

Ennerdale & Kinniside Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 9th January 2013
in St. Mary's Community Centre, Ennerdale Bridge.

Prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting the Chair welcomed Councillor Elaine Woodburn, the Leader of Copeland Borough Council, and invited her to speak on the issue of the MRWS process and the factors that the Copeland Borough Council Cabinet will be taking into consideration when making their decision as to whether to support the move to Stage 4 of the process.

Cllr. Woodburn began her presentation by giving a brief overview of the MRWS process up to the CBC decision which is to be made on January 30th.

In 2007 the then Government asked for 'expressions of interest' from local communities, via local authorities, who would be open to hosting an underground repository for medium and high level nuclear waste. After consulting various organisations, including Parish Councils, CBC submitted an 'expression of interest' in 2008. The main reason for this 'expression of interest' was that the majority of the waste was situated in Copeland already. The MRWS Partnership was set up with a wide range of bodies and organisations engaged in the process. Parish Councils were represented by CALC in the Partnership.

A wide range of consultations were undertaken by the Partnership and this resulted in the Partnership Final Report being issued in August 2012. The report was delivered to the three Decision Making Bodies, Copeland BC, Allerdale BC and Cumbria CC, all of whom have to decide at meetings held at the end of January whether to proceed to Stage 4 of the process, this being desk-top studies into the suitability of the geology of West Cumbria for hosting an underground repository.

Cllr. Woodburn outlined why there had been a pause in the process, this being to allow the DMB's to seek clarity from Government on a number of issues including the right of withdrawal and community benefits. Concerns appear to have been addressed by Government.

When making the decision to move to Stage 4 or not, CBC Cabinet will consider:

- The Final Report
- The Mori Opinion Poll
- Other responses, including those from the Parish Councils
- The opinions of Full Council

The Chair then opened the meeting up to questions from the floor.

Q: There is a lot of concern regarding the siting issues. Is it true that only two areas, Silloth and Ennerdale, have been identified?

A: No sites have yet been identified and there is a lot of work to be done developing local criteria before any sites can be looked at.

Q: Dr. Dearlove has identified these two areas as being potentially suitable.

A: It was his opinion, though my understanding is that he said at least two sites might be suitable, not just two sites. No siting decisions have been made yet.

Q: The fact is that one of these sites falls wholly within the Lake District National Park. Is the Park sacrosanct?

A: I don't want to see the National Park desecrated. There will be no above ground head-works, buildings, structures etc. in the Park.

Q: The Mori Poll consultation did not make it clear that this project could be under or within the National Park. Had it done so it would have had an impact on my response.

A: The Mori phone survey is just one part of the consultation process that councillors will take into consideration. Most people have assumed that this project will happen under or near Sellafield and were relaxed about that.

Q: If CBC decides to support the move to Stage 4 and CCC and ABC decide not to, what happens?

A: The Government have said that there needs to be three green lights, such as CBC, CCC and the Government.

Q: What is your assessment of the Governments response to your letter seeking clarifications. Are you suspicious of the 'woolly' response?

A: We have learnt from the Nirex experience. The Right of Withdrawal will be put on a legal footing. With relation to this, there will be a local referendum at some stage in the process, when local people have all the facts they will be asked for their opinion.

Q: What weight will be given to the views of Town and Parish Councils?

A: No specific weighting, all views will be considered.

Q: Why are CBC only considering an underground repository?

A: This was the recommendation of CoRWM who decided that an underground repository was the best way of dealing with the waste. This view was accepted by the previous Government and the present Government.

Q: What happens if at some future date a better, over-ground way of dealing with nuclear waste is found?

A: There are bound to be regular future assessments of the way that waste is handled.

Q: Dr. Dearlove has identified two volumes of rock as being suitable, one of which is the Ennerdale Granites. The NDA have stated that drilling at Stage 5 will require 100m square pads for the drilling machines to stand on. This will happen within the National Park.

A: Dr. Dearlove is an independent geologist and not part of the MRWS process. He was employed for two specific pieces of work that informed the process. Yes, there will be drilling at Stage 5 but what is damaging to Ennerdale at this moment in time is the scaremongering that is currently happening and this includes the use of language like 'The rape of Ennerdale'.

Q: The NDA document talks about the drilling process and the fact that it will 1,200 metres deep. The extent of the drilling process is a real concern.

A: These are concerns of mine as well.

Q: Organisations such as The Ennerdale Hub might lose income if footpaths are closed and there is large scale disruption in the Ennerdale valley. At Stage 4 is it going to be possible for certain areas to be excluded?

