# Underskiddaw Parish Council Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of Underskiddaw Parish Council held in a virtual meeting room on Tuesday 17th November 2020

**Present:** Mr Jim Wilson (in the Chair), Tony Gibbs, David Horsburgh, Ian Hall, David Lake, Chris Corder

**In Attendance:** Becx Carter (Clerk), Dr G Davies, C/Cllr A Bowness, John Hayes (Village Hall), 1 member of the public

**Apologies**: A/BC Cllr S Lansbury**,** J Boniface (Family commitments)

With 6 councillors present the meeting was quorate.

# 53/2020 Apologies for absence

**Resolved** that apologies and reasons for absence were received and accepted from the above-mentioned persons

# 54/2020 Request for Dispensations & Declarations of Interest

None received

# 55/2020 Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th September 2020

All members had received a copy of the minutes to read.

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th September 2020 were confirmed as a true & accurate record, the Chair was authorised to sign the minutes.

**Action: Clerk to upload the minutes to the website.**

# 56/2020 Public Participation

Q. A member of the public has raised concerns about the speed of traffic on the A591. Over the past 15 years the member of the public in question has observed an increase in the volume and speed of traffic on this road. This increase in volume & speed of traffic is hazardous for other road users, not just drivers but also cyclists, and pedestrians. The member of the public requests parish council support that consideration is given to the introduction of speed calming measures either by way of a 30mph speed limit, or by street furniture e.g. speed indicating device to slow and calm traffic. The Parishoner has also raised concerns direct with Cumbria County Council via Cllr Alan Bowness.

**Resolved** by all present that Underskiddaw Parish Council understand and support the concerns raised by the Parishioner and have raised comments in the past about the speed of traffic on the A591 the Parish Council feel that the 60mph is too great on this stretch of road and it should be reduced. The Parish Council will continue to raise concerns with the Cumbria County Council

**Action: Clerk and Cllr A Bowness to take this forward.**

Q: There is a fingerpost opposite Toft Garth which directs people towards the green lane, but then the signage runs out and people end up in the field (with a bull). Additional signage is required to direct people on to the green lane.

**Action: Clerk to submit this request to the LDNPA for consideration.**

# 57/2020 Update from other bodies

ABC-The written report circulated by A/BC Cllr S Lansbury was noted as received.

CCC-Cllr A Bowness noted that Unitary Authority discussions were ongoing, and currently consideration is being given by all local authorities on the options that could be viable. (One unitary or two)

CCC- Cllr A Bowness noted that he had, had concerns raised with him about the lack of safe cycling infrastructure in the area and he has raised this with the Highways Team.

CCC- If any grit bins are empty these should be reported ASAP.

LDNPA- The Local Plan is now approaching its final stages, the public hearing took place nearly a year ago and the inspector has now proposed some modifications. The current consultations are relating to if the plan is legally compliant, and sound. Once this process has been concluded, it is hope the plan would be made in the Spring of 2021 and become legally enforceable.

LDNPA- The Lake District Park Partnership Plan is ongoing, and there is a briefing session on Thursday evening about this.

LDNPA- Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ it is now thought that much of this may not apply within a National Park and that additional restrictions may still apply in National Parks. But this has not yet been confirmed.

Cllr J Wilson raised concerns that the LDNPA have issued a press release in local media confirming that they don’t know which houses in the local area have (or do not have) occupancy clauses on them. Which calls in to question the role of the LDNPA in community sustainability within the local area.

Dr G Davies confirmed that the LDNPA are aware of all occupancy clauses on properties within the Park, and members of the public can request this information, or try looking on the interactive LDNPA map (<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planning/planning-application-webmap>) . The issue is that some of the older records are not digitized, so the information needs to be requested from the LDNPA. The queries that have been raised in the Keswick Reminder are relating to making all the information available to the public at large.

