

Minutes of the meeting of Kaber Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 21 March 2016 at 19.00 in Kaber Village Hall

Present: Mary Leathes
Stuart Hird
Steven Hastwell
Sam Fisher
Mike Walker Clerk & RFO

Trevor Ladhams Eden District Councillor

Rachel Bell

- 1. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence:** Apologies had been received from Councillors Libby Bateman and Valerie Kendall.
- 2. To approve the minutes of the January 2016 meeting:** The minutes had been circulated with the agenda. Stuart Hird proposed and Steven Hastwell seconded that the minutes be adopted and the Chairman signed them.
- 3. To hear reports on actions from the previous minutes:**
Work has been completed on Clay Lane at no cost to the Parish Council.
The Clerk advertised the vacancy on the Council and as no election was requested possible candidates for co-option could be considered.
A submission for the agreed precept has been made.
Councillors had carried out enquiries regarding a review of governance and a majority of the electorate had signed a petition. The Clerk had held a meeting with EDC about governance.
Cumbria CVS had completed the payment run and the Clerk had received his salary, expenses and HMRC had been paid the appropriate level of Income Tax.
- 4. Declarations of Interest on items on the agenda:** There were no declarations of interest on items on the agenda.
- 5. To consider and decide on Requests for Dispensations:** There were no requests for dispensation.
- 6. Public Participation:** No public participation was requested.
- 7. To consider and comment on planning applications if submitted before the meeting:** Since the previous meeting an application for an agricultural building had been received from Mr & Mrs M Staley. The Clerk had circulated details by e-mail and as there were no adverse comments, advised EDC that the Council had no concerns.

8. **To agree co-option of a new Councillor:** Rachel Bell of Heggerscale House had offered her services as a Parish Councillor. Following brief checks that she was not disqualified, Sam Fisher proposed and Stuart Hird seconded her appointment. Rachel was given the Acceptance of Office form, and the Declaration of Interests form as well as the dispensation request to deal with Council Tax matters. The Clerk will handle the completed forms as necessary.
9. **To follow up actions to identify a new Clerk:** Chrissie Hadfield of Broxty had expressed a willingness to consider the Clerk's role. However, due to childcare concerns she felt unable to take on the responsibility of the role. Mike Walker has expressed a willingness to carry on as Clerk if the anticipated review of Governance is agreed by the electors, until the process is completed. This was accepted by the Council.

Mary Leathes, the Chairman, advised the meeting that she would stand down as Chairman at the Council AGM, but was willing to continue as a Councillor during any review of Governance.

10. **To report on meetings on Governance with CALC and EDC and agree to ask electors whether Kaber PC should request a review of governance:** The Clerk has met with CALC and EDC and both bodies are sympathetic to the difficulties we are experiencing. There appear to be a number of options, remaining as a Council, converting to a Parish meeting, merging with another Parish or becoming unparished. The status quo was felt to be unlikely as the difficulties associated with being a Parish Council are the reasons for requesting a review. Being unparished goes against central Government's plan to devolve decision making to lower levels of Government. The only adjacent Parish Council is Stainmore. This is in a different electoral division, but also does not raise a precept, as it owns land whose rent provides income for the Parish. This would undoubtedly cause problems. Other adjacent parishes are Parish Meetings and may not view a merger with Kaber as worthwhile if it imposed Parish Council demands on them. The most likely outcome would be for Kaber to convert to a Parish Meeting. The process could take some time and the earliest a change could be made would be 1 April 2017. Failing that it would need to be one year later.

More than 50% of the electorate had signed the petition expressing a wish for a review of governance. Steven Hastwell proposed and Sam Fisher seconded that a recommendation be put to the Annual Meeting of Electors that we make a formal request to EDC for a review of Governance. This was accepted.

11. **To consider alternative ways of data transparency compliance:** CALC's hosting of small parish data may be ceased during 2016. The Clerk has been made aware of a company, Hugo Fox, who are offering free websites for Parish Councils and community bodies. Enquiries have resulted in written confirmation that there are no hidden costs and it was agreed that the Parish should explore this option as and when CALC remove the service.

12. To agree additional bank signatory: As Julie Reeves has left the area the Council is short of a bank signatory. Rachel Bell and Stuart Hird both agreed to be signatories.