A: No it isn't and even if it were, why would we exclude Ennerdale and not Wasdale. However, if the vote is to proceed to Stage 4 we will come back to Ennerdale before Stage 5 and talk about local criteria.

Q: You stated that certain areas were excluded because they contained valuable assets such as coal or water. The Lake District National Park is a valuable asset. Why are we not using the waste to provide more energy?

A: They are looking at reusing plutonium but the waste we are talking about for the repository is largely 'legacy waste'.

Q: If the decision is made not to proceed with this process what happens to the waste?

A: It will stay where it is.

The Chair brought the Q & A session to an end and thanked Cllr. Woodburn for attending.

Cllr. Woodburn thanked all those who had attended and concluded by saying that CBC will not do anything to harm Copeland.

There were 53 members of the public in attendance.

The Parish Council meeting proceeded:

1.01.13: In Attendance: Cllrs. Lachlan (Chair), Ayling, Oakley, Wood, Taylor, Topping, McMullen, Denham-Smith and Shail.

There were also 9 members of the public and Cllr. Salkeld (CBC) in attendance.

2.01.13: Apologies: There were no apologies.

3.01.13: Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

4.01.13: The Ben Gill Project: A presentation by United Utilities.

UU staff explained that they were planning to reduce water abstraction from the area. A number of works were ongoing. These included Treatment works, Compensation Flow works, the South Egremont Borehole Scheme, the Ennerdale Fish Pass and the Ben Gill Project.

Natural England have told UU that they require the Ben Gill abstraction point to be returned to its original course, though the point of entry into the river will be slightly higher than the original entry. By placing more water into the river this will in turn increase the amount of gravel and sediments into the water course and this will improve conditions for both fish and the protected fresh-water mussels.

A pedestrian bridge will be placed over the new entry point as there is a public footpath in the vicinity. All the footpaths that cross the work area will be closed for the duration of the works though a temporary footpath from Bleach Green car park will be opened to ensure that walkers are able continue to use the lakeside path. The budget for the project is a little under £1m. Local contractors will be used.

The on-site work is expected to commence in late May/early June 2013 and will definitely be completed by September 30th. There will not be a large number of construction vehicles on the site and an agreement has been reached with Ennerdale School to ensure that construction traffic does not interfere with in-muster and out-muster times.

The Chair suggested that UU be kept in the loop with regard to specific events in the area during the on-site works and that a copy of the 'Miles without Stiles' LDNPA funding application be sent to UU so that the staff team were aware of this project, though not in the Ben Gill area.

A question was asked regarding the condition of the road from Grike Cottage to Bleach Green. It was stated that UU vehicles, together with the increase in traffic using the Bleach Green car park has resulted in the road being in a poor state with large pot-holes appearing on a regular basis and the verges being damaged as vehicles try to pass each other. Passing places are needed on this stretch of road. UU stated that there would be a traffic management plan in place for the length of the project and that there would be some improvement works undertaken.

The Chair thanked UU for their attendance.

ACTION: Clerk to send a copy of the 'Miles without Stiles' funding application to Laura Kimmance (UU)

5.01.13: Minutes of the meeting held on 12th September:

The minutes of the November meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr. Oakley

Seconded: Cllr. Ayling

The Chair duly signed them.

6.01.13: Actions from the minutes (not covered by other agenda items):

118.11.12 The Clerk has passed on the details of people who are interested in supporting a Campaign Group.

119.11.12 The Clerk has met up with new Councillors and gone through the paperwork with them.

120.11.12 Clerk has informed CBC of the precept level for 13/14.

121.11.12 All payments have been sent.

125.11.12 Cllr. Lachlan has sent off the information required by the LDNPA re: footpath funding application.

126.11.12 All newsletter articles have been sent and newsletters printed and delivered.

127.11.12 Letter sent to Cllr. Auld via CALC re: Broadband

128.11.12 Clerk responded to both Sellafeld and CALC (3 Tier meetings)

The Chair confirmed that the 3 Tier Meetings in future would be issue led.

7.01.13: Public Participation:

All members of the public left after the United Utilities presentation and no further issues were raised under Public Participation.

8.01.13: Council Finance:

The Clerk provided councillors with a revised bank reconciliation showing the balance of the main account as £12,444.20p as per the latest available bank statement dated 24th December. The Chair checked the balance with the bank reconciliation and initialled the latest statement.

The following payments were agreed:

- £244.26p Clerk's salary and expenses Quarter 3
- £50.06p HMRC PAYE Quarter 3

Once the above payments had been taken into account, together with those that have yet to clear, the reconciled balance of the main account was £12,120.63p

ACTION: Clerk to send out all payments

9.01.13: Planning Matters:

There were no planning applications to discuss.

