

Parish Council Chairmans Report

May 2021

Meetings - The Parish Council (PC) held 11 meetings over the 2020/21 year with all meetings from March to July cancelled due to Covid 19 lockdown. During the lock down period PC business was undertaken by the Chair and Clerk through Delegated Powers whilst consultation on planning submissions was made by email.

The government introduced legislation to allow online video conference meetings for Councils and this is due to expire on 7 May 2021.

A single face-face meeting was held in August 2020 before all PC meetings moved online via Zoom.

All were scheduled in advance and mostly held on the first Monday of the month. In all 3 members of the public attended during the year despite the meeting Zoom link details being publicised on the Agenda and Parish Website.

Councillors – There are currently 5 elected Councillors; David Graham (Chair), Joan Raine (Vice Chair), David Hewitt, (Ginny) Holroyd, Andrew (Pandy) Beatham. In addition there are 2 co-opted Councillors; Rob McIvor and Stuart Roberts the latter co-optee replacing Jonathon Taylor who stood down at the September meeting.

Planning - The PC is a consultee on all planning applications in the Parish. In total 32 Planning applications were submitted which was a 128% increase on the previous year.

Application details

Authority	No. Applications	Supported	Objected	Approved in advance
YDNPA	15	12	3	
Eden DC	17	8	4	5

Of the 17 Eden DC planning applications 9 were all associated with Winter Tarn Farm. All the applications were approved under delegated authority by the Eden DC Planning Officer. The PC had objected to 2 of the applications which should have resulted in the application going to Planning Committee and another 5 were determined in advance of PC consultation.

The PC has received no response to letters to the Planning Department, Director or Chief Executive and has now formally lodged a complaint against the Authority.

Finances - The PC had £22,435 of income and £14,954.73 of expenditure, the latter closely managed and significant savings made on planned works. The surplus has allowed the replenishment of General and Police House Reserve accounts which were severally depleted during the previous year with major upgrade works required before re-letting of the Police House.

At the end of the 2020/21 year account balances are as follows:

- Current Account £5,552.82
- General Reserve £9,543.01
- Police House Reserve £7,025.33

The Parish Council Precept for 2021/22 (Band D property) remained unchanged at £54.04 per chargeable household providing the Parish Council with £12,440 of income.

As a taster, some of the key issues discussed and actioned over the last 12 months include;

Registration of Parish land – Following the successful first Land Registry registration (Maulds Meaburn Village Green) the PC lodged an application to register Reagill Village Green. This application has yet to be determined with delays attributed to Co-vid.

The PC has continued with its agreed approach to Maulds Meaburn Village Green with a number of new householder agreements instigated as formal Deeds,

Old Police Station – The planned external painting work was completed during the summer of 2020.

Crosby Ravensworth Commons – The Commoners' submission to Natural England for the 10 year management agreement for the Crosby Commons was completed during the year.

The commoners who have rights to graze specific numbers of stock on the fell have developed a scheme that reduces grazing and increases tree cover. The public had a right of access to the common and the submission aims to balance the needs and rights of all concerned with the establishment of areas of planting.

The PC was consulted, both in its role as the owner of Bankmoor, and as a statutory consultee. The PC fully supported the submission and has signed the formal agreement to allow the inclusion of Bankmoor.

The submission is currently with the Secretary of State awaiting full approval..

Holly Cottage – In August Councillors were advised of a bequest, in the will of the Late Ted Relph (A former Chairman of the Parish Council and lifelong resident of the Parish), of his home 'Holly Cottage', the bequest was conditional upon the Parish Council making the cottage available for rent. It was a 3-bedroom family home. The PC employed Lewis Conservation to carry out a Condition Survey and develop a budget for costs associated with the refurbishment of Holly Cottage. This was completed on 5 December 2020.

The refurbishment proposals cover all aspects of the property and are aimed at achieving a minimum Energy Performance band of E whilst also conserving the character of the property. The overall costs of the works are estimated at circa £150,000.

The PC can access funding via the Governments Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) as refurbishment of Holly Cottage would be classified as capital works.

The PWLB gives the PC access to a maximum of £500k borrowing over up to 50 years. For the likely funding required for refurbishment interest rates would be fixed at 1.53% over 25yrs to 1.91% over 50 yrs.

Analysis of loan costs versus potential income from rental clearly demonstrated financial viability and the return of surplus to the PC's accounts.

One of the requirements of the Public Works Loan Board application, even though the PC has no intention of increasing the precept to cover some of the works cost of the project, is that the community must be informed / consulted on the proposed scheme and borrowing. Consultation was carried out through the Lyvennet Link and PC website and is still open for comment.

Parish Councillor's unanimously agreed to acceptance of the bequest.

Unitary Authority – The proposals for the creation of a new single or two unitary authorities across Cumbria to replace the current County and six District Councils closed on 19th April 2021.

The options tabled

Proposer	Proposals.
Allerdale + Copeland	Area 1 [Copeland + Allerdale + Carlisle] Area 2 [Barrow + South Lakes + Eden].
Carlisle + Eden	Area 1 [Allerdale + Carlisle + Eden] Area 2 [Copeland + Barrow + South lakes].
South Lakeland + Barrow	Area 1 [Copeland + Allerdale + Carlisle + Eden] Area 2 [South Lakes + Barrow + Lancs Morecambe Bay Area].
Cumbria	County and District functions absorbed into a new single Unitary Authority.

The decision on the future shape of Cumbria's local government now sits with the Secretary of State.

It is anticipated that should a unitary proposal proceed then any new Authority or Authorities formed will look to shed all non-statutory functions and attempt to push some services down to the most local level; Parish and Town Councils.

MMVG Inspection – Following an inspection of Maulds Meaburn Village Green in Feb 2021 various elements of work have been identified:

- Bus shelter – Replacement of timber, repair guttering and repainting – quotes being sought
- Highway maintenance issues including numerous potholes, damaged pedestrian fencing, cattlegrid clearance – Cumbria Highways has been notified.
- Mill Race and sluice gate – repair and clearance subject to Historic England approval as they are listed as an Ancient Monument
- The damage to the Green from tractor parking and turning is being re-instated by the driver
- Exposed water pipe across river upstream to top footbridge – United Utilities investigating removal.

In addition YDNPA are progressing plans to undertake work with the riverbank willow at Bridge House.

Grants – The Parish Council awarded grants to the following organisations during the year

- Parish Tree Group - £440
- Crosby Ravensworth First Responders £300
- Fell Runner bus - £300

Administration - The Parish Council received an unqualified audit with no matters arising.