

## LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 April 2017 in the Methodist Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Cllrs. R Atfield (Chairman), S. Bagot, H. Burrow, S. Hargraves, K. Holmes, R. Mason, D. Rogerson, J. Thacker, + District Cllr. A. Rawlinson (part), County Cllr. J. Bland, PCSO Park (part), M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

**136/16 Apologies for absence:** None

**137/16 Declarations of Interest:** None

#### 138/16 Minutes

It was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 14 March 2017, as a true record subject to an agreed amendment to Minute 132/16(e) – Heversham School: To clarify that Cllr Bagot's representations were made on behalf of the Parish Council.

**139/16: Public Participation:** None

#### 140/16: Reports:

**a) Reports from Meetings:** None

**b) Police:** PCSO Park reported on the following:

- i. The theft of a quad bike from Cinderbarrow Farm on 29 March is under investigation;
- ii. An incident of criminal damage on Greengate Crescent – under investigation;
- iii. A new Wildlife Officer is currently being trained up;
- iv. Cllr Burrow reported an incident where two youths had been seen on an empty property at Causeway End which PCSO Park noted. In response to an observation by Mr S Read, PCSO Park undertook to look into whether Story Homes have plans for security on the Greengate development site.

**c) District Councillor:** Reports from Cllr Rawlinson (AR):

- i. AR confirmed that she had no new information on the sale of the Carpet Shop;
- ii. There had been problems with re-cycling collections which she was looking into;
- iii. The Clerk was asked to acquire the final plans for the Story Homes development as approved by SLDC.

**d) County Councillor:** Cllr. Bland reported that a period of 'purdah' (a period of time immediately before elections when restrictions on communications activity are in place) was in force in respect of Council elections on 4 May. He reported that a plan for a roundabout at Bridge End had been prepared but had not progressed further. He also acknowledged the poor design of the layout of cones associated with roadworks on the A590 and had made representations about this.

#### 141/16: Finance:

**a) Receipts:** Councillors noted the receipt of £2,414.14p in respect of VAT refund for 2015-16

**b) Payments: Resolved:** to authorise the following payments:

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| i. M R Curry: Salary & expenses                            | £ 593.40 |
| ii. HMRC: Clerks PAYE (Jan-March)                          | £ 362.69 |
| iii. Levens Village Shop (Refreshments for Annual Meeting) | £ 17.00  |

iv. Levens Village Institute (Room Hire)	£ 21.50
v. Levens Estate (Allotment Rent 2016-17)	£147.00

**c) Financial Report:**

- i. Bank Reconciliation 31/03/17: The bank reconciliation indicating a net balance of £9,774.33 was noted. A projected end of year balance after the deduction of known costs of £5,929.74 was also noted.
- ii. Budget Out-turn 31/03/17: The Clerk reported that the projected out-turn was in line with the budget (as amended). Work on the annual accounts is underway and figures for the year will be presented as soon as possible.
- iii. Audits, Risk Assessment and Asset Register: The Clerk reported that Mr A Hartley had agreed to conduct the Internal Audit (though this would be his last year of availability) and that papers for the Annual Accounts had been received from the External Auditors. The Risk Assessment and Asset Register will be completed for approval by Councillors as part of the External Audit.

**142/16: Grant Applications**

Mr Simon Hill spoke to an application by the Levens Playing Fields Committee for a grant of £1,500 to be applied to running costs for the year 2016-17. Mr Hill explained that the school was no longer able to provide grass cutting and this has had a significant impact on the finances of the playing fields. Councillors noted the Income and Expenditure Account presented and Mr Hill confirmed that the current bank account stood at around £5,700 and a reserves account stands at approximately £12,000 for capital schemes. Mr Hill gave outline details of some future plans and confirmed that in the absence of provision in the S106 Agreement, the Committee had approached Story Homes, but had not had received any offer of grant. The Clerk confirmed that provision for a grant was included in the Precept and it was **Resolved** to approve the application, subject to a request that future applications should be supported by full financial details (details of Reserves and bank balance). It was further agreed that subject to receipt of an annual application and funds being available it would be the Council's intention to continue to support the Playing Fields at the current level on an annual basis. It was also agreed to consider the annual application earlier in the year and Mr Hill was encouraged to make an application for 2017-18 in September.

