

MINUTES of the Council Meeting held on Monday
7th March 2022, at 7.30 pm –
in the Ballroom at Bentham Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs Swales (Chair), Adams, Burton, Gerrie and Hill. CCllr Ireton. DCllrs Brockbank and Handley. The Clerk Christine Downey. Ten members of the public.

- 337 Apologies from members unable to attend: -
 337.1 To Note Apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting.
Cllrs Bridgeman, Faraday, Marshall, Stannard, Taylor and Wills.
 337.2 To consider acceptance of reasons for absence.
None.
- 338 Declaration of interests: -
 338.1 To Note Declarations of Interest not already declared under members Code of Conduct or members register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
Cllr Adam declared an interest in the payments on account, one of which is a refund of repair expenses to him.
 338.2 To approve dispensation requests.
None.
- 339 To Receive Comment & Concerns: Public Participation – to hear matters raised by members of the public or Cllrs with an interest (that are allowed to speak) either on agenda items or for future consideration.
 (NB: for non-agenda items Members of the Council are not permitted to respond, except to ask questions for the purposes of clarification).

BUS SERVICE

Several members of the public spoke regarding the bus service. The main points were: -

- Currently it is possible to make a trip to Lancaster on a bus leaving Bentham at 9.20 am, and arrive back between 12pm and 1pm.
- After the changes the bus will leave Bentham at 10.20 am and the passenger would not be able to get back to Bentham until 5.20. (7 hours)
- It currently takes approximately 40 minutes to do 14 miles. After 1st April it will take 2 hours to do 21 miles.
- Most of the members of the public present have cars but were worried about those residents who do not.
- The concern is that because the service from 1 April is slower than the current service that even fewer passengers will use it, meaning that eventually it will cease to exist entirely.
- The train is not as convenient for many people.
- There was concern about how Bentham residents can keep hospital appointments in Lancaster. This was considered to be a very significant problem.
- National average statistics indicate that there would be between 160 and 200 residents over the age of 65 in Bentham without a car.
- The count of bus users on the service was conducted during the pandemic when numbers would inevitably have been much lower than normal. This discrepancy in figures should be taken into account, because the count should have been done outside pandemic.
- People without cars are reluctant to ask others for lifts because of the high cost of petrol.
- Travelling to Lancaster on the train is expensive.
- The residents of Low Bentham need to get to High Bentham to shop.

- Other nearby areas are served by Dales Bus, why can't Bentham have a little white bus service?
- There is no direct bus service to Kendal.

It was reported back to the meeting that Bentham Town Council is very sympathetic and is doing everything that it possibly can to try and help and assist, and will continue to do so. However, it must be pointed out that how the bus service is run is not up to Bentham Town Council and, and therefore there is a limit to what it can do. It should be noted that the intention of the new plan was to support Bentham, but it does not do so. From Bentham to Lancaster will take over 2 hours with a half hour wait in the middle under the new service, which only really supports Booth's supermarket in Kirkby Lonsdale. It does not shuttle Bentham residents between Low Bentham and High Bentham. Some simple changes/tweaks to the proposed new service could make a big improvement. For example, to visit High Bentham in both directions; to extend the service to Wennington to meet the Lancaster bus (and train) at Wennington; or to extend the service to Hornby.

CCllr Ireton responded in detail, the main points were: -

- The bus service is run as a commercial enterprise and the changes are occurring because Stagecoach could not make the route pay, due to the small number of users. There is nothing that NYCC or any other council can do about this. Stagecoach is entitled to cease running that route if they wish.
- NYCC have put the new service in place to fill what would otherwise have been a complete void.
- The contract for the new service is now with Lancaster City Council.
- The Lancaster to Kirkby Lonsdale bus does not go through Wennington. It does go through Hornby but it should be noted that small changes to a bus schedule can affect connections elsewhere.
- Hospital transport is available for those with hospital appointments.
- NYCC Integrated Transport Services do not set criteria for bus services. Individual bus operators decide what they can or cannot provide. In this instance it would be up to Kirkby Coaches to decide what they can do.
- NYCC fully understand that the new service is not perfect by any means, and people should write in to Integrated Transport Services at County Hall. The council should also write in to Integrated Transport Services.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON ROBIN LANE

A member of the public spoke regarding the need for a pedestrian crossing on Robin Lane, outside Bowland View. Many of the prospective residents have low level of mobility and will struggle to cross Robin Lane to get to the shops. At the junction of Scholar's Rise and Robin Lane recently, the member of the public counted 27 vehicles coming down the Lane in a 15-minute period, of which at least 5 were doing well in excess of the speed limit, which is nearly 20%. NYCC have made provision for crossing just below the entrance to Bowland View by providing a 2-foot-wide stretch of dropped pavement, which the speaker considers to be pathetic. He stressed that over 100 people are coming to live right opposite the bus stop, and that better provision for crossing is required, i.e., a pedestrian crossing. He has written to both NYCC and CDC and has been advised to seek the support of Bentham Town Council in making an application for a crossing.

STREET LIGHTS

A member of the public reported that two street lights outside the school have not been working for four months but did not provide the numbers of the faulty street lights.