**Action: If Councillors have concerns about any particular properties within the Parish to let Dr G Davies know and he will check the occupancy restrictions.**

Parish Councillors further raised concerns regarding properties that should be locally occupied which are being used as a holiday let, and which may have received Covid 19 Grant Support. Are the LDNPA going to work with central government to reclaim this funding. Dr G Davies noted that it was unlikely the LDNPA would get involved with grant reclaims, but would look at the enforcement aspects of local occupancy clauses. Until an enforcement notice is issued informing a household of a breach of a planning condition, it is not an offence. It only becomes an offence after this point (so continuing to breach the condition once they have been notified of this).The LDNPA are keen to work with homeowners to remedy the breach with prosecution being the final step.

Further concerns were raised by Parish Councillors about the lack of enforcement with regard to planning matters. Dr G Davies noted that there is a resource issue within the LDNPA teams.

Parish Councillors noted concern that the enforcement of planning conditions currently appears to rely on individual members of the public reporting breaches rather than the LDNPA taking a proactive approach to checking compliance with planning conditions.

**Resolved** by all present that whilst having the information in the public domain is useful, what is required is more stringent enforcement by the LDNPA to encourage compliance from day one.

# 58/2020 Clerks Report

**Resolved** by all present that the Clerks report circulated prior to the meeting be noted as received.

## Footway Lighting Transfer Allerdale Borough Council

The Clerk updated Parish Councilors that matter requires no further discussion as Allerdale Borough Council are withdrawing the request for Parish Councils to consider taking financial responsibility for the electrical costs of footway lighting. This is due to a number of factors:

* The current ABC Executive have a different view from the previous Executive who made the original decision
* The Covid 19 pandemic has severely delayed the timescales we were hoping to work to and site surveys and site meetings with the Parishes were unable to take place
* With the real prospect of Local Government re-organization in the next couple of years, ABC think it would be prudent to wait until the outcome of any new re-organization was known, particularly as all lights may come under one new authority.

The Clerk confirmed that following the inclusion of an article in the non Parish Council affiliated newsletter regarding the potential devolution of footway lighting costs to the Parish Council the feedback received was approximately evenly split between those people who want to keep footway lighting, and those that would be happy to see footway lighting removed.

**Resolved** that no further action be taken on this matter.

## Replacement Fingerpost Applethwaite Lane

Following discussions at the September 2020 meeting regarding a road traffic collision that had occurred resulting in the loss of the cast iron finger post at the bottom of Applethwaite lane, the Clerk confirmed to the meeting that the driver of the vehicle had filed a police report and is in the process of liaising with Cumbria County Council to fund the replacement of this fingerpost. It was noted that the damaged fingerpost is in a local farmyard.

**Resolved** that no further action be taken on this matter as it is being handled by Cumbria County Council.

## Keswick Garden Centre Housing Development Concerns

At the September 2020 Parish Council meeting concerns were raised regarding the dangerous access to this site (both vehicular and pedestrian) and the impact that this development will have on what has been todate a ‘dark skies’ area of the Parish.

The Clerk has raised these concerns with Cumbria County Council, the LDNPA and MP Mark Jenkinson. At the point of the meeting the only response received had been from Cumbria County Council and the LDNPA. Cumbria County Council have confirmed that the view of both CCC & the LDNPA was that the traffic generated by this development would be reduced compared to when the site was used as a Garden Centre. Therefore it is viewed as a ‘highways benefit’. However Cumbria County Council agree with the Parish Council views that there have been numerous accidents on the stretch of road fronting the site in the past 20 years.

Cumbria County Council have suggested that the frontage of this road is investigated by CRASH as the visibility out of the site is severely below standard. To make it standard a 30mph speed limit would need to be reduced but this could be problematic considering the location. Cumbria County Council have confirmed that they will be arranged for this stretch of road to be reviewed by the CRASH group.

Further Cumbria County Council confirmed that with regard to dark skies this is something that CCC can consider. The rule is that the Parish Council has to request dark skies, the applicant then has to agreed to that and it is done.

The LDNPA made no comment regarding the highways safety issues on this stretch of road beyond confirming that the Highways Authority is correct body to discuss speed surveys and road safety studies. Regarding dark skies, the LDNPA confirmed that they will be considering a suitably worded condition relating to lighting.

**Resolved** by all present that the Clerk continue to liaise with Cumbria County Council & the Police about the outcome of the CRASH Group.

