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**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on  
Wednesday, 17 November 2021 commencing at 19.00hrs  
Venue: The Reading Rooms, Beckermet**

**Present:** Julie Nugent (Chairman), Tim Barlow (Vice Chairman), Eric Jewitt, Michael Slater, Kath Cook, Steve Caddy, Tina Church (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Cllr Paul Turner  
Shirley Procter-Dow  
Mark Cullinan, Chair, Copeland Working Group (Agenda item 6)  
Gillian Johnston, RWM (Agenda item 6)  
Kelly Anderson, RWM (Agenda item 6)  
Dan Rigg, RWM (Agenda item 6)

**The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone including the members of the public in attendance. This was followed by a 'round the table' of introductions for the benefit of all attendees.**

**1 Apologies**

None received

**2 To declare any interest in items on the agenda**

None declared

**3 Public Participation**

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and expressed how nice it was to have them there.

BwT Website

Donna McGhee (web site manager) gave an update on the usage of the Parish Council web site. The website was still being used reasonably well. However, there have been around three hundred new users, although some of these users were thought to be from large search engines from the USA and other countries.

Donna stated that the website wasn't being used to its full capability in terms of the information being shared by the Parish Council which had been the case in previous years.

Donna has looked at BT's roll out map for full fibre Broadband and West Cumbria is one of the last areas to get it. The roll out goes up to 2026 and Seascale, Egremont, Thornhill are included but not Beckermet, which will create a digital divide.

**ACTION 1: Chairman/Clerk/Donna to have a separate discussion on how to use the BwT website to its full capability and the Broadband roll out**

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Traffic management and Dog Fouling

Chris Rae expressed an interest in speaking about Agenda item 7 and 8. The Chairman agreed to cover these items with Cllr Paul Turner and Shirley Procter-Dow who were at the meeting to discuss these items in more detail.

#### **4 Approval of the minutes of 15 September 2021 meeting and review actions from previous meetings**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Chairman content to authorise for publication.

The actions were reviewed, closed out or marked as ongoing as appropriate.

**ACTION 2: Chairman to inform the Parish Council of the contents of emergency bins at the next meeting. Follow on from 15/9/21(A13).**

**ACTION 3: EJ to look at Swing Bridge to ensure there are no imminent safety issues**

**ACTION 4: Clerk to contact CCC to identify point of contact for maintenance. See action 15/9/21(A20)**

#### **5 Internal Audit and Annual Governance Accountability Review**

The Chairman recognised that the accounts are six months late and thanked Tina for the work she had put in on getting the accounts to a workable position. The Chairman also recognised the work Sarah Moore had done on the internal audit and accounts for the Parish Council.

The Parish Council agreed to sign off the accounts for publication and the submission of the Exemption Certificate to the external auditor.

#### **6 GDF Overview/answer questions from Parish Council**

Mark Cullinan thanked the Parish Council for the invitation to attend our meeting.

He went on to introduce the members of Radioactive Waste Management Ltd also in attendance.

Mark talked through the 'playing field' diagram which explains the timeline and approach to the GDF siting process and the purpose of the Copeland Working Group, which was a task and finish group with a life span of 6-12 months focusing on community discussions, suitable geology, where the waste is stored and in shore options.

The Working Group recommended formation of 2 Community Partnerships in Copeland – one in mid Copeland and one in South Copeland. The Mid Copeland Community Partnership has now been formed and this stage focuses on continuing the conversation and local studies. This stage could last between 10-15 years and could involve borehole drilling.

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The point was made by a member of the public that the Beckermets community was excluded from roadshows this time round and last time which doesn't bode well for community relations.

RWM gave a guarantee that this would not happen again and apologised.

The point was made by Mike Slater (Parish Council) that whether and wherever the waste was stored (underground or above ground) it will have to be moved, which would directly impact the village of Beckermets and felt the community should be compensated. RWM acknowledged this.

The Parish Council had submitted questions (below) to RWM ahead of the Parish Council meeting, which Mark and RWM aimed to answer in the meeting. Written responses also to be provided by RWM.

<p>1</p>	<p>Who volunteered our area without any public consultation?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>The Government's Working with Communities Policy relating to the development of a GDF states that any individual could suggest any area in the country (England and Wales) that might be worth having a look at. RWM looks at the feasibility of the nominations and takes forward to the community engagement stage as appropriate.</p> <p>In this case the nominations were from a private individual, two local businesses and Copeland Borough Council.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>£1million a year is not enough considering how long Drigg has had £1million per year for LLWR. See letter in Whitehaven News</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>The £1million is set out in Government policy that RWM work with. This sets out the framework for the siting process for a GDF in England and Wales. It is fixed and not within RWMs gift to change.</p> <p>The £1million per year is for each area that moves to Community Partnership stage. Now that we have a community partnership in mid Copeland, the community (located in the area of consideration ie Beckermets, Gosforth and Seascale) can apply for the funding of up to £1million per year via the community investment funding panel part which is a subset of the community partnership. Members of each Parish Council, within the area of consideration, who sit on the community partnership, will have a say in where the funding is allocated.</p> <p>The funding could be aligned to a community vision but for the first year there won't be a community vision so that funding could be used for economic development, playgrounds, community wellbeing or to upgrade local facilities.</p> <p>There is no requirement for matched funding. Funding can be allocated on 100% basis. There is a grants team who can talk through the process and assist with form completion.</p> <p>There are three levels of funding £0-10k, £10-50k and over £50k.</p>

