

SEATON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2014

Present:

Councillor P F Bateman

Councillor Mrs K P Birkett (Chairman)

Councillor M T Ditchburn

Councillor A Grey

Councillor Mrs J King

Councillor Mrs J Norman

Councillor J Sandwith

Councillor Mrs C Tibble

Councillor C Woodman

Clerk: P Bramley

Minute No. 226

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Ardron, Ms M M Gainford, Mrs L Harwood, W McIntyre & J Musgrave.

Minute No. 227

Declarations of Interest

None received.

Minute No. 228

Requests for Dispensations

None received.

Minute No. 229

Minutes of Meeting held on 17 March 2014

Resolved that the minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2014 be accepted and signed as a correct record.

Minute No. 230

Progress Reports

1) Clerk

a) Highways Issues

Reported to Cumbria Highways, no response received.

b) Dropped Kerbs

No notifications of proposals of areas for dropped kerbs received from members.

c) Pavements in Coronation Avenue area

Reported to Cumbria Highways again, no response received.

d) Speeding traffic on Seaton Main Road

Reported to Cumbria Highways, no response received.

e) Hunters Drive Bus Stop

Reported to Cumbria Highways, no response received.

f) Seaton Post Office opening hours

Letter to Seaton Post Office manager, no response received.

g) Jackson Street Bus Shelter

Arrangements made to attend to loose pane & tree to rear of shelter.

h) Meadow Vale Playing Fields

Letter to Seaton Junior Football Club, no response received.

i) Overgrown shrubs at Meadow Vale

Arrangements made with contractor to reduce height to around three feet.

j) Christmas Festival lights 2014

Arrangements made with contractor for lights to be sited around village green.

k) Brick Dubbs

Contact received from Groundwork North East & Cumbria, an Environmental Charity which works with communities to make the most of where they live. Their services include project management, landscape design, community consultation, environmental education with all ages and funding searches. They charge a fee for their services in order to cover their costs, but this is something that could possibly be covered by grants or external funding. Arrangements being made to meet on site & report back to Council.

2) Village Hall

Councillor M Ditchburn reported that the next Village Hall Committee Meeting would be held on 23 April 2014. The Village Hall Committee had been seeking information concerning ownership of the access lane from Causeway Road. It appeared that ownership rested between two parties from the village. The Coal board had advised that immediate professional advice should be sought by the Village Hall Committee.

Resolved that the Council seek advice & guidance from Allerdale Borough Council.

Minute No. 231

Public Questions

1) Mr R McCracken, Secretary of the Seaton Allotment & Gardeners' Society, commented that he was concerned at the apparent lack of interest by the Council in the provision of allotments & that he had received no replies to his letter to individual councillors distributed on 17 March. He held the opinion that he possessed a lot of expertise in allotments & allotment law. Mr McCracken asked three questions:

- a) 'How much have the Council spent to date on legal fees & how much of this has been in the aid of persuading the acquisition of land via a CPO ?
- b) What percentage of funds have been set aside from the 2014/15 budget towards the provision of allotments/securing the existing site under a CPO ?

- c) Why have other parts of the budget been indicated as ring fenced when money for allotment has not ?

In addition, Mr McCracken asked why no Council members had volunteered to become the 'focus point' for the allotments in the same way as members had on such projects as the Scarecrow Festival.

- 2) It was reported that the beck on the Lowca Lane allotment site had been cleaned out some weeks ago & debris left. It was thought that the work could have been arranged through Cumbria County Council or Home Housing Group.

Resolved that:

- 1) It be noted that the Scarecrow Festival was an event to which a number of member contributed & that the Allotments Working Party had been established to address detailed matters concerning the provision of allotments.
- 2) Further consideration be given to the other questions raised by Mr McCracken.
- 3) It be noted that the Council was fully in support of the provision of allotments.
- 4) A meeting of the Allotment Working Party be arranged to enable more detailed discussion of issues concerning the provision of allotments to be considered.
- 5) Interest in sitting on the Allotment Working Party be sought from members.
- 6) The Council seek to ascertain the party responsible for cleaning the beck on the Lowca Lane Allotment site, & request the removal of the debris left behind.

Minute No. 232

County & District Councillors' Reports

1) Cumbria County Council

Councillor Mrs C Tibble advised that she was due to meet officers concerning the loss of bus subsidy & possible solutions for some routes in the area. No firm proposals had been presented to the Allerdale Area Committee concerning the introduction of street parking charges. Education changes in Workington were still to be decided, including the location of the new academy, but the decision would be made by central government. Pot holes, street lighting & flooding continued to be issues of local concern, & Councillor Tibble hoped to meet with officers in the near future to discuss.

2) Allerdale Borough Council

Councillor Mrs C Tibble advised that the inclusion of an anti-poverty agenda in the council plan had progressed & Allerdale was playing a major role in promoting the credit union, including providing for internet access for people located away from contact points, as well as supporting the food bank, for which there was an expanding need. Surplus IT equipment had been provided to the Trades Hall Centre in Workington recently, to help provide computer access for clients. From 1 April, cash payments by Allerdale residents could be made to the council at some sixty pay points at no extra charge. Plans for the new leisure centre were progressing.