**Resolved** by all present that Underskiddaw Parish Council formally request that the area around Keswick Garden Centre be designated dark skies area, to protect the darkness that is currently there.

**Action: Clerk to submit this request to the LDNPA.**

## Local Government Reform In Cumbria- Have your Say

Correspondence has been received from a body called ‘Better Future for Cumbria Campaign’ regarding a grassroots campaign for Local Government Reform and Devolution in Cumbria. The campaign believes in replacing the seven local authorities in Cumbria with two unitary authorities, which should be mindful of local communities, history & connections, along with having an elected mayor for Cumbria. The group fundamentally believe that local people should have a say in how Local Government is reformed.

It was noted that this is a party group (political).

**Resolved** by all present that no action be taken in response to this politically led consultation.

## Dodd Wood Forest Plan Consultation

Prior to the meeting this had been circulated to all Councillors. Forestry England are currently renewing the forest plan for Dodd Wood. The forest plan outlines the operations and felling and replanting for the next 10years and the management proposals for the next 50 years.

**Resolved** by all present that some more continuity of footpaths would be locally appreciated. (E.g. connecting millbeck to Dodd Wood and then back around the other side of Dodd) rather than taking everyone down to the road. The Parish Council is supportive of the forestry management aspect of the plan to ensure sustainability of the forest.

**Action: Clerk to submit these comments, and confirm that Cllr D Lake would be willing to speak to them regarding this.**

# 59/2020 Finance & Accounts

## To receive note of the Bank Balances

**Resolved** by all present that the bank balance be noted as:

Current Account £11,855.34 at 31st October 2020

**Action: Clerk to evidence to the Bank Statement to Cllr J Wilson.**

## Invoices for approval

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **To** | **For** | **Amount** |
| Andrew Wilson | Grass Cutting & Parish Maintenance | £200 |
| Becx Carter | Expenses | £163.45 |
| CPRE | Subscription | £36.00 |

**Resolved** by all present that this invoice be paid.

**Action: Clerk to upload the invoices to the Bank Account and seek authorization from Cllr’s Wilson & Boniface**

## Approval & Signing of Bank Reconciliation

**Resolved** by all present that this be noted as a true and accurate record.

## Draft Budget 21-22 for Consideration

The Clerk had circulated a Draft Budget to all councilors for consideration prior to the meeting, based on the expenditure to date for 20/21 and the expected remaining expenditure for the financial year that a small precept rise maybe required for 21/22 to ensure that the Parish Council remains in a good financial position in terms of reserves going forward.

**Action: Clerk to update the budget and agenda for approval at the January 2021 meeting when hopefully the Band D figures will be available to allow the impacts of any possible alteration to be known on a property basis.**

## Approval of expenditure for previously damaged finger on Applethwaite Fingerpost

During the Summer of 2020 the ‘Applethwaite’ Finger of the aforementioned cast iron fingerpost was damaged by a hedge cutter. Whilst the fingerpost is being replaced following the road traffic accident there is an opportunity for Underskiddaw Parish Council to fund the replacement ‘Applethwaite’ finger to ensure the sign is restored to its former glory. The exact cost of this is not known and would be subject to agreement with Cumbria County Council.

**Resolved** by all present that this be approved and the clerk to confirm costs to all via email.

**Action: Clerk to proceed with this.**

## Keswick & District First Responders Request for Grant

**Resolved** by all present that a S.137 donation of £60 be made to the Keswick & District First Responders to fund the cost of a First Responder pager for one year.

**Action: Clerk to process this donation.**

## Great North Air Ambulance Request for Grant

**Resolved** by all present that a donation of £100 be made to the Great North Air Ambulance in recognition of its valuable work across the country.

