**DEAN PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held in Eaglesfield Village Hall

on Monday 6th January 2025 at 7.30 pm

**Present**: Mr. Hayman, Mr. Chittenden, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Smith, Mr. Haslam, Mr. Scott, Mr. Agnew, Mrs. Pallister, Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Semple (Cumberland Councillor), and Rev’d. Morgan (Clerk).

**Also Present**: Libby Bateman and Lewis McLean from Fibrus, David Day and David Mole from Pardshaw Quaker Centre and thirty-five members of the public.

**80/24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Ferguson (on holiday) and Mr. Worsley (illness). The apologies were accepted.

**81/24 Public Participation** – none, as all were present for agenda business.

**82/24 Visitors’ Business**

1. **Representatives of Viberoptix/Fibrus – to discuss possible installation on or near the Village Green, Eaglesfield.**

Libby Bateman explained that Viberoptix had won the tender to provide hyperfast broadband to rural Cumbria under a government initiative and the purpose of their attendance at the meeting was to discuss a possible wayleave with the Parish Council, as landowner of the Village Green, Eaglesfield. Currently no properties in Dean Parish were accessing hyperfast broadband (1GB/second), and some 42 properties were receiving less than 10mb/second. Where possible, existing infrastructure is used, in order to get the best value for the public purse. Viberoptix has statutory powers and gives 28 days’ notice to Cumberland Council for use of public land.

Infrastructure is required for Eaglesfield Village Green. The original request was for a pole to be erected but following a meeting with members of the Parish Council, this was altered to a chamber above ground and underground cabling to a smaller chamber housing connection equipment (Doby). The Doby is a small box which will enable individual properties to be connected to the network.

The altered proposals will result in significant disruption at installation, involving road closures.

Questions from councillors were invited at this point.

The Chairman asked for clarification about the proposed chamber on the Village Green. This would be a Footway 4 Box, sited between two existing stones, dimensions approx. 4’ x 2’. A subsequent question was asked about placing the infrastructure in the road and the reply was that the company don’t like doing this, they lack the correct specifications for it and for health and safety reasons the road would need to be closed every time there was a need to inspect it; if housed on grass, it can be inspected by simply placing guards around it.

Questions were invited from the public at this point.

Q1. Have surveyors looked at the Village Green - yes.

Q2. Could the existing chamber, off the road, directly beneath the BT pole be used? - No, the infrastructure requires an additional chamber to house equipment.

Q3. How often would the road need to be closed? - impossible to give a definitive answer.

Q4. How many houses would the chamber supply? - 15

Q5. What is the significant disruption at installation? – Crossing the highway to access the houses. Cabling will be moled across the Village Green, if possible, not certain.

Q6. Will the chamber be set flush with the surrounding area? – Yes, it is not in the company’s interests to do otherwise.

Q7. The law protecting village greens states that ‘no structure above or below the ground is permitted’. Isn’t what is proposed in contravention of that law? – It is fairly common to install on village greens and the company has code powers, but Libby Bateman will check this and get back to the Parish Council on this issue.

Q8. How will connections be made to the peripheries of the village without poles and wires? – The proposed box will only service 15 properties in the centre of the village. The plans indicate that a number of new poles will be erected to serve other properties. Libby Bateman agreed to chase up the planning department about the applications not notified to the Parish Council. The PDF will be posted on the Parish Council’s website.

Q9. Could the decommissioned public telephone box adjacent to the village green be used to house the equipment? – No, the company cannot touch BT equipment. Libby Bateman to speak to Openreach about the possible removal of the old box.

Q10. Currently broadband is delivered via poles also used for electricity. Would this be a possibility? – No. There is no new access to joint user poles since an engineer was electrocuted several years ago.

Q11. Can you confirm that you are not intending to put any poles on the Village Green? – Yes, we can confirm that.

The chairman thanked the public for their questions and closed the public participation at this point.

The council raised the following points:

1. A clear plan is lacking, better maps with clear diagrams showing what equipment will be sited where, are needed.
2. Could the chamber be placed under a slab beneath the phone box? – No, junction box is needed further down than that location and stones cannot be placed on top of chambers.
3. Councillors remain unconvinced about the road disruption – Lewis McLean to ask Fibrus if cables can pass under the road.
4. BT don’t close the road to access their chambers in the road – Libby Bateman replied that it is a legal requirement to close the road.
5. What would happen if we came to a complete impasse? – The matter would need to be taken back to the government to negotiate. Worst case scenario, the project would be cancelled for the 15 properties affected.

The chairman proposed the motion that Dean Parish Council is not in a position to decide on the wayleave request at present and would request more options for consideration before a decision can be made. On being put to the vote, Council members voted unanimously in favour and the motion was, therefore, carried. Clerk to convey this to Fibrus via email.