Minute No. 233

Allotments

Members received an update on the position concerning the Council's former allotment site at Lowca Lane. It was noted that:

- 1) The Council's solicitor had arranged Counsel's advice concerning the Council's responsibilities towards its former tenants, (Minute 225(5) refers), at a cost of £1,000 plus VAT. He advised that he was not aware that any of the allotment holders would have protection from eviction whilst awaiting developments over a compulsory acquisition, since their tenancies had ended in line with the ending of the head lease. He also advised that he would check the letter drafted for former tenants, (Minute 225(2) refers), with Counsel.
- 2) An exchange of information had taken place between the Clerk & Mr R McCracken, Secretary of the Seaton Allotment & Gardeners' Society. Mr McCracken had requested that Council members be urgently advised that he could confirm that the Society could offer a minimum of £10,000 towards a purchase of the Lowca Lane allotment site, an amount based on donations from two people. The Clerk had advised that he considered that it would help the Council if it could see some consistency in the information it was being provided with concerning potential contributions towards the compulsory acquisition of the Lowca Lane site from the Seaton Allotment & Gardeners' Society. In addition to various unspecified references, the Council had been advised that:
 - a) The Society had accumulated some £4,000 from various fund raising efforts, (Council meeting 16 September 2013, via an Allotments Working Party meeting held on 9 September), towards the acquisition.
 - b) The Society could contribute some £20,000 towards the acquisition, (Council meeting 18 November 2013, statement made by Mr R McCracken).
 - c) If the Council advised the Society of how much it required as a contribution, it would meet it from its 'petty cash', (Council meeting 17 March 2014, statement by one of the Society members).

The Clerk had advised that the forwarding of the information requested would lead to further confusion, given what had been stated previously, & that if a definitive statement on the society's proposed contribution could be provided, it would be reported to the next meeting.

Mr McCracken considered that the information should be forwarded to Council members & undertook to arrange that, together with additional comments.

- 3) Further to the distribution at the March 17 Council meeting of letters to individual councillors from Mr R McCracken, given the references made to comments & views allegedly provided by Allerdale Borough Council Deputy Monitoring Officer, Mr Justin Price Jones, at a meeting held on 1 November, Mr Price Jones was consulted & he had advised as follows:

- a) ' In the autumn of 2013 the "users of Seaton Allotments" appear to have written to Sir Tony Cunningham MP.
 - b) By letter dated 11th October 2013, the MP wrote to Allerdale Borough Council's Chief Executive. Sir Tony Cunningham's letter was then passed to me for a response.
 - c) The purpose of the meeting held on 1st November 2013 was to establish the 'facts' of the situation.
 - d) During the course of the meeting it became apparent that:
 - i. Seaton Allotments believed that Seaton Parish Council had formally resolved to compulsorily acquire land for allotments; while
 - ii. Seaton Parish Council believed they had not formally resolved to do so - but had only agreed to consider the issue.
 - e) It should be possible to quickly ascertain Seaton Parish Council's true position from an examination of the records/minutes.
 - f) However, if such a fundamental issue has not yet been addressed and determined then it may be premature to involve the Borough Council at this time (and certainly premature to be complaining to the MP!).
 - g) I do not recall expressing the opinion that Seaton Parish Council had not been aggressive enough with the landowners.
 - h) The point I tried to express at the meeting was in relation to the practicalities and costs associated with a CPO, as opposed to the practicalities and costs associated with a negotiated purchase from the current owners.
 - i) A compulsory purchase order will involve both:
 - i. the CPO preparation & administration costs and associated legal costs; AND
 - ii. the compensation cost (i.e. land value).
 - j) A negotiated purchase will involve only the purchase price and the legal/conveyancing costs.
 - k) Accordingly, a negotiated purchase even at a slightly inflated land price may be cheaper than the overall costs of a CPO. It would also be a significantly quicker process.'
- 4) The Clerk provided Council members with comments on the matters raised in Mr R McCracken's letter of 17 March to Council members & with comments in response to issues raised by Mr McCracken in his distribution of the letter to Council members concerning potential support funding available from the Seaton Allotment & Gardeners' Society.
- 5) Reference was made to the two plots of land offered by Cumbria County Council which had been considered previously & rejected by the Council, (Minute 19(3) refers). Despite its apparent unsuitability, it was suggested that further consideration could be given to the land at Siddick offered as a potential allotment site, given the potential timescale involved in a compulsory acquisition & the level of demand for allotments in Seaton.
- Resolved** that the current position be noted & that:
- 1) Members give consideration to the comments made by Allerdale Borough Council Monitoring Officer & the Clerk in papers distributed at the meeting.

- 2) The Council give further consideration to the potential for land owned by Cumbria County Council at Siddick to be developed as allotments at the next meeting.
- 3) Arrangements be made for a meeting of the Allotment Working Party to take place, to enable more detailed discussions to be held on various matters concerning the provision of allotments, & that members' interest in sitting on the Working Party be investigated.

Minute No. 234

Footway Lighting

Resolved that further to Allerdale Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee's consultation on Footway Lighting, the Council respond stating that all lights in the parish were of equal priority & that an additional light was required in the vicinity of the Village Hall.

