

**MINUTES OF LOWER HOLKER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AT FLOOKBURGH VILLAGE
HALL AT 7PM ON WEDNESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2021**

PRESENT

Parish Councillors R Airey, B Dawson, M Keith, S Rawsthorn, J Ryland, Parish Clerk L Prescott, Environment Agency representatives (S Johnston, N Walsh & N Rushton), United Utilities representatives (P Smith & I McCoy) & 10 members of the public.

21/125 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Parish Councillor T Wilson, Parish & District Councillor G Gardner and County Councillor S Sanderson.

21/126 Requests for Dispensations

None.

21/127 Declarations of Interest

None.

21/128 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved The acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2021 was proposed by Councillor Ryland, seconded by Councillor Rawsthorn, agreed unanimously and signed by the Vice Chairman.

21/128 Sewage Discharges into the River Eea – Environment Agency & United Utilities

The Environment Agency (EA) stated that their role is to issue permits to water companies including United Utilities (UU) for between 10 and 15 years. EA can amend permits and require enforcement of permit conditions. The permit only allows discharges into the river where the sewer is at capacity during wet weather. The EA received multiple complaints from residents this summer and on investigation found that United Utilities was non-compliant with their permit for Cark Pumping Station as discharges into the River Eea were taking place on dry weather days. The EA undertook a fish survey and found a serious localised deterioration of water quality which was not acceptable. The non-compliance was categorised at Category 3 (A non-compliance which could have a minor environmental effect) on a scale of 1 (major) to 4 (none). EA issued a warning to United Utilities requiring them to take action to bring the system into compliance with the permit and prepare an infiltration reduction plan and feasibility report by January 2022. This is seen as a test case by the EA. The EA do not monitor discharges but respond to complaints from the public, so discharges on dry weather days should be reported to the EA. They stated that the environmental health risk to the public and provision of warning signage would be the responsibility of Environmental Health department at the District Council.

The root cause of the problem of the sewage being piped from Cartmel to the Cark Pumping Station has been identified by EA/UU as groundwater infiltration due to a cracked aquifer resulting in higher than expected quantities of sewage and water being pumped through the system.

United Utilities (UU) stated that the new system was installed in the early 2000s to replace the Cartmel treatment works, so instead of the Cartmel sewage being treated at Cartmel the sewage is now pumped to Cark Pumping Station and thereafter onwards to the Grange Treatment works. The capacity of the current system is inadequate in relation to the quantities being pumped, resulting in the discharges into the River Eea. The two pumps at Cark Pumping Station have both failed this year (in July and September), so temporary pumps are presently being used and the screening of discharges has been identified as inadequate over the last 12 to 18 months. Replacement pumps will be included in the feasibility study submitted to the EA and a new screen is being designed by contractors.

Three actions UU have under consideration to reduce the discharges are increasing the sewer capacity, reducing infiltration and an onsite treatment facility (eg reedbeds). They stated that the cost to replace the piping from Cartmel and onward to the Grange Treatment Works is not proportionate as it would be millions of pounds. They also stated that it would not be possible to totally stop the infiltration of the groundwater into the pipes. They are a consultee on planning applications and insist all new developments have 'foul only' discharges into the sewage system, with surface water being managed separately.

Concerns were raised by residents and Councillors in relation to the profits of water companies (£56 billion since 1969) not being reinvested in infrastructure, the impact on residents, public health, wildlife & fish, the lack of a timetable for improvements, the need for EA and UU to work more closely and the need to stop any further housing development until the issues are resolved.

21/129 **Public Participation (at the Chairman's discretion)**

None.

21/130 **Police**

The Clerk reported the Grange and Cartmel area figures Area (September 2021): Violence and sexual offences 10, Theft 6, Criminal damage and arson 5, Public order 3.

