ABC telling residents that we intended to fill the potholes with gravel and even them out to keep the village tidy and that if anyone for any reason had any comments that they wished to make they would need to respond by a certain date. Mr Hanley knew the contractor that was currently working on digging out the cycle path and he would ask him on our behalf if he would be willing to fill in the potholes and level them out. The Chairman asked Mr Hanley if he could get a rough cost for the price of this work.

Parking on Westnewton Road – this issue had been brought up at the previous meeting. Councillors agreed that there was nothing that the Council could do about this as Allerdale owned the land up to the white lines that were outline for parking.

Police Report – The Clerk reported that the focus was still very much on Covid. A recent drugs operation was centred around Barrow and there were no reports based around here.

Playground/Toilets Update – The Chair reminded Councillors that we had already discussed signage for the toilet block. He had not had a response from Playdale regarding the I Player so would need to chase that up. A request had been made to close the gap in the playing field where dogs were getting in and Simon Ringrose had completed this work. He had also filled in some holes in the park that had been reported to the Clerk by a member of the public. Mrs Jones asked what the two sums of £397.09 in the

Financial Officers report under Parks and Open spaces was for. The Chair replied that they were for grass cutting from Tivoli

Grass Cutting – Unfortunately as Mrs Wingfield was not present, the Chair felt that we could not proceed with this item. All the bills were paid and up to date apart for the bill for Mr Sym which would need a transfer of money from the business account to the current account before it could be honoured, The Chair and Clerk were in the process of sorting this out.

Footlights – currently the plan to charge Parish Council for foot lighting was on hold.

Correspondence - a letter had been received from Cockermouth Mechanics Brass Band requesting funding. Unfortunately at the moment we are not in a position to give out any money.

The Clerk had received an email from Mr Barnard regarding poo bag dispensers. He reported that he had been to Bowness on Solway and had been impressed by the dispensers they had positioned there around the village. He had done some research online and the dispensers could be purchased for £79.00 plus V.A.T. The Friends of Allonby Green and the Community Forum may be interested in getting involved in this. He would circulate the information to all councillors.

Update from Councillor Markley – Councillor Markley had just come from a Local Government Reform meeting Cumbria wide linked into Northampton, Buckinghamshire and Cheshire. Four bids had been put in by County and 1 by the County Council for a single unitary, 1 by Allerdale for a unity between Coopeland, Allerdale and Carlisle, Carlisle had put one in for Carlisle, Allerdale and Eden, South Lakes had put a bid in with Morecambe Bay and Barrow. Bids had to be in by the 9th of November. Allerdale executive would make a decision at its meeting next Monday. Councillor Markley also brought up the issue of road erosion at Dubmill Point and Crosscanonby road end. He reported that the Council had been out to have a look and also clean up debris at Dubmill point. At Crosscanonby road end, it was down to three of four metres. There will be 16,00 tonne of stone to go in, which County Council had gone out to tender for from European money. The work on this would now not start until next year. Mr Barnard asked if the County were aware of the issues on the B5300. Councillor Markley reported that Allerdale had been out after the recent high tides both to clear the road and inspect and that he brought the subject up at every available opportunity and they were very well aware of the importance of the road to Silloth, Maryport and Allonby residents.

Reports from Committees – nothing to report from either the Community Forum or the Village Hall. Mrs Jones reported that the church had installed new railings and that work needed to take place on the church boundary wall, for which a contribution from the Parish Council would be gratefully received if it were possible. She gave thanks to the people who constructed the cairn for Remembrance Day and informed the meeting that Mrs Jan Potter was hoping to construct a Nativity display outside church with the help of others, so even if we were not able to get into church for Xmas, at least there would be a focal point outside church.

Planning – The Clerk had forwarded details regarding an application from Dobsons farm. This was a straightforward application that did not need objection.

Finance – On the Finance Officers report, the Chair pointed out that the salary for L Richardson should actually come under the heading of Toilet Block as she was a contractor, not a member of staff. The bill from Ellis Bros should be put under the budget heading of establishment expenses. Current a/c up to 7th November balance is £2517.79 and in the Deposit a/c £30,188.00

Items for next agenda: Potholes, Website Provider (Mr Browes to send information over to Mr Hanley regarding questions that need to be asked vis a vis website provider) Bollards on cycle track, Signage on Croft Farm Close (Chair to phone Allerdale)

Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday 19th January at 7.30p.m.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.20p.m.