

KESWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Keswick Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 50 Main Street, Keswick on Thursday 10th October 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Chairman

Councillor David Burn

Alexandra Boardman	Markus Campbell-Savours	Allan Daniels
Alan Dunn	Steve Harwood	Sally Lansbury
Tony Lywood	Duncan Miller	Adam Paxon
Allan Todd		

Also present were Lynda Walker (Town Clerk), 3 members of the press and 80 members of the public.

Prior to the start of the meeting members of the public were given the opportunity to speak and a number of issues were raised concerning the unsuitability of tarmac as a surface for the reinstated Keswick to Threlkeld railway path. Other issues raised included access for farm vehicles and horse riding, possible introduction of driverless pods on the trail and the lack of democratic accountability of members of the Lake District National Park Authority.

111. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Titley.

112. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Chairman be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 19th September 2019 (pages 23 – 27).

113. Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk reported that no requests for dispensations had been received.

114. Declarations of Interests

Declarations of interests in respect of items on the agenda were received from:
Councillor Tony Lywood – member of the Lake District National Park Authority.

115. Keswick to Threlkeld Railway Path

Following a meeting with officers of the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) held on 2nd October 2019 when it had been made clear to Councillors that despite overwhelming public opposition to the use of tarmac, and constructive suggestions for alternative surfaces which would be suitable being put forward, no change to the proposed tarmac surface for the reinstated path from Keswick to Threlkeld would be considered, Councillor Harwood proposed a motion of no confidence in the Chief Officers of the Lake District National Park Authority together with a statement to be issued to the LDNPA. Councillors applauded the hard work of Councillor Harwood on this issue and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that a vote of no confidence be passed in the Chief Officers of the Lake District National Park Authority and that the following statement be issued:

‘Keswick Town Council has passed a unanimous motion of no confidence in the Chief Officers of the Lake District National Park Authority in view of their complete intransigence and disregard of the overwhelming views of the local population and wider community in

opposition to the tarmac surface finish, and to the associated destruction of so much natural habitat, proposed for the Keswick to Threlkeld railway path.

It is clear that the decisions made have been based on the principle that the needs of cyclists who wish to ride between Keswick and Threlkeld at speed outweigh all other considerations. To this end we consider that statistics and material facts have been presented in a distorted way to justify why tarmac is the only acceptable surface option - which is incorrect. It is not surprising that decisions have been taken to support this option taken against this background. It is an urban solution being imposed in a rural situation.

These points of detail go against the core principles of the National Park and its new status as a World Heritage Site. The excellent work carried out in bringing this project to fruition is being ruined by a dogmatic insistence that this decision cannot and will not be changed. It is eroding trust in the National Park's remit to protect this special landscape. Moreover we believe their position is in conflict with the primary purpose of a national park as set out in the Environment Act 1995.

There is still time to change this decision if there is a will to do so. Tried and tested alternatives have been put forward which satisfy the needs of all users and which command public support. Keswick Town Council asks the LDNPA to please take this opportunity to reconsider, to restore faith that the National Park is listening to the views of the people.'

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Chairman

Date