21/131 **District and County Councillors**

a) County Councillor Sanderson provided a written report:

Schools and Learning

- Covid 19 is still having an impact on schools with increases in rates of infection : staff and pupils. This has led to more pressure on school leaders in managing their school and ensuring safe environments. Guidance was issued from the LA which schools appreciated.
- Still waiting for clarification of the impact on school budgets by the Chancellors Budget. As a county we have financial issues which remain to be addressed.
- Over the last few months work has been undertaken with Heads and officers and despite the pandemic people have been willing to work together to put together an educational Vision and plan for Cumbria. It was felt to be an optimum time to do it with two years before the actual handover to two unitaries and it has been written and shared with all schools, colleges, learning centres and universities. It is very much their document. Work is continuing on improving SEND provision and we are expecting a revisit from Ofsted and CQC. Again this is another pressure on staff.
- The Local Government Reform process continues unfortunately without our new CEO as she has resigned because of ill health. It is expected her Deputy will stand in. All the 7 CEOs are working together but it is a very unsettling time for everyone. We all have to keep services running through to March 23.
- She would like to thank the County Council staff for all the work undertaken during the recent bad weather we did not come off a flood warning until Monday, and she knows many areas were affected it was one level off a major incident. She apologised for not attending but is unwell.

21/132 **Planning Applications**

The following Planning Applications were considered:

a) SL/2021/0991. Land adjacent Bridge House, Land off Manorside, Flookburgh. Application for Outline Planning Permission for the proposed development of 32 residential dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking and amenity space with all matters reserved except for scale, access, layout and landscaping.

Resolved To object on the following grounds:

- i) The access from Manorside onto the B5277 is unsafe for large numbers of vehicles as there is a lack of clear line of sight.
- ii) The access along Manorside is unsuitable as multiple cars park on the roadside narrowing the access.

- iii) There are longstanding problems with inadequate sewage facilities on Manorside and additional sewage added to the system would make the problem worse.
 - iv) There is a known flood risk on the site making it unsuitable for further development.
 - v) The developers have not indicated how they would ensure that the access across the agricultural track through the site will be properly maintained.
 - vi) The Parish Council submitted a request for the SLDC Local Plan that is current to include a requirement for developers of the sites on either side of the railway to contribute towards a pedestrian bridge over the railway and this is not included.
- b) SL/2021/0982. 46 Marne Avenue, Ravenstown LA11 7LH. Single storey side extension, 2 storey rear extension & extended conservatory to rear
Resolved To support as similar to neighbouring properties.

21/133 **Planning Decisions**

None.

21/134 **Financial Reports**

Resolved The Financial report, including budget comparison and bank reconciliation as at 24 October 2021, was accepted unanimously and signed by the Vice Chairman.

21/135 **Payment of Accounts**

Resolved The authorisation of the following payments was agreed unanimously:

Clerk's Salary (October 2021)	£399.70
Postage Stamps	£7.92
Orian/SLS (Toilet Cleaning) (September 2021)	£471.92
Eon Next – Electricity (Toilets) (1/9/2021-30/9/2021) DD	£35.96
SSE – Electricity (Street Lighting) (2/9/2021-1/10/2021) DD	£48.15
Continental Landscapes (Grass Cutting 28/8/2021 – 23/10/2021)	£432.00

21/136 **Grant Application**

A grant application from Cartmel Multi Sports Court project was considered.

Resolved to award a grant of £500 towards this project.

21/137 **Highways**

a) To receive details of highways matters to be reported

None.

b) To receive details of highways matters reported

None.

21/138 **Flookburgh Community Playground**

The Clerk reported that the playground has been quieter due to the weather.

21/139 **Cark Toilets & Cark Park/Playground**

The Clerk reported that the lighting timer is faulty and an electrician has been asked to investigate.

21/140 **Flookburgh Square**

The Clerk reported that a quotation has been received from P Dalton to place galvanised painted caps on the bollards at a cost of £370.

Resolved To accept the quotation and proceed with the repairs.

21/141 **Correspondence**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a) Cumbria County Council
Covid updates. County Council legal challenge to Unitary councils. Health and Wellbeing Coaching sessions.
- b) South Lakeland District Council
Planning Applications. Covid updates. New Truth Poverty Commission funding.
- c) Cumbria Association of Local Councils
Newsletter. Training. Police Ethics and Integrity Panel Vacancies. Updates on Local Government Reorganisation. Covid updates.

21/142 **Date of Next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was noted:

The next Parish Council meeting will be held at 7 pm on Wednesday 1st December in Lower Holker Village Hall.

Clerk to the Council: - Lyn Prescott, 13 Church Walk, Flookburgh, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 7JX