

Levens Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Levens Methodist Church on the 08 March 2022. The meeting commenced at 7.55 p.m. following the conclusion of the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present: Cllrs R. Atfield, J. Battye, H. Burrow, K. Holmes, R. Mason, D. Rogerson, M. Willacy; County Cllr. J. Bland, M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

116/21 Apologies for Absence: Cllr. S. Bagot (illness).

117/21 Declarations of interest: In relation to Item 9(h) of the Agenda, Cllrs. Atfield and Holmes declared that they were Trustees of the Levens Playing Fields Charity and Cllr. Battye declared that she was Secretary to the Levens Playing Fields Committee.

118/21 Minutes: Following an agreed amendment to Item 106/21(iii) (now to read: "...hosted by Sustrans immediately prior to the Project Meeting on 01 February.") it was **Resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 08 March 2022 as a true record.

119/21 Public Participation: There were no matters raised by the public for consideration.

120/21 Reports

- a) **Reports from Councillors attending meetings:** No external meetings had been attended.
- b) **Police:** There was no report from the Police. Cllr. Battye reported that she had attended a meeting of the Tuesday Club at which the local PCSOs had given a presentation on their role. This had covered a number of issues including cold-calling and crime prevention which had elicited a good number of questions. PCSO Park publicised a number of dates when she would be available at the Village Shop and it was hoped to confirm times. Cllr Holmes reported that police had attended an incident at Dobsons recently and an accident on the Levens section of the A590 on the evening of 04 March.
- c) **District Councillor:** Cllr. Holmes reported as follows:
 - i. David Sykes (SLDC) had appreciated good wishes from Levens PC in respect of his upcoming retirement. He had been particularly pleased to hear recent developments at the Carpet Shop.
 - ii. In respect of recent observations about dog litter particularly around Greengate, the Causeway and Sampool, he urged any member of the public with concerns to try to get evidence such as photographs on which SLDC environmental team could work.
 - iii. He reported that following a report from a Parishioner, he had dealt with a hanging tree in the vicinity of Underhill.
- d) **County Councillor:** Cllr. Bland reported as follows:
 - i. The next meeting to consider improvements to the A590 including a possible roundabout at Gilpin Bridge will take place on the evening of 31 March at the Gilpin Bridge Hotel.
 - ii. Other matters relating to Levens Lane would be dealt with later in the Agenda.

121/21 Finance

- a) **Receipts:** There were no receipts in the period 01 - 28 February.
- b) **Payments:** The following payments were **Approved**:
 - i. M R Curry - Salary February 2022: (PC £383.30; Project £258.92; Charity £8.43
Mileage £13.00; Annual Allowances: Office £100.00; Broadband £60.00) £823.65
 - ii. Direct 365: Defibrillator supplies – 2 sets pads + battery: £292.80
 - iii. Printing Plus: Spring Newsletter: £154.30
- c) **Bank Reconciliation and report on Ring-Fenced Funds:** The reconciled net bank balance of £13,712.20 (allowing for unrepresented cheques) at 28 February was noted. Councillors also noted that after deduction of ring-fenced funds the underlying balance available to the Parish Council is £8,012.14 with a further £2,939.45 due as refund from the Community Project.
- d) **Grant to Levens Playing Fields:** Following an application with accompanying financial detail, it was **Resolved** to make a grant of £1,600.00 to Levens Playing Fields Committee for 2021-22.
- e) **Grant to Levens Methodist Church:** It was **Resolved** to make a grant of £600.00 to Levens Methodist Church for 2021-22 for hosting Levens Post Office.

- f) **Management of PC Finances:** The Chairman reported investigations into digital and online banking facilities were ongoing.

