**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on**

**Wednesday 15th July, 2020 at 7.30 pm**

Present: Cllrs. J. Bowe, A. Little (Chair), W. Powley, A. Raine.

As the Annual Meeting scheduled for 13th May had been cancelled due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid 19) in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 the appointment of Chair (Councillor A. Little) will remain until May 2021.

**2322 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. M. Giddings and Cllr M. Grainger, Allerdale Borough Councillor.

**2323 Amendment to Standing Orders**

The protocol for virtual meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting. RESOLVED that the amendment to the Standing Orders be accepted.

**2324 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2020 were accepted as a true record.

**2325 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**2326 Dispensation Requests**

None received.

**2327 Public Voice Slot**

No members of the public had requested to join the meeting

The following matters were raised:

Removal of Public Footpath Signs Torpenhow Area – It had been reported that since the start of the coronavirus pandemic five footway signs had been removed. One has since been reinstated. The Countryside Access Officer had been notified and he advised that they would need proof as to who had taken them down before they could take any action. They will investigate the matter and ensure new posts are installed if they are not reinstalled by whoever had removed them.

Japanese Knotweed – A parishioner had reported to Cllr Bowe that Japanese knotweed is growing along the riverbank in Blennerhasset. The Clerk was requested in the first instance to report this to the Environment Agency.

**2328 Reports from Outside Bodies**

(a) Allerdale Borough Council – Apologies had been received from Cllr M. Grainger.

(b) Cumbria County Council – Cllr Bowness was not in attendance.

(c) Police Community Support Officer – The police newsletter for the Maryport, Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton area had been received. The Clerk reported there was nothing in the newsletter relating to the parish.

**2329 Highways**

1. Maintenance – Now that lockdown restrictions were being lifted the Clerk was requested to pursue matters reported at the last meeting with Highways.
2. Speed Monitoring – Thee was no update regarding the speeding issues in Blennerhasset.

The Clerk reported that the consultation on the proposed 50mph speed limit to replace the existing national speed limit on the A595 through Bothel due to take place at the end of March/early April had been postponed due to Covid 19 restrictions. Cumbria County Council had advised that the consultation will now take place in early September. Members requested that Cumbria County Council be reminded that they be kept informed of the upcoming consultation.

**2330** **Planning**

1. Applications received:

 None

1. Decisions:

HOU/2020/0014 – Old Cobblers Shop, Blennerhasset

Installation of 2no roof windows to rear elevations APPROVED

**2331 Finances**

1. The financial statement at 31st March, 2020 had been circulated with the agenda.

Balances at 31st March, 2020

Cumberland Building Society £10,695.34

Income received:

Allerdale Borough Council – First Half Yearly Precept £5,325.00

Electricity North West – Wayleave £ 78.88

HMRC VAT Refund £ 276.20

Balances 30th June 2020

Cumberland Building Society £16,436.74

NatWest £ 276.20

1. The following payments were approved for payment:

 Clerk’s account Quarter 1 £339.73

 HMRC PAYE Quarter 1 £ 84.80

 Clerk’s expenses Quarter 1 £122.93

 Internal Auditor £ 85.00

 CALC Annual Subscription £148.67

 Allerdale BC – Playground Inspection £ 67.20

 Donation granted to Torpenhow Defibrillator Fund £250.00

**2332 Annual Audit**

The Clerk reported that the internal audit had been carried out with no issues identified. Members considered the effectiveness of the system of internal control and agreed that this is satisfactory.

1. Annual Governance Statement – Members considered the Annual Governance Statement and agreed that arrangements are in place for effective financial management and the accounting statements are prepared in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations. RESOLVED that the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement.
2. Accounting Statement 2019/20 – Members agreed that the Accounting Statement in the annual return fairly represents the financial position of the parish council. RESOLVED that the Chairman be authorised to sign the annual return.
3. Certificate of Exemption - Members resolved that the Certificate of Exemption should be signed by the Chairman and Clerk certifying that the Parish Council is exempt from a limited assurance review and during the financial year 2019/20 the gross income for the year or gross annual expenditure for the year did not exceed £25,000.
4. Period of Exercise of Public Rights – Members noted that the period for the exercise of public rights will commence on 3rd August and will end on 11th September, 2020. A notice will be displayed on the parish notice boards notifying electors of their rights to inspect the accounts.
5. Publication on website – The Clerk reported the requisite documents will be added to the parish council’s website.

**2333 Correspondence**

Correspondence received since the last meeting:

Allerdale Borough Council – Footway Lighting

CALC – Footway Lighting

Allerdale Borough Council – Playground Inspection

CALC – Advice on re-opening play areas

BHIB Insurance – Advice on re-opening play areas

Removal of footpath sign/closed footpath

Concern had been raised by residents in Torpenhow regarding workers on the UU pipeline staying in Torpenhow and travelling back to their homes in other parts of the country. The police had been notified of these concerns. The Clerk was requested to contact UU for confirmation that they are keeping a record of key workers coming into the parish and that these workers are not travelling from worse affected areas.

**2334 Blennerhasset Playing Field**

1. Playing Field Committee – No developments since the last meeting
2. Registration of the legal title – There were no developments to report since the last meeting
3. Play Area – The inspection of the play area had been carried and the report circulated. There were no high risks identified in the report. Cllr Giddings had advised that as he is a key worker, he is unable to continue to cut the grass in the play area. Following a discussion it was agreed that the play area should be closed until further notice. Cllr Powley agreed to erect the sign. A discussion then followed around the options/responsibilities for the play area. It was agreed the Clerk would contact the Charity Commission for their advice as to whether the Parish Council can be removed from their connection with the Charity.

**2335 Village Greens**

It was agreed to defer this item until next year.

**2336 Map Board – Torpenho****w**

The Clerk reported that due to the coronavirus pandemic Image Signmakers staff had been furloughed. It was agreed to defer this item until next year.

**2337 Defibrillator – Torpenhow**

A request for funding towards the defibrillator in Torpenhow had been received. RESOLVED to grant the sum of £250.00.

**2338 Blennerhasset Conservation Area Appraisal**

No further information was available at the time of the meeting.

**2339 Footway Lighting**

Further to min ref 2381 CALC had requested legal advice as to whether the Borough Council can legally enforce the transfer of responsibility for the footway lights in the parish. The advice had concluded that parishes will either contribute or the Borough Council will stop power to the footway lights. (Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to arrange for any of its functions to be done by another authority (except executive functions)). The arrangement needs to be agreed between the parties. There is no requirement for a parish council to contribute to the costs of electricity for footway lights unless it agrees to do so but the principal authority can stop lighting the footway lamps.

The annual cost for the lights in the Parish is £1254.28 plus VAT. The charges will be effective from April 2021. The Parish Council has the option to have the lights removed. As the costs will result in an increase in the parish precept of over 10% the Borough Council should be notified that due to lockdown restrictions the parish council is unable to hold a public meeting to consult residents on the proposals.

Members discussed the inventory of lights supplied by the Borough Council and pointed out that there are discrepancies in the inventory. It was agreed that the Borough Council should be made aware of the inaccuracies and suggest that a further survey should be carried out.

**2340 Bus Shelters**

Cllr Powley reported that the work will be carried out in the next few months.

**2341 Agenda items for the Next Meeting**

No additional items were added to the agenda.

**2****342 Date of Next Meeting**

Bi-Monthly Meeting 9th September 2020

The meeting closed at 8.23 pm

Signed……………………………….

Chairman

Date………………………………….