

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF

CLEATOR MOOR TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON TUESDAY 9th JANUARY 2018

At 6.30pm, in CLEATOR MOOR CIVIC HALL

Present Cllr L Adair
 Cllr P Burns
 Cllr M Denwood
 Cllr N Ford (Chair)
 Cllr D Hully
 Cllr J Hully
 Cllr L Jones-Bulman
 Cllr M Messenger
 Cllr D Riley
 Cllr R Wood

Mrs H Gilmour (Clerk)

Also present at the meeting were Cumbria County Councillors A Lamb and F Morgan, Copeland Borough Councillors D Banks and H Branney.

The Mayor of Copeland, M Starkie was in attendance with Copeland Borough Council officers Mr M Graham and Mrs P Graham. Mr D Sandelands attended on behalf of the Whitehaven News. Representatives of Home Ms E Brailey, Ms K Heaney, Mr B Ham, Mr J Varah, Ms S Courty and Mr B Patterson and approximately 140 members of the public, mostly from the Wath Brow and Priory Drive estates.

Opening words and welcome were delivered by Councillor Ford.

There were no apologies for the meeting.

001/18 To approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Cleator Moor Town Council held on 12th December 2017.

Resolved that the minutes be approved and signed.

002/18 Declarations of Interest, on items of the agenda.

Members were invited to list their interests in the ledger and are recorded as Councillor Ford declared an interest in Cleator Moor Community Interest Company, Chamber of Trade, Sustrans, W.C.C.F. Richard Mulholland and Flosh Meadows. Councillor J Hully declared an interest in planning, various members of the public, Mr Mulholland and Mr Metcalfe. Councillor Messenger declared an interest in Exchange Corner NW, Phoenix Youth, Kier Hardie and Priory Drive. Councillor Denwood declared an interest in Exchange Corner NW, Home Group and Priory Drive. Councillor Burns declared an interest in the regeneration of Wath Brow and Priory Drive and the 19 dwellings on the Flosh Meadows development. Councillor Wood declared an interest in planning, Flosh Meadows and Mr Mulholland.

003/18 Applications to the Clerk, for dispensations.

None received.

004/18 To receive an update from United Utilities - Mr K Stewart.

This agenda item was deferred.

005/18 To receive an update from Home

Ms E Brailey, Ms K Heaney, Mr B Ham, Mr J Varah, Ms S Courty and Mr B Patterson of Home attended the meeting to discuss the regeneration of the Wath Brow and Priory Drive estates in Cleator Moor.

A series of letters have been issued to Home tenants and owner occupiers on the Home estates with, in some cases, an initial demolition notice and suspension of rights to buy letter included. These letters have caused extreme distress in the community. Mr Ham started the dialogue by apologising unreservedly for the situation and calling the letters "stupid." He advised that Home were at the very start of the process and have no fixed plans. They have money to invest in Cleator Moor and are asking for the communities help to develop plans.

Ms Brailey stated that there are a number of issues with the properties in Cleator Moor. The condition of the housing stock, the high level of voids, the lack of bungalows and two bedroomed properties and the high cost of repairs on older properties and the short tenancies have indicated that Home have problems in the Priory Drive and Wath Brow estates. They estimate it will cost £9.6 million over the next thirty years to maintain these properties. Home have identified £15 million to improve the area and want to invest in the right things that meet the needs of the community.

It was noted that there is an aging population who have different needs to people with young families. Home want to provide affordable homes that are cheap to heat and maintain. Consultation events have been arranged and are aimed at providing the opportunity for residents to discuss the type of property they have or the type of property they would like. Originally the invitations were just sent to phase 1 regeneration properties, but now this has been extended and covers six days. Tenants and owner occupiers are encouraged to attend to give their views. The consultation events will be manned by Home Group staff and information will be provided detailing how the decisions to carry out investment in Cleator Moor came about. If demolition is an option, Home want to support residents to get a property the resident will be happy with, and will work with tenants, to pay for removals, reconnections, new carpets and blinds and fully decorated properties. Customers who are involved in demolition would be entitled to a Home Loss Payment which is a statutory payment. It was stated that Home have no compulsory purchase options, but are keen to buy back property from owner occupiers if that is what they want, but they can't force people to sell their property. Home aims to keep everyone informed and will arrange further events and send out newsletters, they want the input from customers so urge everyone to attend the consultation events.

006/18 Public Participation.

Councillor Riley pointed out that it is always very difficult to get in contact with Home. Ms Brailey responded that a dedicated officer will be the main contact for residents and her contact details have been sent out with the letters. There are other people dealing with this, but they can't always get to the telephone, but if people leave a message they will return calls.

Home were asked why the letters were dated 13th November but only sent out now and asked why they didn't come to residents first instead of scaremongering. Home accepted the letters were wrong and apologised again.

Home were asked how long they had been planning the regeneration/demolition. Ms Brailey responded saying the area was identified as a priority about 18 months ago but no plans have been made. Home want to find out what residents want.

Home apologised for the "initial demolition notice/halt the right to buy" letter.