122/21 Levens Community Project

- a) **Levens Community Project Advisory Group (PAG):** Cllr. Mason reported that a meeting of PAG had been held on 01 March by Zoom and that he had also given an update Report on the Project at the Annual Parish Meeting. Key items noted were:
- b) **Sale of Plots:** Sales of the two plots currently under offer at Cotes were progressing with the sale of Plot 3 due to be completed on 11 March. Plot 1 (Cotes) and Plot 3 (Church Hill) remain on the market. The grid-cover for the drain sump has been installed at Cotes and B4RN connections will run to the telegraph pole.
- c) **Underhill:** Tim Thacker continues to make good progress on infrastructure works. He has submitted an interim invoice (see Item (e) below).
- d) **New Village Hall:**
- i. Boundary Walls: The Party Wall consultant continues to negotiate a revised Agreement with a surveyor appointed by a neighbour occupying an adjoining property.
 - ii. Two quotes for the building of the boundary walls as designed by Paul Snape have been received. A third is awaited.
- e) **Finance:**
- i. Tim Thacker has submitted an interim invoice for £87,471 which has been certified by Tony Hills. This has been requested from Infrastructure Grant and payment received. On that basis payment of the invoice was **Approved**.
 - ii. Councillors noted that a bank reconciliation as of 23 February showed Project funds-in-hand of £1,047,981.59p.
 - iii. A meeting with Armstrong Watson (Accountants) to discuss VAT matters is to take place on 09 March.

123/21 Schedule of Planning Applications:

a) Councillors reviewed the following applications:

PC Ref	Location	Proposal	Application No.	PC View	Outcome
5	Low Levens Farm	Construct slurry lagoon	SL/2020/0983	PC had submitted No Objection	Decision deferred due to proximity of mains water pipe
42	The Langdales LA8 8PJ	Variation of conditions	SL/2022/0067	See below	See below
45	Plot 2: Cotes	Erect single dwelling, garage etc.	SL/2022/0134	Revision of previous consent considered	No Objection
46	Pinfold LA8 8PA	Single storey extension & associated modifications	SL/2022/0134	No objection but questions remain about the route of the main sewer.	No objection but comment to be made relating to potential build over main sewer
47	46 Meadow Wood	Detached summerhouse	SL/2022/0148	Currently invalid, but no objection	No Objection

Application SL/2022/0067: Variation of Conditions, The Langdales: Cllr. Holmes advised that this application had now been validated and was live. He reported that he had spoken with a planning officer who confirmed that it included the variation of Condition 2 relating to General Permitted Development Rights (imposed to protect neighbouring residential amenity) and Condition 4 relating to the retention of the existing beech hedge on the southern boundary (imposed to preserve neighbours living conditions). The application was the subject of discussion and the Parish Council concluded that it saw no justifiable reasons why the conditions were any less valid now compared with when they were originally imposed. It was **Resolved** that District Councillor Holmes be requested to call-in the application and that a letter of objection be sent to Development Management in response to their consultation.

b) Other Planning Matters:

- i) Whitbarrow Grove: Cllr. Holmes reported that SLDC Enforcement was considering several matters including that the replacement tree was neither in the correct location nor of an acceptable variety.

- ii) 46, Greengate: The Enforcement Officer had made two visits to the development following concerns about the height of the building and the discharge of building works. No report had yet been produced and Cllr Holmes undertook follow progress and report back.