340 To Confirm the Minutes of the full council meeting of 24th February 2022. (Paper 2022/37)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 24th February 2022 are agreed and be signed.

341 To receive the Police Report and allow members to ask questions for information - if any.
Received.

342 To receive a report from the Public Safety Officer and allow members to ask questions for information – if any.
Not available.

343 To receive the Clerks Report (for information only). (Paper 2022/38)
Received.

344 To receive reports from CCllr and DCllrs (for information only) – if any.

DCllr Brockbank reported that there was a full Craven District Council meeting last week, at which she made CDC aware of the problems in Bentham regarding the bus service, and asked them to look into it. Whilst CDC has no authority in relation to the bus service, she hopes they might be able to make useful suggestions and she will report back in due course.

DCllr Handley reported that the electric car charging points are going to be installed next week, and are scheduled for use around 22nd March.

CCllr Ireton reported: As is the case nationally and regionally, here in North Yorkshire we are facing unprecedented pressure in the adult care sector. There has been a major step change in recruiting people to the sector since the economy opened up again. We have found ourselves in fierce competition with other sectors for labour. The omicron variant pressures have only added to an already acute problem. Much of the normal available workforce has simply evaporated. The need for more people to work in social care is becoming ever more critical. Across north Yorkshire 20,000 people work in the care sector and on any given day there are at least 1,000 jobs available. Because of the shortage North Yorkshire County Council are launching their own major social care recruitment campaign.

CCllr Ireton also expressed his support for the request for a pedestrian crossing on Robin Lane.

345 Planning: -

345.1 To consider and comment upon New Planning Applications: -

345.1.1 2022/23711/HH. To replace existing septic tank and filter system with a Harlequin Hydroclear 12-person sewage treatment plant HC12, with outlet drain discharging into adjacent watercourse. Woodside Barn, Beck Lane, Low Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 8NZ.

RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.

345.1.2 2022/23766/FUL. New domestic access from highway. Over Raygill House, Dumb Toms Lane, Ingleton, Carnforth, Lancaster, LA6 3DS.

RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.

345.2 To receive Correspondence on Planning issues.

345.2.1 Correspondence regarding the Banks Way development.

DCllr Brockbank reported that she is meeting with CDC officers this Wednesday at 4pm on a Teams meeting. Various reports will be discussed, including the report from Cllr Taylor, a report from the builders, and emails from residents and neighbours. She will “find out what the real situation is and what can be done. And will feed back at the next meeting”.

- 345.2.2 Letter from Lancaster City Council dated 24th February 2022. Notification of further information to planning application no 21/00792/FUL. Proposed works for and use of replacement section of aqueduct, including earthworks and ancillary infrastructure including: a new valve house building within fenced compound with permanent vehicular access provision and an area of proposed ground raiding for landscaping, with the installation of a tunnel shaft and an open cut connection area within a temporary construction compound, to include site access, storage areas, plant and machinery, and drainage infrastructure. In addition, a temporary satellite park and ride facility with vehicle marshalling area, a temporary residents parking area: and a series of local highways. Haweswater Aqueduct, Helks Brow, Wray, Lancashire. (Paper 2022/48) (SEE also item 346.1)

It was reported that this issue is all about how the road network will tolerate the traffic generated by the Haweswater Aqueduct work.

DCllr Brockbank reminded the meeting that there should have been two planning applications but that CDC allowed Lancashire County Council to deal with all of it and take the lead on it, on condition that Bentham Town Council were consulted. However, she will take it back to CDC if Bentham have not been consulted.

- 345.3 To receive planning decisions – See Clerks report.

Received.

- 346 To consider and note Highway Matters for information - if any. (Councillors can comment on any minor highway issues currently causing concern).

At Mount Pleasant a temporary road repair has been done, but the water pipe is still burst so the repair will go again. There is another man hole collapsed just the other side of this junction and there is still a pot hole outside Cllr Burtons house that nobody will accept responsibility for.

The pavements along Robin Lane are cracking up, probably due to cars parking on it.

- 346.1 To discuss concerns about the threat to the B6480 from erosion of the field near to Ridding Lodge and to agree a way forward. (Paper 2022/39)

RESOLVED: Clerk to make Highways aware of the problem.

- 346.2 To discuss a proposal for a pedestrian crossing on Robin Lane and to agree a way forward. (Papers 2022/40 and 41)

RESOLVED: To request that NYCC consider the proposal for a pedestrian crossing.

- 346.3 To discuss the street lights at Millholme Drive and to agree a way forward. (Paper 2022/42)

RESOLVED: Clerk to write to the Chief Executive of NYCC in attempt to get the problem resolved.

- 347 To agree the Accounts for Payment.

