

LAZONBY PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT BEFORE APPROVAL

THE ANNUAL OPEN PARISH MEETING **of the** **PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes

held on Wednesday 10th May 2023, starting at 6 p.m, in Lazonby Village Hall.

Present: Chair Councillor Chris West

Councillors Andrew Miller, Tim Wright, Peter Foley, Phillip Whitehead, Andrew Bates and Ruth Hookway.

Also in attendance: County Councillor Hilary Carrick, Clerk to the Council Rebecca Wyatt and 20 parishioners.

ITEM / MINUTE No.	ITEM	BUSINESS
1.	Apologies for absence.	RESOLVED that the apologies received from Parish Councillor Angie Miller and Treasurer Chris Hoy be accepted and noted.
2.	Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 4th May 2022.	The Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 4 th May 2022 were considered. RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 4 th May 2022 be approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.
3.	Reports from the Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 4th May 2022.	RESOLVED that there were no reports from the Minutes of the last Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 4 th May 2022.
4.	The Chair's Annual Report for the period May 2022 to May 2023. Welcome to Lazonby Parish Council's Annual Open Meeting. Thank you for your attendance and I look forward to your comments in the open session following my report. It has been an interesting year which has had its challenges and successes. I would like to thank all those Parishioners who have contributed towards the running of the Parish Council and participated when we, as the Council have promoted events and keep an eye on the way we conduct the business to ensure we maintain a high standard of governance and accountability. I hope you will continue to support the Council and its members in the coming year. As volunteers, all the members give their time freely and have achieved good results for the Parishioners, more can always be done, but free time is not always available. For the smooth running, and financial security and effectiveness of the Parish Council I would like to thank Beccy Wyatt and Chris Hoy who have worked with dedication which has made my job easier. I	

thank them for their professional and tireless efforts. I would also like to thank Tim for being the deputy chair and my fellow Councillors for their willingness to give up their time to take part in various projects to benefit the parish.

District Councillor Gordon Nicolson and County Councillor Hilary Carrick deserve a big thank you for the time they spend on parish matters. Other people that have worked exceedingly hard for us and deserve a thank you are: Shaun Bunting for his work on the Parish Council website, Geoff and Jennifer Wilson for their continuing work on the upkeep of the recycling centre, and for the work they do with Rob Simm on keeping the Village Green looking so good, the grass-cutting volunteers who keep the village looking tidy and the school staff and parents who deliver the newsletter.

Since my last report Councillor Phil Whitehead has returned from sabbatical but regrettably Councillor Steve Craig resigned and is a big miss to me as he was a good sounding board and had worked very hard to promote broadband for our village. Sadly, Councillor John Judson who has been on the Council for 40 years, as decided to hang his boots up. I would like to thank him for all the work he has done over the years. He has been Chair, Highways contact officer, grass-cutting and general maintenance guru. He was also a fountain of knowledge about the village and the history of parish projects. His shoes will hard to fill. Two other members have also decided not to put themselves forward for election, Councillors Gordon Nicholson and Peter Foley. Both these members have been very instrumental in pushing the development of the Egg Packing Factory, and have agreed in principle to still be involved in the process by putting themselves forward for co-option back onto the Council in the near future. Councillor Gordon Nicolson has been a member of the Council for over 15 years and has been a tremendous help in navigating District and County Council Policies and help LPC understand the changes and procedures on many topics over the years. Councillor Peter Foley has been a member of the council for over four years and again because of his professional career and experience has helped the council on many issues. He again will be missed. With these Councillors not standing for election we now have 5 vacancies out of ten seats, and so the Parish Council is in much need of filling these seats in order not to lose the Parish Council and the vital role it plays making decisions and representing the local community at grass root level.

Every month there are issues which recur as they are general 'housekeeping' matters. Topics which continue to cause problems are traffic, dog fouling, dogs running freely in fields of sheep, general litter, weeds and people dumping inappropriate material at the recycling centre and in rural parts of the parish. I would like to thank all the Parishioners who have, on their daily exercise, collected litter and managed to keep our village looking tidy also those that regularly weed untidy areas and look after planted areas.

The traffic problem continues to be a big issue and although we have had consultations with the Highways Department and listened to villagers' concerns, there is a limited amount to what can be done. The traffic has also increased with the number of new houses and the construction of traffic to the new building sites.

You will all be aware that the footway between Lazonby & District swimming pool and Eden Bridge has been completed. It was a great effort on everyone part to fulfil this dream and make it a reality. The Council with the help of Councillors Hilary Carrick and Gordon Nicholson secured funding for the footpath to which the Parish Council had to fund match, thanks to the very generous contribution of the Parishioners, local business and a grant from Eden District Council we were able to raise the money needed. It has been well used by all groups within the community and has enabled the School to have events they were unable to hold before it was completed. The Headmaster has thanked Council a number of times as they now have a running group using the path weekly and they have had trips over the river to Lacy's Caves.