10.01.13: Procedural Matters:

The Clerk drew the attention of councillors to a number of issues regarding the running of council meetings and the supporting documentation. He also expressed his concerns regarding the apparent lack of a number of governance documents.

After some discussion it was agreed that future agendas would be similar to the example produced by the Clerk and that councillor apologies together with reasons for absence would be noted in the minutes.

It was further agreed that a Governance sub-group be set up to initially develop an updated version of Standing Orders and a new version of the Financial Regulations for the Parish Council. Cllrs. Topping, Ayling and Denham-Smith agreed to be member of the sub-group along with the Clerk.

ACTION: Clerk to send out relevant documents to the members of the Governance sub-group prior to arranging a first meeting of the group

11.01.13: MRWS:

Cllr. Wood reported that the Decision making Bodies, CCC, CBC and ABC, are all to decide whether or not to proceed to Stage 4 on January 30th. CBC are to meet at 10.00am in the Bainbridge Room at the Copeland Centre.

The Ennerdale referendum, which is to be counted on Thursday 17th will be covered by the BBC and the Whitehaven News. There has been an article in the Whitehaven News on the government funding of £500k to promote tourism in Cumbria to offset any negative impacts that the repository might have on tourism. The Sunday Politics Show on BBC is to cover the issue on January 20th. There is also to be an article in Research Fortnight magazine.

ACTION: Clerk to prepare letters for Cabinet and Executive of CBC and CCC once referendum results are available.

ACTION: Cllrs also to write letters as above if they wish to.

ACTION: Cllrs to attend CBC Cabinet meeting on 30th is able to.

12.01.13: Report from the Police and Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr. Wood informed councillors that there were no incidents in November and one domestic incident in December.

The Cumbria Community Messaging service sent out 25 alerts during the last two months, 12 in November and 13 in December.

13.01.13: Highways Matters:

Cllr. Lachlan reported that he will undertake a tour of the Parish during January with Ricki Crawford from Cumbria Highways. He also reported that there had been further staff reductions within the Cumbria Highways team based at Richmond House.

There has been a second incident of theft of batteries from the Speed Indicator Devices, currently situated in the villages around Cold Fell. The police are now considering the use of mains operated SIDs.

ACTION: Cllr. Lachlan to raise the issue of lighting outside the church/community centre with Ricki Crawford when they meet up.

14.01.13: Report from ECRAAG:

Cllr. Oakley informed councillors that there was nothing new to report at this stage.

15.01.13: Broadband Update:

Cllr. Topping handed out copies of the latest Connecting Cumbria newsletter. He also reported that there had been no real progress made since his last report but he expected the project to be moving forward in the spring.

16.01.13: Correspondence:

All electronic correspondence has been forwarded to councillors. Other Correspondence:

Correspondence	For information	For action
CBC: Government Funding Allocation	X	X
LDNPA – Minerals Safeguarding Area	X	
CCC: Draft Budget Proposals	X	X
LDNPA: Allocations of Land for housing	X	
REGEN NE Copeland: request for funding	X	X
Freedom of information request	X	Replied to 22/12/12

The Clerk provided councillors with details of the Freedom of Information request and the response that had been sent.

ACTION: Clerk to check with Sarah Mitchell, Regen NE Copeland, re: funding from the PC.

ACTION: Clerk to confirm 13/14 precept with CBC.

ACTION: Cllr. Lachlan to discuss allocations of land for employment with Ennerdale Hub.

17.01.13: Parish Council Website: Cllr Topping reported that the website would be going live in February. He also requested longer versions of the articles from the Winter newsletter if they were available.

ACTION: Cllrs to send articles to Cllr Topping. Clerk to forward minutes and Cllr. Information list and 2013 meeting dates.

18.01.13: Feedback from meetings:

Cllr. Wood reported that Dean PC had confirmed their funding for the 217 Bus Service of £1,000 for the first half of the next financial year. Cllr. Ayling is to attend the next 217 meeting.

Cllr. Lachlan reported back from the most recent RNEC West Lakes Xtreme project meeting. He handed round plans for the project which he felt had a very good chance of attracting funding and being delivered. He also reported on progress made on the development of the Ehen Valley Way for walkers and mountain bikers.

19.01.13: Topics for the next meeting:

- Wild Ennerdale - update

20.01.13: Date of next meeting:

7.00pm on Wednesday 13th March 2013 in St. Mary's Community Centre, Ennerdale Bridge

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chair

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