

# Cumbria Association of Local Councils

## Copeland District

### Minutes of a three tier Meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019 Waberthwaite Village Hall Chairman Gillian Elliott (Cumbria County Council)

**PRESENT: -**

Paul Turner (Cumbria CC)	Doug Sim (St Bees PC)
Ged McGrath (Cllr Copland B C)	Julia Wrigley (Wasdale Parish Meeting)
Margaret Davies (Wasdale Parish Meeting)	Anne Todd (Bootle PC)
Keith Hitchen (Drigg and Carleton PC Waberthwaite PC and Cumbria County Council)	
Doug Wilson (Cllr Copeland B C)	Richard Thornton (Waberthwaite PC)
Peter Manning (Beckermet PC)	Julie Betteridge (Copeland BC)
Felicity Wilson (Cllr Copeland B C)	Julie Friend (Copeland B C)
Jane Micklethwaite (Millom TC)	Michael Steele (Waberthwaite PC)
Chris Shaw (Calc Copeland Liaison Officer)	Tony Dyson (Millom TC)
Angela Dyson (Millom TC)	Gordon Smith (Haile and Wilton PC)
Nick Ford (Cleator Moor TC)	Rebecca Cummings (Millom TC)
Lorraine Smyth (ACT)	Rick Wylie (UClan)

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Gillian Elliott welcomed those attending and said there were apologies from Andy Pratt (Drigg and C. PC), David Faulkner (Bootle PC), Ruth Peters (Millom TC), Helen Gilmour (Cleator Moor TC) and Gwyneth Everett (Frizington PC)

#### **2. Note of the meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and any matters arising**

The note had been circulated earlier and was agreed.

a) Parish Council Elections. Chris Shaw said that the number of vacancies following the town/parish Council elections had dropped compared with 2015 and only at Muncaster PC were there insufficient numbers to form a council. The elections officer at the district council has said a rerun had resulted in a quorum allowing the council to continue. Chris said there were 168 nominations for 219 parish council seats and that the unfilled seats were 23.3% compared with over 24% in 2015. In the town councils there were 50 candidates for the 49 seats (102%) Together the unfilled seats drops to 18.7%

b) Highways Working Together. It was noted that the county council via Calc had circulated a note which is at appendix A

c) Public Health Update. Chris said that Georgina Ternent the county council public health officer for Copeland had produced a note to be circulated. It is at Appendix B

**2a. Vacancy for second Copeland district representative to the county executive.** Chris said that given that Brian Kennish had not sought election at Muncaster PC he could no longer represent the district at the county executive. He said that the district executive at its last meeting Oliver Dorgan from Cleator Moor TC had been proposed to take Brian Kennish's place. The meeting confirmed the proposal

**3. Public Value Conference** The chair welcomed Rick Wylie from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) at Westlakes Science Park. Gillian said that Rick had spoken at the 2019 Westlakes Public Value Convention in May and when arranging today's meeting it was agreed that the subject would make an interesting topic not usually covered at three tier meetings. The presentation is attached. Appendix C (It is a touch technical but worth spending time looking at the slides) Most of the questions were about Dounreay which is being decommissioned and much of what is happening in that remote area of Northern Scotland may be seen as a precursor as to what may eventually be seen at Sellafield and West Cumbria. Questions about the Copeland poverty gap which was seen through the well paid jobs at Sellafield compared with some of the deprived areas were asked and the need to diversify from a single industry which has dominated Copeland for many years. Planning policy was raised and how public value could influence planning policy. There was a short discussion as to whether the Lake District Authority planning regime had already embraced public value to a degree that was not yet seen in Copeland. The chair thanked Rick for his presentation.

**4. Rural Housing Needs** The chair welcomed Julie Friend from the district council and Lorraine Smyth from Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT). They shared the presentation which is attached. Questions followed the presentation. (Appendix D) It was noted that that second homes policy in the LDNPA in Copeland had used Section 106 and that the district council had not adopted a policy. Lorraine said that LDNPA had restrictions on ownership but that the enforcement was difficult. She said that planners relied on local information. It was noted that the second homes issue in Copeland related to contractors rather than holiday makers. A question was asked about the ability of parish councils to influence decisions. Mrs Betteridge said that parish council's views were always taken into account. Julie said that there was no shortage of affordable homes in Copeland but the choice such as bungalows was limited. Before the meeting ended details about the High Street fund for the towns in Copeland was provided with more guidance to be provided in August.

**5. Common Purpose** The chair said Doug Sim (St Bees PC) would speak on behalf of the parishes to be followed by Fee Wilson, a Ward councillor, and then Paul Turner a County councillor. The aim was to see how the three tiers could work better together.

Doug spoke about issues which affected St Bees but which impacted on both the district council and the county council. He said that the public toilets at the foreshore cost the parish £18k each year yet they benefitted both tourists from away and Cumbrians generally. There was no financial assistance from the district council. Doug showed a slide of traffic at a standstill in Main Street St Bees and said that whilst the county councillor was sympathetic until the Highways Agency, the county council and Sellafield Ltd really got to grips with problems on the A595 traffic would continue to travel through St Bees. Doug mentioned the

parish council's efforts to either buy or enter into an asset transfer for land beside the railway line which would allow the car park at the station to be extended. He was asked whether this was an issue where the county council and the district council could place pressure on the railways. Doug said that problem had been ongoing for years.

Fee Wilson said she represented the Millom Ward together with two other councillors. She said that the new ward boundaries from 2019 meant that only 9 ward councillors represented the whole of Copeland from St Bees south with two councillors for both Gosforth ward and Black Combe ward, three councillors for Millom and one each at St Bees and Beckermest. She said that the statutory responsibilities for the district council included planning, social welfare and waste collection with the recycling arrangements being particularly successful. Fee said that the issues raised by Doug about Sellafield traffic were equally matters of concern to the district council and both councillors and officers were working to identify pinch points and to deal with the parking problems. She said that there were housing issues in south Copeland which meant working closely with the Home Group. She said that she was working with Sellafield Ltd to see whether there could be new work places in the Millom area. Fee said that there needed to be meaningful conversations between the three tiers and this was just a start.

Paul Turner said he had been a county councillor for 2 years and was one of 12 county councillors in Copeland. Paul said that the issues surrounding Sellafield travel to work and the problems reported by both Doug and Fee showed the need for a common purpose approach. He said that he was working with the Community Speedwatch group in his division and linking with the police for a training session to be organised. Paul said he was looking to work with Cllr Whiteside whereby he would take the traffic issues for the two divisions and Chris would concentrate on health issues for the same two divisions. He said they would see whether this experiment was a success.

The chair thanked the speakers and there followed a general discussion. Amongst the issues mentioned were arrangements being trialled at Millom for the three tiers from that area to meet supported by officers to look at specific problems in South Copeland. It was thought that whilst the discussions were useful they may benefit from more focussed discussions on particular matters. Chris Shaw said that Calc were promoting new councillor courses in the county through the autumn.

The meeting closed at 8.45