A resident said if demolition is being discussed it sounds like Home have already decided. Ms Brailey said that was not the case. She stated that the consultation process will draw out information on what people want and need.

Residents felt the twenty pounds shopping voucher was an insult and not enough. It was stated that a free weeks rent would have been better.

Home stated that they did not have money from Europe to do this work. The money came from the profits from the sale of housing stock and the sale of property on new developments.

Home were asked what was the criteria for demolition. They responded saying if an individual tenant doesn't want the house knocked down then it would remain.

A resident questioned how Home can redevelop if you don't knock the properties down, and stated that Home have deliberately run the condition of the properties down so people will want to move.

Another resident asked if new properties would be private or social housing. Home responded by saying they would provide at least as many social houses as there are now. The reasons for considering demolition are that it may not be sensible to invest in existing housing stock it may be better to build new ones.

An owner-occupier stated how angry she felt that she hadn't been informed of this, and only found out through social media. Again, Home apologised saying they had "got it wrong" and they are addressing this issue by opening out the consultation to all residents.

A resident asked "who is going to buy our house now that the demolition notices have gone out." Home responded by inviting the resident to the consultation to discuss options on one to one basis.

Another resident said she had lived in her home for 28 years and didn't want to move and asked Home to put it in writing that she could stay.

The meeting was asked if they wanted investment in the estates. All responded yes.

Residents said if some are private and some are social housing, there will be people who can't afford to buy a property. Home said they did not want to displace the community and wanted the community to come together. Home stated if people don't want to move, they don't have to.

Problems with contacting Home were discussed and it was suggested to the meeting that if people are not getting answers then contact the Town Council.

Home said they would only demolish property with the consent of the people living in them.

A resident stated that areas of Kier Hardie Avenue have been knocked down and not re-built and it was said at that time that bungalows would be built there. Home were asked why they didn't build on Kier Hardie Avenue. Home responded that this area was something they wanted to talk to the community about, and ask if bungalows should be built there.

A Priory Drive resident asked if her home is refurbished, could she move back afterwards. Home responded by saying she may not even have to move out, depending on the work involved.

Councillor Jones-Bulman said there were a lot of drainage problems on the estate which causes damage to properties. Home responded by saying these are the issues we want to discuss and understand.

A resident stated that three letters from Home in two days was ridiculous. Another had a letter for an asbestos check too. An explanation as to why the asbestos checks are carried out was delivered.

A resident asked what will the impact on rents be after the refurbishments. Home responded by saying that the rents are set on the same basis whether it is an old property or a new one.

Home were asked to show their commitment to the community by having a permanent base in the town throughout this process.

Discussion around the right to buy took place. Home said it would be an option to sell property to residents, so they could renovate their homes themselves. If they were to buy property back from owner-occupiers, they would pay the market value plus 10%, with the valuation carried out by an independent company.

A resident stated "I put it to you, that you know exactly what you are doing. You are just backtracking now."

A resident asked, if tenants want to move, what would the timescales be. Home responded that it is a long process, and this is just the beginning. Firstly, we need to understand everyone's wishes.

Councillor Branney called for a show of hands of people who wanted to stay in Cleator Moor. All present from the communities of Wath Brow and Priory Drive areas raised their hands.

Home agreed to collate the questions they have taken, and the ones they have been receiving over the telephone and provide answers to them all. A copy would be sent to all residents, owner occupiers and councillors. They agreed to arrange another meeting in six months time, for the community to hold Home to account.

Councillors asked if they could attend the consultation events. Home agreed.

The discussion with Home/residents concluded with the Chair reading a list of points requiring clarification by Home, that had been prepared by a resident.

The majority of public and all of Home left the meeting at this point with the exception of Mr Graham and Mr Mulholland.

Clerk asked to write to Home to suggest they open an office in the town for the duration of this process.

Councillor Lamb gave an update on the water problems at Wath Brow and confirmed that residents who area affected, are being supported by agencies and provided with free connections of piping to the roadside drains from their gardens.

Councillor Morgan informed members that the budget and fire plan consultation had now concluded. Consideration is being given to the provision of physical works to address speeding through the village of Cleator. Councillor Morgan has been pressing for enforcement work to be carried out in the town. Councillor Morgan was asked if it would be possible to look at a pedestrian crossing at the Bowthorn Road junction with Whitehaven Road, and he confirmed that this had a need for improvement had been identified and that he would look into it.

Councillor Branney noted the Boundary Commissions consultation response and urged the council to respond and further urged councillors to each respond individually too. With reference to the previous discussion with Home and residents he said that it would be useful for Home to have an office base in the town and could we write to offer some space. Clerk to contact Home on this matter. Councillor Banks added that Phoenix Enterprise Centre would have space or some of the empty shops would be a possibility.

007/18 To review planning applications:

Members reviewed the following applications and recorded no objections:

- 04/17/2407/OF1 - Erection of first floor rear extension to form an additional bedroom - 6 Main St, Cleator - Mr B Howland.
- 04/17/2410/OF1 - Two storey extension 51 Trumpet Terrace - Mr and Mrs Connolly.