Councillor John Judson has continued to take responsibility for issues with the Highways and has succeeded to have repairs carried out in the village and surrounding roads when necessary. He has built up a good relationship with the Highways Department. This winter has been a very trying season for potholes and has been continually on our agenda. Councillor Hilary Carrick has been keeping up with the issues we have in the village and Councillor John Judson wrote an article for the 'Westmorland Herald' highlighting the problem.

The Egg Packing Housing factory site is still presenting the Council with a lot of work to see this Housing Development project through. Councillors Gordon Nicholson and Peter Foley have been tireless in their work to find ways to drive this forward. This is still an ongoing project. The big success is that we now have planning permission which has taken nearly a year to come through and we have a new partner with Coast and Castles Housing Association.

Councillor Phillip Whitehead is still keen to promote conservation in the Parish and is looking for projects.

As a Council, we have continued to support organisations in the Parish through the grants we award. The following amounts over the accounting Years 23/24 were distributed as follows:-

1. **The Eden Valley Players - £1200** towards the purchase of wireless microphone headsets and 1 handheld microphone for productions.
2. **The Lazonby Festive Donation Club - £50** towards the cost of purchasing a Christmas tree to place outside the Midland, decorations and additional lights to raise money by donating to Jigsaw Charity.

We derive some of our revenue from the recycling site and our fishing licences. Both of these have reduced over the last few years, but we are hoping the fishing licence revenue may increase with the either the ability to pay with your mobile phone which is something we are looking into or working in partnership with an angling club who will take this responsibility on. We also looking into visitors contributing to the parking/picnic area by the Recycling centre by voluntary contributing to parking there.

With other organisations in the Village we help organise a Village Event for the Coronation. This included the swimming pool doing a Coronation Breakfast, a special Church service, a tree planting courtesy of Bells of Lazonby, children's sports, fancy dress, and bring your own picnic on the school field, while in the school hall there was a crown, cake decoration and bun decoration competition judged by the WI and Eden Court. The day was finished off with a Ceildh in the village Hall. It was a whole village event. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved for their hard-work.

Finally, I would like to welcome everyone who has moved into the Parish this year. We would welcome your input in helping the Parish Council to run a successful and happy parish and encourage you to join us on the Parish Council as there are several vacancies open. Please continue to read the notices that are put up on the parish notice boards and keep up to date with the planning applications and other parish matters through our website (www.lazonbyparishcouncil.org), as we can only represent the people of the parish if we know your views. Meanwhile, everyone is very welcome to attend our meetings, which are held on the first Wednesday each month at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, except January and August.

Councillor Chris West
Chair, Lazonby Parish Council
May 2023.

RESOLVED that the Chairs Report be noted with thanks to the Chair Chris West.

ALSO RESOLVED that the Parish Council would like to thank the Chair Councillor Chris West and the Vice-Chair Tim Wright for the work they have carried out on behalf of the Parish Council over the past year.

5.

**Treasurer's
Financial
Report and
Accounts.**

The Treasurer presented the financial report and accounts for 2022 - 2023 (please see attached), which were issued to all those present after which questions were invited. The following report was given.

Total Reserves held at yearend 2022/23 were £43616.
The External Auditors strongly recommend that the maximum reserves should not exceed twice the Precept amount. The Precept for the year stood at £14350.
Therefore the maximum Reserve balance would equate to £28700. Reserves were substantially above this threshold by £14916. The explanation for such an increase is attributed to the Parish Council instigating an affordable housing project on the site

of the old Egg Packing Station and a fundraising project to raise funds to create a footway linking the Swimming Pool and Lazonby Bridge. The Eden DC grant for affordable housing was paid in two phases, firstly £27000 and secondly £34000, the first phase has been spent and the second only partially. The footway donations in total after all costs amounted to £30031 and this amount was finally paid to Cumbria CC in February, greatly reducing the reserve balance of £74090 the previous year. Therefore Parish Reserves less the remaining unspent grant were £15116, inside the recommended reserve threshold.

Whilst the Precept was increased by £1000 to £14350 in May 2022 to cover £6000 in local group grant applications including the Queen's Jubilee grants and £3000 from reserves to contribute to the footway project in December 2022 the Council agreed that the Precept should remain unchanged at £14350 for 2023/24.

This was in recognition of the effects of the living cost crisis on parishioners and adequate reserves to cover expected costs in 2023/24.

A full audit externally will again be needed because of the turnover thresholds breaching the £25k limit of income and expenditure. This will be available in its entirety on the Parish website from July. However, I have provided some detail in the main differences between the accounts of 2021/22 and present day 2022/23.

Local grants were UP £4925 - Local group applications were £5066, Jubilee applications £375 and £500 was contributed to the Village Hall to renovate the Flat for a Ukrainian couple.

Capital/Project expenditure was UP £30384 - The accumulated donations for the footway project totaled £30031 after costs as this was paid to Cumbria CC for the works in February. Another 6 street lights were adopted by the Parish and upgraded with new light heads at a cost of £2520.

Grants Received were UP £8181 - Cumbria CC provided £1500 towards the 6 street lights recently adopted and £7500 from Eden DC towards the footway project.