*Libby Bateman, Lewis McLean and most of the members of the public left the meeting at this point.*

1. **Mr David Day, to discuss issues affecting Pardshaw Quaker Centre.**

Mr. Day explained that he and Mr. Mole were trustees of the charity Pardshaw Quaker Centre. The PQC had been open to the public on the Sunday of August bank holiday weekend 2024, when 25 local people had visited. The Cumberland Council’s Lakes to Sea panel members had since also visited and invited the PQC trustees to make a bid to the panel for funding. The Trustees wish to develop the building as an asset for the local community, the local Quaker community and the national Quaker community. Funding of £50,000 is needed to bring the premises up to the desired standard as it currently has electricity, full safety wiring, heating and a fully working kitchen but requires further work, including the opening up of a doorway blocked up in 1883, which will provide wheelchair access and a second entrance to the building.

Mr. Day expressed a desire to form a partnership with Dean PC to address issues of mutual concern.

A funding bid would be considered by the Lakes to Sea Community Panel in February 2025 towards the cost of purchasing a defibrillator but thereafter money would be needed for its maintenance. It was not yet clear where these funds would come from, but the plan was to site the defibrillator on the exterior wall of the building where it would be accessible from the roadside and with parking facilities adjacent.

The Emergency Response Group had already discussed the possibility of the PQC being an alternative safe refuge and storage for emergency equipment and had agreed that this would be useful once the building has been refurbished in line with current plans.

It was agreed that once the building is fully accessible to everyone it would be possible to include it as a venue in the annual cycle of Parish Council meetings.

The Chairman stated that Dean P C would support any grant applications from the trustees of PQC.

The Clerk was asked to check the current legislation around Parish Council’s funding religious groups.

Mrs. Pallister volunteered to be the link council member with the PQC and Mr. Day invited council members to visit the centre and see it for themselves.

*Mr. Day and Mr. Mole left the meeting at this point.*

**83/24 Declarations of Interest –** Mr. Scott declared an interest under agenda item 14 a) and it was agreed that this item would be dealt with at the end of the meeting.

**84/24 Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2024 were approved, subject to the removal of the word ‘building’ and insertion of ‘settlement’ under minute 67/24, and on the proposal of Mr. Haslam, seconded by Mr. Smith, and were signed by the chairman.

**85/24 Matters arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda** - none.

**86/24 Report from Cumberland Councillor Mr. A. Semple**

Mr. Semple reminded members of the community networking event to be held on Friday 17th January 2025 from 1 – 3pm at Cockermouth Rugby Union Club, Strawberry Howe, Cockermouth.

Boundary Commission consultations on boundary reviews was ongoing and comments can be made on the boundary commission website until the end of February 2025, with any changes coming into effect in February 2026. Cumberland Council recommends an increase from 46 councillors to 55, to enable more efficient running of the council.

In response to a question about the Devolution White Paper, Mr. Semple explained that there was now agreement between the two unitary authorities for Cumbria and that devolution would almost certainly happen with mayoral elections most likely taking place at the same time as the next Cumberland Council elections.

*Mr. Semple left the meeting at this point, 9.00pm*

**87/24 Open Spaces** – Nothing new.

**88/24 Update on Sewage Plant**

Mr. Scott reported that United Utilities is moving at pace to stop overflows into becks, including provision of some holding tanks. Notice had been given that they would begin work in Deanscales in March 2025 with work completed during the Summer. It was agreed this is good news.

**89/24 License application, The Royal Yew, Dean**

Information on the application had been circulated via email prior to the meeting. On the proposal of Mr. Chittenden, seconded by Mr. Agnew, it was unanimously resolved that the clerk should notify the licensing authority that Dean Parish Council fully supports this application.

**90/24 Update on Website**

Mr. Haslam reported that over 100 individual visits had been made to the site since its launch. Feedback from councillors was invited. More would be added over the next two weeks before the site will be handed over to the clerk. It was agreed that documents relating to the Viberoptix/Fibrus wayleave request would be uploaded to the site.

**91/24 Adoption of Policy Documents**

Draft copies of the following documents had been circulated by email prior to the meeting:

i. Retention of Documents Policy (revised)

ii. Complaints Procedure

iii. GDPR Policy

iv. Safeguarding Policy

On the proposal of Mr. Haslam, seconded by Mrs. Pallister, it was unanimously agreed that the policies be adopted.

It was noted that some additional hardware may be required by the clerk in order to comply fully with the digital records retention.

**92/24 Reports**

1. **Dean Community Response Group**

**The following report was received:**

‘Since the last meeting Mr Thomas has checked and commissioned the donated second hand 2kw petrol generator

The Emergency Equipment Store has been emptied of its previous contents and cleaned out. All of the emergency equipment purchased with the Grantscape funds and that donated by private donors has, with the assistance of Mr Agnew, been moved into the store (with the exception of catering equipment which has now been distributed to village halls to hold in readiness).

CRG Committee members and the Parish Clerk have details of how to access the equipment if needed and CRG Volunteers have been briefed by WhatsApp.

In the New Year there will be a meeting of the CRG committee to review the arrangements and re-authorise the Dean Emergency Response Plan (date to be confirmed). CRG Volunteers will be invited to come and view the store.’