The following resolution was approved by Council:

- i) That a bank account be continued with HSBC Bank plc (the 'Bank') and the Bank is authorised to:
 - a) Pay all cheques and other instruction for payment or accept instructions to stop such payments signed on behalf of the Council by any two of those listed, (the "Signatory") whether any account of the Council is in debit or credit;
 - b) Deliver any item held on behalf of the Council by the Bank in safe keeping against the written receipt of the "Signatory"; and
 - c) Accept the "Signatory as fully empowered to act on behalf of the Council in any other transaction with the Bank (including closing the account); and
- ii) That any debt incurred on the Bank under this mandate shall, in the absence of written agreement by the Bank to the contrary, be repayable on demand.
- iii) That the Clerk from time to time is authorised to supply the Bank as and when necessary with lists of persons who are authorised to sign, give receipts, and act on behalf of the Council, and that the Bank may rely on such lists.
- iv) That these resolutions remain in force until cancelled in writing to the Bank signed by the Chair Person or Clerk, from time to time acting or claiming to act on behalf of the Council, and the Bank shall be entitled to act on such notice whether the resolutions have been validly cancelled or not.
- v) That the Council accepts the account and banking relationship with the Bank will be governed by and subject to the Banking Business Terms and Conditions (a copy of which has been provided) as amended from time to time together with any terms and conditions in respect of specific products and services requested by the Council from time to time.

The Clerk will arrange completion of the necessary forms for this change. Rachel and Stuart were informed that if they do not have an HSBC account, identification will need to be presented to a local branch of HSBC.

At this point the meeting was adjourned for the Annual Meeting of Electors, and reconvened at 20.20.

13. To approve payments made to Kaber Village Hall: The Clerk has sent cheques for £100 in payment for a rental invoice and £100 as a donation to Kaber Village Hall. Stuart Hird proposed and Rachel Bell seconded that these payments be approved.

14. To approve payment of the Kirkby Stephen Burial Board precept (£135) in May 2016: Malcolm Hutchinson advised the Council that the Burial Board surplus was diminishing rapidly and efforts were being made to rectify this. The increase for 2016 was small. Sam Fisher proposed and Steven Hastwell seconded that this payment be made. The Clerk will send a cheque in time for payment by 1 May 2016 as requested.

- 15. To agree payment of £25 donation to Kirkby Stephen Community Office:**
Mary Leathes proposed that a modest donation of £25 be made for the valuable service provided by Kirkby Stephen for the local area. Steve Hastwell seconded the proposal and a cheque was signed after the meeting.
- 16. To consider whether the Council wishes to comment on EDC's scrutiny review:**
Documents had been circulated but Councillors had no comments to forward to EDC.
- 17. To consider if Kaber Parish Council wishes to recognise the Queen's birthday through a gift to village children:** The Clerk showed the Council a medal which he had been sent which was available at a cost of £1.99 plus VAT. He advised the Council that Winton had agreed to purchase these for children in that Parish. It was noted that there were at least 23 children in Kaber. Joining in with an order with Winton would allow the minimum order to be achieved to the advantage of both parishes. Council agreed a modest expenditure on this and the Clerk agreed to get information on village children from Christine Dowson and pursue the purchase jointly with Winton.
- 18. Consideration of Future Issues in Kaber:**
Mary Leathes pointed out that as she would stand down as Chairman at the AGM in May, there is a need to appoint a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman at that meeting. Sam Fisher pointed out that lorry traffic down Poppin Lane was causing damage and wondered if anything could be done. The Clerk has raised this with Highways in the past but will pursue this again with the help of Sam Fisher.
- 19. To hear input from Eden District Council and Cumbria County Council:**
Trevor Ladhams advised the Council that he was only just back in harness after his illness and had nothing to raise regarding EDC. In the absence of Libby Bateman there was no news from Cumbria.
- 20. To review Sundry Correspondence and agree any action:**
NALC has informed Parish Council that the Section 137 expenditure limit for 2016/7 is £7.42 per elector.
The CALC Circular was received and circulated to Councillors.
The 2015/6 audit documents have been received and will be completed at the AGM. The order of the audit form has been changed and the Council will need to sign off the governance section before agreeing the accounts. This can be done at the same meeting.
Notification of the Police & Crime Commissioner election has been received and a poster displayed.
A letter had been received via Kirkby Stephen Town Council regarding the change of evening firing at Warcop range from Monday to Tuesday evenings. The Clerk had responded on behalf of Kaber PC even though it was not formally consulted.
- 21. To consider any items to be raised at the next Council meeting:** The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and a Chairman and Vice-Chairman

need to be elected. The meeting will also need to approve the governance document for the audit and the annual audited accounts. It is also the time Council reviews the Financial Risk Assessment and the information available under the Freedom of Information Act.

22. **To decide a date for the next Parish Council Meeting:**

The next meeting of Kaber Parish Council will be held on Monday 16 May 2016 at 19.00 in Kaber Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.10