**143/16: Levens Community Project**

- a) **Sale of Plots at Sizergh Fell Quarry and Cotes:** Cllr. Mason reported that the boundary issue remained unresolved, though the Parish Council Solicitor was adamant that the claimants have no substantive case. To assist, Mr Read has volunteered to undertake further research and this offer was welcomed with thanks. The Clerk was asked to obtain a copy of the 1950 transfer of Sizergh Castle land to the National Trust which the Parish Council has not yet seen. To support the case further, the Solicitor has asked if any current or past Councillors could provide a formal statement confirming that the Hornyold-Strickland's have not had possession of the quarry since the transfer in 1950. Whilst names of past Councillors were proposed, it was agreed that it was up to the other side rather than the Parish Council to prove ownership, particularly to avoid the escalation of costs.
- b) **Allotments:** The Clerk reported that Allotment Agreements including a plan were printed and ready for distribution.
- c) **Project Finance:** The Clerk reported that the projected surplus of funds available from grants received remained at around £450. The Project is now at a watershed having

utilised financial resources as intended to develop the scheme to a point where sale of property will provide the necessary resources for the next phase. The delay caused by the Sizergth dispute is having a material impact on the timescale of the project, but it was noted that the Project Working Group is making plans for the next phase.

- d) **Project Working Group:** Cllr Mason reported that a meeting on 30 March had considered re-designed plans for the Quarry and that National Park planners were supportive. On funding it had been agreed to establish a sub-group to secure new resources from such opportunities as the Community Led Housing Scheme, the Walney Wind Farm initiative and others. Cllr Mason and the Clerk are due to meet Story Homes on 27 April to discuss their support for the project and a social group is looking at local fund raising and awareness events. The Group is also reviewing the Business Plan and consideration is being given to the development of the Church Road Allotments site (design and planning).

#### **144/16: Planning Applications**

a) **New Planning Applications**

SL/2017/0102: Southwaite, Brigsteer Road, Levens - No objection

b) **To note Planning Applications determined since last meeting:**

SL/2016/1144 & 1160: Levens Hall Café Building – Approved 21/03/17

**145/16: Levens Traffic Management Initiative:** Cllr Hargraves reported on a well-attended public meeting on 3 April which had generated a variety of ideas to work into agreed proposals. Cllr Hargraves and Darren Wilson are currently collating these and will update the Parish Council as plans evolve.

#### **146/16 Open Actions Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda:**

- a) **Greengate Development Street Naming Consultation:** Cllrs Bagot and Burrow reported that after numerous suggestions had been rejected they and the Clerk had attended a meeting with the relevant SLDC officers on 6 April. SLDC is bound by government guidelines and clearly constrained as to what it is prepared to accept. After much discussion and approval from the Post Office and Developers it was agreed to recommend Meadow Wood. **Resolved:** To accept Meadow Wood as the street name for the Greengate development.
- b) **Village Maintenance and Woodland Management:** The Maintenance Group has yet to meet to consider future plans. The Clerk is to confirm location and extent of all woodland plots in order to register these with the Rural Payments Agency as a requirement for Woodland Planning Grant.
- c) **Annual Parish Meeting:** It was agreed that this had been well attended and that the format with the guest speaker following the 'formal' reports (Chair and Finance) had worked well and should be repeated. The use of social media by Cllr Rogerson to publicise the event was welcomed.
- d) **B4RN:** Following discussion in March, Mr Simon Doddrell spoke to a completed application form to Levens Charity and a revised request for funding support. The request is for the sum of £750 to be drawn against as required. Councillors were pleased to note continued progress with the project and associated fund raising efforts above the sums already allocated by the Parish Council. **Resolved:** To approve a grant of up to £750 from Levens Charity to be paid on request.

**147/16: Correspondence**

Members noted the correspondence received as detailed on the schedule circulated previously by the Clerk and discussed the following:

- a) In relation to the letter from NALC/CALC asking all Councils to continue to be prudent in their spending and precept bids, Councillors asked why SLDC figures showed and apparent increase of 8% in the Levens precept for 2017-18, which did not tally with the figure requested. Cllr Rawlinson undertook to explore this and the Clerk agreed to write for clarity.

**148/16 Future agenda items:**

- Woodland and Maintenance Management Plans
- Levens Village Traffic Management

**149/16 Date of next meetings:**

- Annual General Meeting: Tuesday 9 May, 2017

**The Meeting closed at 9.19 p.m.**

Signed ..... (Chairman)                      Date