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	<p>It was asked whether any compensation provision had been made in Government policy for the community (not host community) for having nuclear waste transported through their village on route to the GDF if elsewhere in the country. Bearing in mind that over 80% of the waste is currently stored within the parish of Beckermeth with Thornhill.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>RWM advised that this was not part of Government Policy now but could potentially be influenced in the future. However, it is early days, and we are the first area in the country that has moved from Working Group to Community Partnership and the process is estimated to last 10-15 years so some of the detail still needs to be worked out. There is an understanding that if the host community is not Copeland, then transportation of the waste, would need to be considered.</p> <p>Through RWM there will be an opportunity to bring in wider expertise Eg transportation etc</p> <p><b>ACTION 5: RWM to provide an electronic copy of Government policy relating to community compensation</b></p>
3	<p>What will be paid during construction?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>Construction is a long way off, but a potential host community should start to think longer term about community benefit.</p> <p>The construction of a GDF is dependent on a host community being suitable and agreeable to hosting a GDF. The £1M per year moving to £2.5million at point of borehole studies takes the community to the point in the process when the test of public support is conducted which is designed to determine the final view for a potential host community and whether there is a willingness to host a GDF. Without a willing host community, the process would stop in that community. If the result is positive then RWM would proceed with the statutory licencing, environmental permitting, and development consent application processes to build a GDF.</p> <p>The Government policy, relating to community funding at this point in the project, just refers to 'significant additional investment'. No figure has been committed to, but the policy does indicate that the community benefits will be significant and comparable with other international projects.</p> <p>Advice from RWM is to 'think big' in terms of what our community wants as part of a community vision. I.e infrastructure.</p> <p><b>ACTION 6: RWM (Kelly Anderson) to advise if the £1million yearly funding is linked to inflation</b></p>
4	<p>How can the area cope if there is also a proposal to construct on the Moorside site?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p>

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	<p>There are other areas who have come forward and are having discussions relating to being a potential host community for a GDF. If the community says no, then the process stops.</p> <p>Dan referred to a site evaluation document which is available.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Parish Council reiterated that the Parish Council will be totally transparent in its communication with the local community.</p> <p>RWM gave a guarantee that Beckermest would be first on the list for future roadshows etc.</p>
5	<p>What is the formal application process to secure funding for the community?</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>See Q2 response</p>
6	<p>What are the criteria to secure funding?</p> <p>See Q2 response</p>
7	<p>Who manages the funding process?</p> <p>See Q2 response</p>
8	<p>What is Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's position on guaranteed funding for host community and for how long?</p> <p>Answer:</p> <p>£1million per year rising to £2.5million per year at borehole testing stage.</p>
9	<p>What are the other Socio-Economic benefits for the host community? Ie funding for traffic management etc</p> <p>Answer:</p> <p>It is Government's view that as the GDF is a multi-billion pound infrastructure project it will have a positive effect on the local economy for more than one hundred years. Current predictions are that it will employ six hundred skilled, well-paid staff per year over the duration of the project. It is also likely to involve major investment in local transport facilities, other infrastructure, education, and local services.</p> <p>As the Government policy is to provide community funding that is in line with other countries, the advice from RWM was to 'think big at this stage' in terms of transformational projects our community would want if the project went ahead.</p> <p>A MOP commented that they were pleased there would in investment in infrastructure etc but asked how much money would be available over a longer term</p>

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	<b>ACTION 7: RWM (Kelly Anderson) to investigate funding for infrastructure investment</b>
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During the detailed discussion, there were concerns raised by a member of the public relating to:

- suitability of the geology in this area
- safety of a GDF (open to attack by air)
- fishing rights over the GDF area (if out to sea)

RWM gave reassurances that nuclear is a highly regulated area. RWM would work with the relevant regulatory bodies (Office for Nuclear Regulation, the Environment Agency etc) as safety is paramount. The geology of the area is yet to be tested and fishing would not be affected.

The Chairman asked if there were any more questions that hadn't been addressed. The Clerk offered to act as Single point of contact for obtaining answers to questions.

The Chairman thanked RWM and Mark Cullinan for their attendance prior to them leaving the meeting.

## **7 Traffic Management in Beckermat**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Paul Turner to the meeting.

The issue of speeding through Beckermat was discussed at length with members of the community raising their concerns yet again.

It was felt by the community and the Parish Council that this issue was taking far too long to resolve (approx. 35-40 years) and still nothing had been done about it. Too much time had been spent on collecting data, looking at traffic management proposals, and the siting of speed monitoring equipment being placed in the wrong area was not helping identify a solution.

Cllr Turner had actively tried to set up a meeting with the area manager for Highways to look at where data gathering machinery could be placed to be of benefit to gather speeding information. However, the opinion was that too much time had been spent on gathering data with no action ever being taken.