Thanks were expressed to Mr. Thomas and Mr. Agnew for assistance in moving the equipment into the store.

1. **Dean Moor Solar Farm Proposal**

A meeting was held with representatives of Dean Moor on 10th December. A power point presentation was given, which will be distributed to Parish Council members once received electronically. There had been some movement on screening. The battery storage system had been dropped from the proposal; this would have been the most commercially viable part of the scheme but would have made it extremely difficult to reinstate the land completely at the end of the 40-year life of the project. This significantly reduces the Parish Council’s leverage for a larger community fund, of which a bigger proportion up front was requested as well as a larger proportion to be made available to the two parishes - Dean Solar will give this some thought. The solar farm will be built and then sold on. Dean Moor intimated they were talking to RWE. A letter had been sent to Josh McAlister MP in mid-December asking him to make representations to Dean Solar.

1. **Lostrigg Solar Farm Proposal**

Nothing further to report.

**93/24 Finances**

1. **Approval of payments**

On the proposal of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Haslam, the following payments were approved:

Clerk’s salary – January - net £ 257.23

Tax on January salary £ 64.30

Clerk’s expenses £ 38.05

Clerks salary - February– net £ 257.23

Tax on February salary £ 64.30

JT Décor (repair to Eaglesfield notice board) £ 40.00

JT Décor (installation of sign on gate at Barkers

Meadow field). £ 20.00

J A Lee (Dean bus shelter cleaning) £ 56.02

Kirkstile Community Centre – rent (Nov) £ 37.50

Eaglesfield Village Hall – rent (Jan) £ 30.00

**b) Bank Balance as at 6/01/25**

Balance as per statement £19768.55

Less outstanding cheques (£ 170.10)

Balance remaining £19598.45

**c) Ground Rents**

The Clerk advised that she had requested the ground rent for 2025 for the two garage plots in Eaglesfield.

**d) Donation**

A question was raised about money collected at a funeral in 2023, which it was understood was to be gifted to the Parish Council – Clerk to check the accounts.

**94/24 Planning**

**Ref No: LBC/2024/0047**

Applicant: Richard Cummings

Proposal: Listed building consent for replacement windows, internal doors, install wood burners and replacement of defective floor.

Location: Wadsworth Farm, Branthwaite, Workington CA14 4SZ

Dean Parish Council had no objections.

**Ref No: HOU/2024/0181**

Applicant: Josh Hoyle

Proposal: Alteration and extension to a previously converted barn comprising of an entrance porch, living room and a bedroom, bathroom and walk-in wardrobe on the first floor.

Location: Hill Top Barn, Ullock, Workington CA14 4TP

Dean Parish Council had no objections.

**Applicant: Julie Waite**

Proposal: Listed building consent for removal of uPVC porch to rear and replace with timber. Retrospective removal of dangerous chimney stack to rear elevations Removal of plasterboard drylining to dining room and replace with lime plaster

Location: Manor House, Dean, Workington, CA14 4TJ

Dean Parish Council had no objections.

**Reference No: FUL/2024/0049**

Applicant: J Skelton

Proposal: Conversion of a barn to dwelling

Location: Barn Opposite Southward Cottage, Pardshaw, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 0SP

Dean Parish Council had no objections

**95/24Amenity**

**a. Registered Land and Asset Register -**Nothing to report.

**b. Reg’s Round** – Nothing to report**.**

**c. Broadband –** Already covered.

**d. Repairs to noticeboards and seats.**

It was agreed that J T Décor be asked to repair the Eaglesfield noticeboard with a leg splint.

**e. Footpath 225014 Eaglesfield to the Dubbs**

Mrs. Moore voiced concern that she had not received an invitation to the meeting with the landowner. It was agreed that the clerk would pass all information to all councillors in future. It was recognised that this would result in a higher volume of email from the clerk.

A meeting had been held with the landowner, on site, attended by Mr. Hayman, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Scott., Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Semple.

The Council discussed the issue and the findings of the site visit and concluded that there is some discrepancy and ambiguity around the designation and end point of the footpath as marked on the OS map. Resolved: take no further action with regard to seeking the reopening of the path.

**96/24 Highways Issues –** A planned road closure of the C2032 at Deanscales was noted.

**97/24 Reports on Meetings Attended** – none.

**98/24 Communications addressed to the council –** nothing new this meeting.

**99/24 Grass Cutting Contract 2025**

*Mr. Scott left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.*

On the proposal of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mrs. Pallister, it was agreed that the contract be awarded to Mr. Scott at the same rate as the previous year, of £6,400.00 + VAT.

Mr. Scott was asked to quote for the addition of an area opposite the Kirkstile Community Centre, which will be considered at a future meeting.

**100/24 Confirmation of date of next meeting**

Monday 3rd March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Kirkstile Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.56pm.

Signed as a true and correct record …………………………………….. Chairman

Date …………………………