

# Levens Parish Council

## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 November 2014 in the Methodist Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs R.Atfield (Chairman), H.Burrow, C.Hammond, D.Martin, R.Mason, J.Thacker, and P.Davidson (clerk) + County Cllr J.Bland + PCSO M.Hutchinson + 4 members of the public

### 163/14 Apologies for absence

Cllr S.Bagot

### 164/14 Declarations of interest

None

### 165/14 Minutes

It was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the council held on 14 October 2014, as a true record.

### 166/14 Levens Community Project

The Chairman advised members of the public that an extraordinary meeting of the parish council had been called for 25 November, specifically to provide a briefing to the community on the plans and status of the Levens Community Project. In view of this, the Levens Community Project was not an agenda item for the current meeting.

### 167/14 Public Participation

- Levens Playing Fields (LPF): representatives from LPF explained that funding is extremely tight, with no spare funds to do anything other than the minimum to keep the facilities open. They also stated that insurance costs were going up and the play equipment was becoming increasingly dated. Councillors thanked the LPF representatives for their input, which they took into consideration in their budget discussion.
- Community Resilience Conference: a member of the public reported that he had attended a Community Resilience conference. He felt that the conference had been a useful event, and highlighted:
  - Cumbria Community Messaging service, a free service providing up-to-date information on community issues (see [www.cumbriacommunitymessaging.co.uk](http://www.cumbriacommunitymessaging.co.uk)).
  - Community emergency planning advice.

### 168/14 Reports

#### a) Police

A public consultation is underway, concluding this Friday, into future options for policing in Cumbria. The driver was the need to find substantial cost savings.

Summary of PCSO Hutchinson's report:

- Crime within the area remains low. Thefts continue to be opportunistic, especially from outbuildings.
- There has been a recent spate of break-in's around the Gateback, Crooklands and Milnthorpe areas.
- Two crimes in the parish: theft of a works vehicle and a money fraud scam. Regarding the scam, PCSO Hutchinson reminded members of the public never to divulge personal details over the phone.

#### b) Relevant matters from District and County Councillors

Cllr Bland reported that he had acknowledged the poor state of the road surface at the top of Hutton Lane and had talked to Highways, who had agreed to add this job to their list.

Cllr Bland reinforced the message from PCSO Hutchinson about the importance of the public consultation underway into the future of policing in Cumbria. He urged the Parish Council to respond to the consultation and to support the position that PCSO's should be retained.

- c) Report on the Internal Drainage Board meeting held on 21 October  
Cllr Martin reported that Veronica Waller had been appointed as project manager. Consultants have been appointed to work on the business case, and they are due to report in February. The area involved is mainly farmland. Cllr Bland added that he expected the levy to be approximately £10 per household.
- d) Report on the Highways meeting held on 22 October reviewing A590 traffic management  
Cllr Burrow reported from the meeting, that Jonathan Reade of Highways was well aware of the challenging nature of the A590. Mr Reade considered that there was potentially sufficient evidence of a need for a roundabout. Electronic signage was due to be installed in 2015. Options are being assessed for the Force Lane exit, including improved signage and the possible construction of a new road to join onto the A6.

#### 169/14 Councillor Vacancy for co-option

Councillors had interviewed both candidates. It was **resolved** to co-opt Sylvia Roberts onto the Council.

#### 170/14 Planning Applications

##### a) New Planning Applications

No new applications this month.

##### b) To note Planning Applications determined since last meeting

**SL/2014/0812:** Hare & Hounds Inn, Lowgate, Levens. Variation of Condition 2 attached to planning application SL/2014/0136. Approved.

**SL/2014/0881:** Greengate Cottage, Levens. Alterations and extension to garage. Approved.

**SL/2014/0822:** Greengate, Levens. Outline planning application for residential development of up to 50 dwellings. Approved.

##### c) To note Planning Applications still outstanding

**SL/2014/0370:** Change of use, extension, refurbishment and partial demolition of former carpet showroom and site to form nine self-contained apartments.

The clerk reported that he had contacted SLDC to enquire the status of this application but had received no reply.

**SL/2014/0705:** Applegarth, Levens. Single storey extension and 1<sup>st</sup> floor extension

**SL/2014/0797:** 29 Greengate, Levens. Extension and addition of dormers.

#### 171/14 Offer from Mr.Bannister of purchase of land

It was **resolved** to use the services of Michael Hodgson estate agents, to act on the Council's behalf in the negotiation of the sale of this piece of land. The clerk will write to Michael Hodgson accordingly. Cllr Mason agreed to discuss with the legal adviser at Milne Moser, the estimated legal costs involved in this sale.

#### 172/14 Finance

##### a) Grants and Donations

It was **resolved** to donate £30 to Royal British Legion for a wreath

It was **resolved** to provide a grant of £1000 to Levens Playing Fields, as this year's contribution towards the maintenance and upkeep of this important village facility.

##### b) Budget

Councillors reviewed the draft budget presented by the clerk. It was agreed that the budget for next year and the level of precept, would be finalised at the January meeting.

##### c) Receipts

- Homes & Communities Agency: Levens Community Project grant £26019.00

##### d) Payments

It was **resolved** to authorise the following payments:

- Clerk's salary & expenses: Aug + Sept + Oct £1387.33

## 173/14 Open actions not covered elsewhere on the agenda

a) Closure of gate

The clerk had drafted a letter and councillors agreed that this should now be sent out to the residents of the private road.

b) Trees overhanging Beathwaite Gardens

The clerk and Chairman considered that the trees had now been cut back. Other councillors will check.

Cllr Burrow asked the clerk to check back at the history of the council's request for Mr Hutchinson to cut back a yew tree, as nothing had resulted from this request.

c) Twinning

The clerk reported that he had received some responses to the twinning poster, all positive about the idea of twinning, but with no one putting themselves forward to volunteer to get involved. The clerk was asked to contact Mr Foxwell at the school.

d) Woodland management

Cllr Mason to arrange for Luke Steer to make an assessment of the council's woodland. This is entirely separate from the Levens Community Project tree survey.

e) Village maintenance tasks

Completed. Invoice awaited. Cllr Thacker was asked to document the list of village maintenance tasks.

## 174/14 Correspondence

The Chairman noted the community spirited work which Alan Thomson – who is 92 years old – had done recently, in tidying up the recycling area. The clerk was asked to send a letter of thanks to Mr Thomson on behalf of the Parish Council.

## 175/14 Date of next meetings

- an extraordinary meeting of the council is planned for 25 November 7.30pm in the Methodist church, to provide a briefing to the community on the Levens Community Project.
- a second extraordinary meeting to be held on 9 December, to transact business on the Levens Community project.
- next ordinary meeting of the parish council is on 13 January 2015.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date