Tree Peaks Ltd	Tree work and replanting at Felstead as per estimate	900.00
Glasdon	3 benches for School Hill	1,823.36
Kingsdale Projects	Work at bus shelter	606.81
Craven District Council	Green bin at cemetery	36.00
Business Stream	Waste water - cemetery	5.37
Business Stream	Waste water – Town hall	28.69
Mark Paige	Christmas tree for planting at School Hill	364.00
Salaries and mileage allowance		2.850.01
Christine Downey	Refunded postage	6.40
Gareth Adams	Screwfix – door closer for kitchen and light bulb	54.74
Viking	Ink and stationery	194.15

Kingsdale Projects	Installation of benches at School Hill	600.00
B&CE Armstrongs	Light bulbs	65.89
Pro Laundry & Catering Services Ltd	Repair to fridge in main kitchen	195.00
Victoria Institute Low Bentham	Booking for town council meeting on 24/02/22	33.00
Clearglass Cleaning	Window cleaning town hall	110.00
1 & 1 Ionis	Internet	18.00
BT Group	Phone bill TIP	46.08
SSE Swalec	Unmetered electric supply	89.25
Craven DC	Trade waste 2021/22	55.10
Total Energies	Electricity town hall	1,008.33
Premium Credit Ltd	Insurance	334.76
NEST	Pension contributions	127.47

RESOLVED: Approved.

RESOLVED: To be authorised by Cllr Adams and Faraday – with the exception of payment of £54.74 to Cllr Adams, which will be authorised after next meeting.

- 348 Open Spaces: To discuss grass cutting at Goodenber Play Area and agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: Clerk to instruct Thomas Brown to proceed with grass cutting at Goodenber Play Area.
RESOLVED: This grass cutting to be paid for out of Parish Caretakers budget.
- 349 Buildings:
- 349.1 To consider the reports on the Town Hall Clock and the quotes, and to agree a way forward. (Papers 2022/43, 44 and 45)
It was reported that the Automatic Winding option will require an electric supply to be installed at an additional cost.
RESOLVED: To proceed with “Workshop overhaul of the movement, pulleys, bevel gears & strike hammer” and “Automatic winding” options, to be paid for out of reserves.
- 349.2 To consider repairing or replacing the fridge in the main kitchen at the town hall and to agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: To proceed with the purchase of Polar CD082 Single Door Stainless Steel Fridge 400 Litre.
- 350 Community Youth Building: To finalise arrangements for walkabout on 18/03/2022. (Paper 2022/46)
RESOLVED: Cllrs Burton and Swales to conduct the walk about on the morning of Friday 18th March 2022, with the representatives from The Bentham Youth Group.
- 351 Tourist Information Season 2022: -
- 351.1 To consider opening the Tourist Information Point for the 2022 season, and to agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: To open the TIP on the days that have volunteers who are happy to return. (This is likely to be Friday and Saturday).
- 351.2 To discuss and agree arrangements for the co-ordination of volunteers.
RESOLVED: Cllr Stannard to coordinate volunteers.
- 351.3 To discuss insurance restrictions on volunteers over 80 and agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: Insurance questionnaires to be distributed to all TIP volunteers who return, with a request that they are filled in “if applicable”.
- 351.4 To discuss and agree arrangements for a TIP Coffee Morning on 19/03/2022, if required.
RESOLVED: Not to proceed with a TIP coffee morning on 16/03/2022.
RESOLVED: Clerk to report back if a later date becomes available.

- 352 To discuss Web presence and to agree a way forward. (Paper 2022/47)
RESOLVED: To acquire an SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificate for all domains from current webhost.
- 353 To discuss the flag pole at School Hill and to agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: Cllr Marshall to organise the purchase and installation of the flag pole at School Hill.
- 354 Special Projects being undertaken with funding from the Welcome Back Fund: -
- 354.1 To review progress to date.
 It was reported that everything is in hand, apart from the fact that Mark Burrow has not confirmed to the clerk that he will have completed the electrical work and submitted his invoice by the deadline of 21st March 2022.
- 354.2 To consider quotes – if any received.
None.
- 354.3 To agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: Cllr Burton to push Mark Burrow to reply to clerk urgently regarding the completion of the work and submission of invoice by 21st March 2022.
- 355 To receive reports from councillors who represent the Council on other bodies for information only.
Friends of Bentham Library: Cllr Swales reported that the library has received a donation of Lego from Settle Swimming Pool.
- 356 Items for next meeting and minor items for information only.
- 1) The bus service is not Bentham Town Councils bus service, but the council is keen to support users and get the best possible outcome. With that in mind, the council should write to Integrated Transport to point out that although the new bus service is a good start, that it could be much improved with a few tweaks. In particular the time frame for a journey from Bentham to Lancaster, and back again, needs to be considerably reduced from the 7 hours that it will take under the current proposals. And journeys between High and Low Bentham should be made available at all opportunities, and not only twice a day with a four-hour gap as under the current proposals.
 - 2) Election papers have been received and will be circulated for completion as soon as possible.
 - 3) Details of the site of the Jubilee Beacon for registration with Bruno Peak the Pageantmaster are whatever was registered with him last time. Let the clerk know the what3words if you know.
 - 4) An update about the Bentham Masterplan from CDC has been circulated. Any further news will be passed on.
 - 5) It is Craven Parish Liaison meeting on Wednesday 23/03/2022. Please forward any agenda items to the clerk to pass on this week.
- 357 Date of next meeting: 24/03/2022
- There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.