Minute No. 235

Planning Issues

Resolved that the following observations on planning applications be made:

Reference No: 2/2014/0147
 Applicant: Airvolution Energy
 Proposal: Application to vary condition 3 of planning approval 2/2013/0628 to allow the width of the access track to be retained at 4m to maintain operational access to the wind turbine

Location: Land near Wythegill Syke, Seaton
Objection to the proposed development & the proposed expansion in track size, noting that the developers originally cited the necessity of the turbine to provide power to a plant that had since closed.

Reference No: 2/2014/0186
 Applicant: Mrs Lesley Grace, Seaton Academy
 Proposal: Use of porta cabin for additional classroom area
 Location: Seaton Academy, High Seaton, Seaton

No Objections

Reference No: 2/2014/0183
 Applicant: Mr & Mrs T Stephens
 Proposal: Erection of detached dwelling, (resubmission to 2/2103/0773)

Location: 28 High Seaton, Seaton
The Council continue to object to the proposed development, given concerns that the proposed amendments had not addressed previous concerns offered. In particular, it believed that there was an increased risk of flooding on Fernleigh Close as

a result of the amendments to drainage, continued failure to adequately address the problems of the capacity of the culvert in the vicinity to deal with drainage effectively, & problems of vehicular access to & parking on Fernleigh Close.

Reference No: 2/2014/0196
Applicant: Mr S S Deo, Poundsavers
Proposal: Change of use of part shop to one bedroom flat & garage adjoining into 2 one bedroom flats
Location: Poundsavers, Hunters Drive, Seaton
No Objections

Reference No: 2/2014/0234
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Penn
Proposal: Demolition & replacement of semi-derelict domestic storage outbuildings
Location: 52 High Seaton, Seaton
No Objections

Reference No: 2/2014/0250
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Short
Proposal: Rear Extension
Location: 3 Barncroft Close, Seaton
No Objections

Resolved: that the following planning application decisions made by Allerdale Borough Council be noted:

Reference No: 2/2013/0042
Applicant: Mr Brian Rushworth, Eastman Chemical
Proposal: Installation of new nitrogen generation equipment within an existing manufacturing plant. New equipment to be free standing in the open, (not enclosed within a building)
Location: Eastman Chemical Ltd, Siddick, Workington
APPROVED

Reference No: 2/2013/0064
Applicant: Mr David Brown
Proposal: Outline application for two dwellings
Location: Land adjacent to Buildings Farm, Lowca Lane, Seaton
APPROVED

Reference No: 2/2013/0064
Applicant: Mr Christopher Thompson, Jacobs Stobarts
Proposal: First Floor Extension on top of existing garage & dining room
Location: 24 Fernleigh Drive, Seaton

APPROVED

Reference No: 2/2013/0086
Applicant: Mr Lee Hunter
Proposal: Veranda/balcony to rear of bungalow, (retrospective)
Location: 5 Fernleigh Drive, Seaton

REFUSED

Reference No: 2/2013/0079
Applicant: Mr R Scott
Proposal: Extension above garage
Location: 97 Whitestiles, Seaton

APPROVED

Minute No. 236

Accounts – April 2014

Resolved that the accounts listed in the schedule totalling £6,570.03 be agreed for payment.

Minute No. 237

Finance Report

Members received a report showing actual expenditure & income for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014, in comparison to budget, including budget virements.

Resolved that the report be agreed.

Minute No. 238

Correspondence

Correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Council invite Allerdale Borough Council Senior Development Officer Mrs D Rollo to speak to the Council about Reducing Poverty measures being developed by the Borough Council.
- 2) The Council respond to Cumbrian SPAA Foundation Ltd requesting Parcs programme events in Seaton in 2014 in line with those of 2013, & advising that Seaton Village Hall may be available in the event of inclement weather.
- 3) Mr S Fowler be advised that the Council recognised his concerns with disturbances at Firth House, having previously requested the Police to address the matter & that his letter be referred to the Police.
- 4) NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group be invited to make a presentation to the Council & public on their proposals for health services over the next five years.

- 5) The possibility of registering the Lowca Lane allotment site as a community asset be investigated.
- 6) The condition of the garden at 68 Fernleigh Drive, Seaton, be reported to Allerdale Borough Council Street Scene Officer.

Minute No. 239

Councillors' Reports

- 1) It was considered that the meeting arrangements may have prevented the Council being provided with supporting information towards discussion on allotments by members of the Seaton Allotment & Gardeners' Society.
Resolved that, noting that the Allotments Working Party was a suitable body for discussing matters in more detail, the Allotments agenda item be held prior to the Public Questions item on the next agenda.
- 2) It was reported that vehicles parking on Lowca Lane on the corner between Meadow Vale & Hazelgrove were causing a hazard for drivers.
Resolved that the matter be reported to Cumbria Highways, with a request that consideration be given to the introduction of double yellow lines in that area.

Minute No.240

Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting, the Annual Council Meeting, would be held on 19 May 2014 at 7.00pm.

The meeting finished at 8.55 pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date