124/21 Open Actions Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda

- a) **Traffic Management:** It was **Agreed** that the Parish Council should promote a wider village consultation exercise on this matter and that this would be included on the Agenda for the next meeting. A report in the recent CALC Newsletter on the availability of speed-camera technology for a cost of around £500 was noted and welcomed in principle. There had still been no response from Arnside on the request for details of their scheme. The Clerk will send a further request.
- b) **Levens Lane Footpath:** Cllr. Bland reported that he had organised a site meeting the following day with representatives from Levens Hall and Cumbria County Council, including Highways. Cllr. Mason will attend for the Parish Council.
- c) **Parish and Other Land**
 - i. **Brigsteer Road site:** The grant application to Friends of the Lake District has been re-submitted.
 - ii. **Registration of Land at Cotes:** The Clerk reported that there was as yet no response from HMLR.
 - iii. **Parish Hedge, Hutton Lane:** Cllr. Mason confirmed that work to remove the hedge had been successfully completed on Thursday 03 March. A tenancy agreement for 2022-23 will now be prepared.
- d) **Woodland Management:** Cllr. Atfield reported on a letter received from T & P Capstick on 23 February confirming that their tree contact did not meet the necessary criteria to work on Parish land. It was **Agreed** that in implementing the Woodland Management Plan priority should be given to addressing their concerns particularly in relation to unhealthy trees adjacent to their property as part of a phased thinning programme. The Parish Council noted that it is currently having difficulty in securing service from qualified tree surgeons and that it is unlikely that any diseased trees will be felled this side of bird-nesting season. However Cllr Holmes will meet with Russell Boow to inspect and any that are clearly dangerous will be removed as soon as possible. He will also undertake thinning work in exchange for felled timber. The Clerk will write to Mr. & Mrs. Capstick to update them on these proposals.
- e) **South Westmorland Village Maintenance Association:** It was noted that the sum of £474.13p was due to Levens as part of the winding-up of the SWVMA. The need for a contingency was stressed and it was **Agreed** to include this on the Agenda of the next meeting to establish a Working Group to consider options.
- f) **Parish Council Website:** Cllr Rogerson reported on a Zoom meeting held the previous evening when Tom Hecht had run through content and design for the new PC webpage. The Working Group was pleased to recommend developments to the Parish Council and to endorse Cllr Rogerson's praise for the amount of work Tom has put into this Project. The new site is to be put to the Village Webteam on 15 March for final comment and subject to comment will go live by the end of the month. Tom has requested more content and photos which Cllr Rogerson will publicise via Facebook. Tom has reported that Google Workspace, a component of the website is being withdrawn from July, but that he has sourced a cost-effective alternative at an annual cost equivalent to \$47. It was **Agreed** to proceed with Tom's recommendation of this and pay the annual subscription on receipt of an invoice or expenses claim.
- g) **Platinum Jubilee:** There were no further developments to report.
- h) **Electric Car Charging Points:** Cllr Holmes confirmed that there is no development to report.
- i) **Playing Fields Pump Track:** Cllr Battye reported that Dallam Tower Estate has not agreed to the development of a pump track. The Playing Fields Committee is to meet next week to consider options.
- j) **The Greening Campaign:** Cllr Battye reported that a meeting is being planned to develop the Greening group to tackle climate change, with a talk on Sustainable and Community gardening and an exchange of information, at 7.30pm on Monday April 11th in the Village Hall. There will be more information about this when the speaker is confirmed,
- k) **B4RN:** Cllr. Rogerson reported that 295 properties were now live (soon to be 297) representing 90% of all requests now connected. He was asked to enquire about when the Project would be able to relinquish the printer purchased for it by Levens Charity.

125/21 Correspondence: Items on the schedule of correspondence not otherwise dealt with were:

- From a resident noting a fallen tree at Underhill. As notes in his report, Cllr Holmes had dealt with this.
- A complaint about dog fouling at Sampool. Councillors acknowledged the problem here and in other places and their efforts to highlight the issue in various ways. It was agreed to reply to the correspondent suggesting that he should try to get photographic evidence and send on to Environmental Health at SLDC.
- From Ian Brodie advising on strimming work via volunteers from the National Trust on floristically rich PC owned grassland at the Crossings. The Clerk had thanked him for this work and advised that prior notice of intended work in the future would be appreciated.

126/21 Future Agenda Items: Items confirmed for the next Agenda were:

- i. Contingencies for adverse winter weather.
- ii. A village consultation process regarding the introduction of a 20 mph advisory speed limit.

127/21 Date of the Next Meeting: The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30p.m. on Tuesday 12 April 2022 in the Methodist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.26 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date:.....