A formal request was made by the Parish Council, to implement an interim solution in the areas of concern in the village, along the lines of the traffic management system when entering Ennerdale village.

Cllr Turner is trying to arrange for the Police lead, on the collision reduction team, to be involved in the discussion with Mathew Reeves, Martin Taylor (new area manager) and members of the Parish Council.

**ACTION 8: Cllr Turner to look at interim traffic management solutions (while the data gathering was being carried out) and feedback to the Parish Council**

**ACTION 9: Cllr Turner to obtain a price for the provision and installation of speeding equipment**

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- ACTION 10:** Cllr Turner to continue to push for a meeting with Matthew Reeves (Highways), Police lead on collision reduction, and Martin Taylor (Area Manager) to reinforce the importance of reaching a solution for the residents of Beckermet. Members of the Parish Council would also join this discussion
- ACTION 11:** Chairman of Parish Council to write to Matthew Reeves and Martyn Taylor to speed up data collection and obtain a timescale for a meeting (hopefully before Christmas), and to stress the importance of a solution to this longstanding problem
- ACTION 12:** Cllr Turner to investigate if Cumbria Police, working out of Sellafield, could have a presence with a speed gun with the intention of prosecuting speeding offenders

#### County Council Reporting system

Cllr Turner made the Parish Council aware of a new system for fault reporting. It has been broadened out to include white lines, road painting, rights of way, kissing gates, bridges etc. More information can be found on the County Council website under fault reporting.

#### Beckermet Cemetery

Cllr Turner raised concerns regarding the continued flooding on the road near the cemetery due to a design fault, despite the amount of money spent on works to resolve the issue. He has expressed his disgust with Highways England and advised that Highways England will tackle this problem eventually.

The Parish Council, and members of the public, thanked Cllr Turner for attending the meeting.

## **8 Dog Fouling and fly tipping**

The Chairman welcomed Shirley to the meeting.

These issues were discussed at length with members of the public voicing their concerns at the lack of progress relating to fly tipping and the increased incidents of dog fouling, which could be irresponsible dog owners or free roaming dogs.

#### Fly tipping

Shirley explained that there is a plan to move the rubbish, but the council was short staffed which is why the fly tipping waste had not been collected. The waste has been checked and it is not hazardous so not classed as a priority.

- ACTION 13:** Shirley to arrange for rubbish to be collected

#### Dog fouling

A request for additional bins in the village was made.

New signage would be ordered to replace the 'no dog waste' sign on the bin near the bus stop.

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Dates and times of fouling to be provided to Shirley to enable enforcement officers to patrol problem areas

**ACTION 14: Shirley to arrange for the provision and installation of new signage, additional bins, and enforcement officer patrols**

The Chairman thanked Shirley for attending the meeting

## 9 Finance

### Clerk's salary

Clerk's salary and expenses approved as per Finance Report.

### Previous Clerk's outstanding salary

It was agreed that two months' salary would be paid to the previous Clerk (to include one month payable for handover).

The Chairman made a proposal that money set aside for the previous Clerk's NI/tax should be paid to her in a separate cheque. A letter would be drafted for the previous Clerk to sign outlining she had the financial responsibility for her tax/NI thereafter.

**ACTION 15: Two months' salary to be paid this month to previous Clerk**

**ACTION 16: Chairman and Vice Chair to discuss legalities outside of the meeting**

**ACTION 17: Additional payment figure for NI/tax and proposed letter to Clerk to be discussed at December meeting**

### Donation to Royal British Legion

Donation of £50 for the memorial wreath on Remembrance Day authorised for payment.

## 10 Planning Applications

Noted by the Parish Council

## 11 Forward Agenda

### Grass cutting at St John's.

To lend Parish Council support to expedite this work.

**ACTION 18: EJ to find out the point of contact at Copeland Borough Council.**

**ACTION 19: Clerk to include on the December agenda**



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Church Yard/Path Tidy Up

It was agreed that a tidy up was a good idea ahead of the Christmas light switch on.

**ACTION 20: Vice Chairman to contact the vicar to obtain approval and publish on village Facebook page**

Bin emptying at Thornhill Play Park

The previous chairman had taken the decision to appoint a local resident of Thornhill to empty the litter bin located at Thornhill Play Park. An agreement was signed by the local resident and the previous Clerk on 4 March 2021 but could not be found in the Parish Council records. The agreement has now been received by the Clerk.

This was discussed in the March 2021 meeting as per the extract in the minutes of that meeting, but not agreed by the full council.

Concern was raised about whether the Parish Council's insurance policy would cover this work.

As the gentleman had carried out the work in good faith Steve Caddy had visited him and agreed that a voucher (£100) for The Factory Shop would be purchased as a thank you.

It was decided that from 1 April 2022 Copeland Council would be asked to take over responsibility.

**ACTION 21: Chairman to purchase a £100 voucher from The Factory Shop**

**ACTION 22: Clerk to write to local resident to thank him and release him from his duties**

**ACTION 23: Clerk to organise emptying with Copeland Borough Council**

**12 Date and time of next Parish Council meeting**

Wednesday, 15 December October 2021 at 19.00hrs in The Reading Rooms.