**Action: Clerk to process this donation.**

**Action: Clerk to increase the budget for both these organization’s for 2021/22**

# 60/2020 Lake District National Park Authority

## Decisions

**Resolved** that the below decisions be noted.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Address** | **Proposal** | **Decision** |
| 7/2020/2201 | Skiddaw Bank, Millbeck, | New garage extension to existing dwelling in place of car port | Approved with conditions |
| 7/2020/2185 & (2186) | Millbeck Hall Cottage, Millbeck | Conversion of existing attached barn to provide additional accommodation for use with the existing dwelling | Approved with conditions |

## Planning Applications for Consideration

None

1. United Utilities Pipeline Update

Following concerns raised by both Parish Councillors and Parishoners at the September 2020 meeting the Clerk had raised a number of concerns with United Utilities (a copy was also sent to MP Mark Jenkinson).

A response has been received from both United Utilities & from MP Mark Jenkinson. The response from United Utilities is as follows:

*Visual Condition of the Easement*

United Utilities note the Parish Council comments regarding the condition of the easement in the Parish area. Despite Covid 19 and all of the restrictions that have come with it, United Utilities are still on track to complete the project by March 2022 and the UU team have been extremely busy in the area completing testing, cleansing the pipework and constructing valve and washout chambers. As such the area is still an active construction site however they have taken steps to clean up the areas as reinstatement has progressed.

Mr I McCoy (Stakeholder Manager) understands that the mud pits, heaps of debris and large blue pipes have now been removed and the area is tidy. If anyone has any specific concerns regarding the condition of these easement the Parish Council should let United Utilities know. There are small piles of soil adjacent to the access points which have to remain as they are the soil that will be used when reinstated the access points at the end of the project.

*Beck Banks*

Reseeding with grass through hessian coir is a standard method of reinstated river banks after work has been carried out. The hessian is used to support the soils on the restored banks and provides a number of things:

* Provides cover for the top soil surface to allow grass growth, it prevents seedlings being washed out before they have a chance to root properly
* Provides support against the forces of the watercourse in spate to stop the banks slumping
* Coir allows grasses to grow (A specific grass mix is used to restore watercourses)
* Coir will eventually rot into the soils as it is an entirely natural material
* The coir is dug in at its edges and securely pegged in (pegs 100% natural material)
* The coir is only used on river banks, the base has a suitable substrate replaced in there, either from saved material from the original water course or material collected from deposits from other similar water courses in the area.

The methodology for using hessian has been signed off by the project Steering Group that includes the Environment Agency, Natural England and the LDNPA. Reports for each watercourse (as flumes are removed) are sent to the group and reviewed individually. Mr I McCoy is pleased to confirm that the steering group are happy with the reinstatement in this area and there is a commitment to regular monitoring of the site to ensure there is no erosion.

If there is damage to the hessian e.g. in Storms, this will be replaced as soon as practicable. This is a known risk but alternatives such as turfing would have the same/additional issues.

Tree planting will take place over winter. The trees planted will be saplings and as such will take some time to provide bank protection hence the placement of coir.

*Communication*

Mr McCoy noted that given the pandemic communication has had to be addressed differently in 2020. Usually United Utilities would offer to attend Parish Council meetings twice a year to provide updates but this hasn’t been possible.

Communications on the ground have focused on the areas where United Utilities have a large ongoing construction to keep locals and landowners informed of their activity. All landowners including those in Underskiddaw are continually engaged via their Land Agents as they are directly impacted by UU’s present.

Mr McCoy confirmed the United Utilities Pipeline website was kept updated and that they would be willing to attend a future Parish Council meeting (virtually) if the Parish Council felt this would be beneficial.

**Resolved** by all present that inviting United Utilities to the meeting seems pointless as historically they have promised many things that they have never delivered on, however, to inviting them to the meeting continues to hold them accountable.

**Action: Clerk to invite United Utilities to the January 2021**

**Action: Clerk to write to United Utilities again regarding the lack of ongoing compensation and the fact that the promised ‘grant fund’ was very small and ran out very rapidly and grants were issued to organization’s not directly impacted by the Pipeline works.**

# 61/2020 Members Reports

Village Hall- Currently the Village Hall remains closed and the committee are going to use the winter to undertake some maintenance works on the Village Hall

# 62/2020 Dates of next meeting

**Resolved** that the next meeting date be Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 14:00 in a Virtual Meeting Room.

Signed……………………………………………………………………………. (Dated) ………………………….

Meeting Closed 15:05