Recycling Credits were UP £995 – no payment was made in 2021/22 which has now been rectified although the second half of 2022/23 has yet to be paid.

Staff Salaries/Costs WERE UP £820 – due to a substantial increase in wages under local authority guidelines.

Maintenance was DOWN £1815 – despite £2000 paid to GDS Doors for a shutter added to the storehouse, and renovation to the Parish Noticeboards.

VAT Recovery was DOWN £3052 – The Affordable Housing Project had a temporary lull in activity resulting in less project work for the site. It must be noted that the majority of any VAT recovered overall is apportioned to the remaining grant from Eden DC.

Miscellaneous Income was DOWN £23323 - In 2021/22 the majority of the donations towards the footway project were paid into the Parish Deposit account to ringfence from the usual Parish business, just two more donations were received in 2022/23 for £175.

Finally the Budget for 2023/24 has projected a net deficit of £1290 projecting Reserves as at **31/03/2024** of **£13102**

Chris Hoy
Treasurer to the Council

RESOLVED that the financial report and accounts submitted for 2022 to 2023 by the Treasurer be noted and approved and that the Treasurer be thanked for his report.

<p>6.</p>	<p>Planning Application Concerns and Comments.</p>	<p>The Council discussed recent planning applications in the parish that are concerning parishioners. The parishioners were also allowed to give representation on this matter.</p> <p>Several parishioners have expressed their concerns about Planning Application No. 23/0254. A previous application was turned down in 2000, and furthermore the Lazonby Neighbourhood Plan does not identify the Fiddlers Lane site as an allocation for development, The land is managed by a local property agency for a family that do not live in the area. The following concerns and points were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The parish already exceeds the 106 recommended new houses for the area as laid out in the Neighbourhood Plan, due to several housing development already been built or currently being built in the last few years. 2) Parking issues. 3) There will be a traffic increase on an inadequate road, and there is an inadequate access to the site. 4) The existing excessive parking issues on Auction Mart day which will add to the problems. 5) Lack of adequate street lighting. 6) There is a potential sink hole in the area. 7) Concerns about the aging sewage system in the area and the increase in waste. 8) The issues of nutrient neutrality in relation to this planning application. 9) No upgrade to the power grid mentioned. 10) Concerns that a turning area on the planning application could be there for more houses to be built in the future. <p>RESOLVED that the Parish Council note the concerns of the parishioners when considering the response to Planning Application No. 23/0254.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Open Forum – Parishioners’ Questions & Suggestions.</p>	<p>The Chair opened the Meeting to the floor and invited those present for their contributions for debate. Also any parishioner emails received were also considered. There were no further issues brought up by those present but a parishioner has given their concerns via email regarding the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What is the Parish Council doing in relation to the unwarranted planning application number 23/0254 put in by Penrith Farmers & Kidds plc in an area which falls outside the area designated for development in the Village Plan?</i> 2. <i>There is an area of the side of the B6410 on the opposite side of the road to the Will Pool further up towards the Telephone exchange which needs filling in with tarmac.</i> 3. <i>The drain near the back entrance to the quarry is still flooding and whilst the former County Council tried to do something about this nothing further has been done and the flooded road continues.</i> 4. <i>I note that the council is finally looking at asking for donations for parking at the recycling centre. This has been kicked around for many years as can be seen from the minutes of the Parish Council over many years when places like Skelton have had a donation box which takes cash for many years. The cost of an electronic mode of payment is expensive and unlikely to bring much income in and so be another burden which the residents of Lazonby have to pay for with no likely return on the money spent. This in my view is unacceptable waste of money. How come the residents have not been asked their views. It would be better to spend money on putting a proper road surface from the entrance to the</i>

recycling centre itself rather than keep on filling the holes in with gravel which will be an ongoing issue if not dealt with properly.

5. *In this day and age is it not possible to send out by e-mail (as must happen for Councillors) to those residents interested in the agenda and minutes of meetings who wish to keep in touch with what is going on in Lazonby as merely relying on people reading the agendas put up in the Co-op and the village notice boards and in Lazonby Lines which sometimes arrives after scheduled Council Meetings?*

RESOLVED that the parishioner's concerns were noted by the Parish Council and the following points were made:

1. The concerns about planning application no. 23/0254 have been noted and will be considered when the Parish Council makes their response to the planning application.
2. The area of the side of the B6410 on the opposite side of the road to the Will Pool further up towards the Telephone exchange which needed filling in with tarmac is being dealt with.
3. The drain near the back entrance to the quarry which has been flooding is still undergoing repairs.
4. The donations for use of the Eden Bridge car park is carefully being considered by the Parish Council still but there will be no cost to the Parish Council in setting it up, other than possibly some signs, and no cost for using the electronic method of payment. Unfortunately, the regular winter flooding of the car park stops a permanent surface being laid as it will just be washed away every time the river floods.
5. Finally, parishioners can have their email address added to the list for emailing out agenda paperwork on request. The parishioner is now on the list.

There being no further items raised for discussion the Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all Parishioners for their attendance and closed the meeting at approximately 6.50 pm.