

SEBERGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of 16 July 2014

Present: Councillors: AV Rule (Chairman); P Pearson; A Bell; M Chesters-Bouma; M Stockdale; C Tinnion
Clerk: A Fawcett

In Attendance: 16 members of the public

1. Apologies:

Received from Cllr D Fairbairn who was attending an Allerdale BC meeting.

2. Appointment of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer:

i. The Chairman introduced & welcomed Alison Fawcett to the meeting as the new Clerk and RFO. ii. The Council approved the use of the Model Contract of Employment, which the Clerk agreed was acceptable and this will be duly completed and signed. Councillors were asked to copy the Clerk into any correspondence they send.

3. Minutes:

The Minutes of the last meeting had been circulated and were agreed as a true record after the inclusion of the following at the end of Minute 8 - "and payment of the outstanding sum was authorised."

4. Declarations of Interest:

None at this time.

5. Adjournment of meeting:

The meeting was adjourned for questions and comments from members of the public.

i. Wind turbine applications – The issue of access to applications was raised and the Chairman said that he had been in contact with Steve Long, Allerdale Planning, who agreed to supply paper copies at no charge for those without Internet access and who were unable to travel to Allerdale BC offices to view applications. A request can be made direct to Allerdale or via the Clerk. It was also confirmed that comments can be submitted up to the time that a decision is made.

The Chairman confirmed that adoption of the Allerdale Local Plan had been agreed by Allerdale BC Executive that morning, and the full council was considering it that evening. It was expected that there would be further information about this at the forthcoming Neighbourhood Forum Meeting on 24 July. Among other things, the new Plan confirms that an 800m setback will be expected between new wind turbines & local residences.

Comments were made about flicker and how local assessments should be made when problems are raised, and about localism & how local feelings and consultation had resulted in the inclusion of the policy.

The Chairman ran through the current applications & proposals, namely Fell Hill Farm, Reathwaite Farm, The Ling, Roundhill Farm, Park Head Quarry and Clea Green, and the position of each.

A question was asked about how members of the public could make their views known, and it was confirmed that although the Council will write reflecting its views, it is up to individuals to respond to planning applications and/or pre-application consultation letters. One member of the public was part of a group in Westward with knowledge and experience they would be happy share.

The meeting resumed.

6. Report from District Councillor:

None received as he had sent his apologies.

7. Highways

i. Bollards, Churchtown – Mr Stockdale reported that these have now been replaced. He reported that Mr Little, Sebergham Services, had expressed concerns, but that they had been provided as a result of concerns expressed by local residents which were reflected in the policies agreed in the Parish Plan. **ii. Water run-off, Churchtown** – Mr Little had also requested action on water run-off from a field higher up the road which led to flooding around the garage. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact Highways about this as it is thought to be the result of a blocked culvert. **iii. Community Speed Watch initiative** – It was agreed that the Clerk will try and get some further information on the current status of the SIDs, and also the training of volunteers in the use of a speed gun as there is at least one parishioner who is interested in volunteering to use this.

8. Correspondence:

i. Planning Inspector's report on Allerdale Draft Local Plan – This had been circulated previously. It was confirmed that the dwellings within 800m ruling relates to turbines over 25m to blade tip, applies to residential dwellings and excludes any that have a financial involvement in the application. As stated elsewhere, clarification on date of application of this rule is awaited. **ii. The Ling – Pre-application consultation** – Cllrs. Bell, Rule and Pearson all declared a personal interest in this item being in close proximity to the proposed turbine. There was discussion on whether comments should only be submitted once a full application is received, however, it was agreed that this could seem perverse. The Parish Council's policy on smaller turbines was reiterated (that turbines up to 15m hub height & supplying local businesses would generally be supported, but that each case would be considered on its merits).

With regard to the pre-application consultation letter, it was agreed to write once the Allerdale Local Plan has been confirmed, indicating that the Council is minded to object on the grounds of height, proximity to dwellings & cumulative impact. **iii. Roundhill – Pre-application consultation** – Cllrs. Chesters-Bouma and Tinnion declared a personal interest in this item as they live in close proximity. It was reported that two Scoping Opinion requests had been made to Allerdale for this site, one for two turbines & one for three. It was agreed to respond to the pre-application consultation letter indicating that the Council is minded to object on the grounds of height and proximity to dwellings and also the cumulative effect of several turbines in a small area.

9. Planning Applications:

i. Fell Hill Farm, Welton – 2/2014/0490 – Councillors confirmed their formal objection to the application on the grounds of the new 800m policy, flawed conclusions with respect to the noise assessment, the cursory ecological assessment, visibility over a wide area, cumulative impact, negative impact on tourism and agreement with the Planning Inspector's comments when refusing the Clea Mire appeal. **ii. Reathwaite Farm – 2/2014/0419** – It was agreed that to object on the grounds of dwellings within 800m, the visible effect, adverse impact and cumulative effect on the landscape and tourism. In general discussion, Mr Stockdale spoke of the possible formation of a protest group. It was agreed that the Council could support a group if one forms, but it does also need to maintain its integrity and impartiality and so could not actively call for the formation of such a group.

10. Co-Option of Councillors:

Mr Stockdale reported that he had received one expression of interest in joining the Council – from Ken Graham, and proposed him to be co-opted. All were in favour, Mr Graham accepted this and will be passed the relevant paperwork by the Clerk.

Councillors will continue to encourage anybody showing interest to fill the one remaining place.

11. Training:

Some information had been received from CALC on both Clerk and Councillor training. Councillor training, if they come to us, will cost £150.00 and this was agreed as being a reasonable charge; it was agreed that councillors from neighbouring parishes could be invited to this. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact them to discuss options further.

12. Governance:

Mrs Chesters-Bouma had prepared a paper on this which she ran through and will e-mail to all Councillors. It was agreed that she and the Clerk will come up with a list of outstanding items in priority order and bring this to the next meeting, but it was recognised and agreed that work on the Financial Regulations should be started before that.

13. Accounts:

i. Audit of accounts 2013/14 – The Chairman reported that the internal audit had been carried out and the accounts are now with the external auditor. **ii. New Clerk extra hours** – It was agreed to pay a maximum of 20 hours extra between now and the next meeting for the Clerk to cover work required to get everything up-to-date. **iii. Banking arrangements** – The Chairman explained the difficulties encountered in adding signatories to the existing bank accounts and in attempting to open an alternative account as required by Lloyds Bank. It was agreed that a new business account should be opened with HSBC in the name of Sebergham Parish Council, with Alan Rule, Peter Pearson, Andrew Bell and Michael Stockdale as signatories (any 2 to authorise each transaction). The Clerk/RFO should be registered as the person authorised to administer the account on behalf of the Council. It was agreed that the Council's two existing accounts with Lloyds Bank be closed and all monies transferred to the new account.

It was confirmed that the new account would have no monthly fees but cheques will be charged per item, however, the first 18 months will be free.

iv. Payments – The following payments were authorised to be made:

Hall rental = £60.00

Reimbursement for insurance (to be paid to AV Rule) = £217.88

Reimbursement for internal audit fee (to be paid to AV Rule) = £35.00

14. Date of next meeting:

Confirmed as Wednesday 17 September 2014.

The meeting closed at 9.23pm.