With regards to application 04/17/2025/OR1 - Variation of condition 2 of approved application (application for design of estate access road) to relocate access junction by approximately 2.0m in field adjacent to Church St, Cleator - Mr W Agnew. Members requested their comments be recorded, consistent with previous applications for this land.

- concerns that Church Street cannot accommodate an increase in the volume of vehicles this estate will generate.
- concerns regarding the loss of agricultural land on the existing green field site.
- concerns that the open vistas from Prospect Row will be lost and the character of the area altered.
- it was noted that this area of land is not listed for development in the current Local Plan, the development constitutes urban creep and gives the potential to join up of communities of Cleator and Cleator Moor, which is something the council is opposed to.

It is noted on the plan within the application, "access to possible future development" which indicates possible future plans by the applicant, to develop more of this area. The council would like it placed on record that Cleator Moor Town Council objects to any additional applications in the area of this site, as it would further destroy the open countryside and the unique character of that part of the town.

008/18 To review and approve letter of objection to Copeland Borough Council regarding application 04/17/2391/001 Outline application for residential development (19 dwellings) with all matters reserved except access on land to the north of Flosch Meadows Mr R Mulholland and to nominate a speaker to attend the CBC planning panel to voice the council's objections.

A draft letter of objection to this planning application was circulated to members prior to the meeting, with members invited to comment and suggest any amendments. The comments contained in the letter were agreed in principal, with the addition of comments regarding a community energy system. Councillor Wood agreed to review the letter with the Clerk prior to issue.

Councillor Jones-Bulman was nominated to address the planning panel with regards to this application.

009/18 To consider the Local Government Boundary Commission's consultation on the Copeland Council Electoral Review and form a response.
Resolved that the draft response be approved and issued.

010/18 To review correspondence.

The following correspondence was reviewed.

Date Rec'd	From	Regarding	Action
15/12/2017	CALC	Information on new child health app	For information
18/12/2017	Tilhill	Evaluation of Blackhow Woodland for forest certification	For information
21/12/2017	CALC	Data Protection Training update	For information
02/01/2018	Mr S Linfoot	Suggestions for Kangol Mill	For information
04/01/2018	Crime Commissioners Officer	Policing survey information	Circulated to members
05/01/2018	CALC	Links to Highway England report	For information
08/01/2018	F Morgan	Timetable of events in Copeland Libraries Week Commencing 8 th January 2018.	For information
09/01/2018	CALC	NALC survey	Circulated to Members
09/01/2018	Cumbria Constabulary	December Report	Circulated to Members
Various	CCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National review of Health Care Systems welcomed by Cumbria • Mollie the Sprollie joins the fight against illegal tobacco • Cumbria appoints a new coroner • Apply now to join Cumbria's on-call fire 	For information

		<p>fighters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a new year's resolution - test your smoke alarm every month in 2018 • County Council responds to Storm Eleanor • Cumbria County Council seeks reviews and opinions of carers living in Cumbria 	
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011/18 To discuss Cleator Moor Market.

Members agreed to discuss this issue with Copeland Borough Council officer, Janice Carroll at the next meeting.

012/18 To consider submitting a regular column to Egremont 2 Day.

Resolved to submit article periodically. Clerk to advise on the deadlines for print. Any written pieces to be approved prior to sending the paper.

013/18 To receive the Clerks report.

Copeland Borough Council officer Janice Carrol has confirmed she will attend the next meeting of the council to discuss a ranger project. CALC training opportunities were highlighted and members asked to identify any training requirements and contact the Clerk as required.

014/18 To consider applications for sponsorship.

- Cumbria Children's Dyslexia Project - Clerk to contact St Patricks and Montreal School to discuss the suitability of this project and assess the need for support in that area. This item is to be included on a future agenda.

015/18 Finance:

- Resolved that the schedule of accounts for January 2018 be approved and paid.

Name	Voucher Number	Cheque Number	Amount
Canon	145	302895	22.04
Phoenix Youth	146	302896	6000.00
North West Air Ambulance	147	302897	250.00
Copeland Borough Council	148	302898	4302.20
Works 4 You	149	302899	54.00
R Mulholland	150	302900	120.00
Water Plus	151	302901	104.10

Water Plus	152	302902	201.42
Canon	153	302903	149.39
Canon	154	302904	149.39
H Gilmour	155	302905	1467.56
Local Government Pension	156	302906	433.27
C McGee	157	302907	97.50
British Gas	158	302908	21.88
Copeland Borough Council	159	302909	58.19
Orian	160	302910	97.50
ADT	161	302911	1249.20
ADT	162	302912	2328.41
TOTAL			£17,106.05

- Resolved to note bank reconciliations up to the end of December 2017.
- Budget 2018/19. Resolved that a precept of £82,500.00 be approved. Clerk to inform Copeland Borough Council.

016/18 Items for inclusion on the next agenda.

Members were invited to notify the Clerk of any items when they arise.

017/18 To approve the date of the next meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the council be scheduled for 13th February 2018

Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed

Dated