

Levens Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12 May 2015 in the Methodist Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs R.Atfield, S.Bagot, H.Burrow, C.Hammond, D.Martin, R.Mason, S.Roberts, J.Thacker, County Cllr J.Bland, Dist. Cllr A.Rawlinson, P.Davidson (clerk) + 4 members of the public

1/15 Election of Chairman for council year 2014/15

It was **resolved** unanimously that Cllr R.Atfield be elected Chairman for council year 2015/16.

2/15 Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Upon election, the Chairman signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3/15 Appointment of Vice Chairman for council year 2015/16

It was **resolved** unanimously that Cllr D.Martin be appointed Vice Chairman for council year 2015/16.

4/15 Apologies for absence: none

5/15 Declarations of interest: none

6/15 Minutes

It was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 14 April 2015 as a true record.

7/15 Appointment of representatives

It was **resolved** that the following representatives be appointed:

- a) **Highwayman:** Cllr R.Atfield. It was noted that Staveley Parish Council have access to a Highways Area Steward. County Cllr Bland will make efforts to allocate a Highways Area Steward for Levens.
- b) **Village Institute:** Cllr S.Bagot
- c) **Levens Playing Fields:** C.Hammond
- d) **Woodlands Officer:** Cllr J.Thacker
- e) **Levens Charity Sub-committee:** Cllrs H.Burrow, S.Bagot & R.Mason
- f) **Footpath officer:** Cllr J.Thacker
- g) **Land registration:** Cllr R.Mason
- h) **CALC:** Cllr R.Atfield
- i) **LAP:** C.Hammond
- j) **Allotments:** Cllrs H.Burrow, R.Mason and S.Roberts
- k) **Maintenance sub-committee:** Cllrs D.Martin & J.Thacker

8/15 Public Participation

- **Levens Community Project:** Mr C.Turner noted that detailed costings for the building of the village hall and Institute were not yet available. In this context, Mr Turner asked for clarification of the strategy for the sale of the plots of land at Cotes. In particular, he wished to understand whether it was the Council's intention to sell only sufficient plots to provide the capital required for the building of the village and Institute flats. Cllr Mason responded by saying that it was the Council's intention to undertake the sale of both Sizergh Fell Quarry and the plots at Cotes through formal tender. It was anticipated that, by that stage, the Council would have obtained detailed costings for the village hall and Institute flats and would therefore be in a position to make an informed decision on the need or otherwise to sell all three plots at Cotes.

Mr Turner offered his support to the Parish Council in the management of a business plan for the project. Councillors thanked Mr Turner for his offer of support.

- Defibrillator: Mr J.Watson advised that he was procuring a Public Access Defibrillator for the Institute and that Sue Cox had agreed to provide training. Councillors expressed their thanks to Mr Watson for this public-spirited gesture.

9/15 Reports

a) **Police**: none

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

District Cllr Rawlinson gave a report on the planning application relating to the old carpet shop. She advised that the planning application had been refused, and that she and SLDC were continuing to liaise with the owner.

District Cllr Rawlinson reported that, at the end of the 2013/14 financial year, she had allocated £1000 from her member's allowance to Levens. She now wished to confirm with the Parish Council how this money should be spent. The clerk advised that, as far as he was aware, this money had not been received. The clerk will check the bank records. On the assumption that this money is available, the Parish Council advised Cllr Rawlinson that it would wish to allocate this funding to the construction of a new website for the village. Cllr Rawlinson was asked to confirm that this was a legitimate use for the funds.

10/15 Planning Applications

a) **New Planning Applications**

SL/2015/0358: Brettagh Holt. Alterations and extensions to former residential institution: revised scheme SL/2014/0574. It was **resolved** that the Council had no objections to this application.

b) **Planning Applications determined since last meeting**

SL/2015/0087: Bridge End, Levens. Installation of underground package treatment plant with steel kiosk above to handle domestic sewage from operational depot. Approved.

c) **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.

SL/2015/0280: Bridlecroft, Levens. Erection of stable building, menage and access.

11/15 Levens Community Project (LCP)

It was noted that all of the Parish Council's LCP planning applications had been approved.

It was also noted that the Parish Council's grant application for funding of the Business Plan had been approved, with an award of £1600.

Next steps:

- S106: this is still awaited from SLDC. It was agreed that a solicitor should be engaged, to draw up the S106 agreement.
- Damson Design: the Council are awaiting details from Tony Hills of the next stages of the plan, including timescales and costs.
- Business Plan: with grant funding secured, it was **resolved** to instruct Wingspan to draw up the business plan. The clerk was asked to check that the grant funding had been received.
- Further grant funding: it was agreed that the Project Working Group should be tasked to seek out further opportunities for grant funding. Cllr Mason will call a meeting of the working group.
- Appointment of solicitor and estate agent: it was agreed that Cllr Mason would seek quotes from solicitors to act on the Council's behalf in the sale of the plots of land and to provide advice on the best way forwards for the village charities. The previously obtained quotes from estate agents would also be reviewed.
- Independent financial advice: it was agreed that Cllr Mason would seek quotes for independent financial advice for the project.
- Environmental survey at Sizergh: a quotation had been received from e3p (via Damson Design) for the environmental survey of Sizergh Fell Quarry. This work is required to be carried out as part of Phase 2 of the project, but was considered by councillors to be urgent, in view of the possible contaminants contained within the quarry. It was **resolved** to authorise e3p to undertake the survey at the earliest possible opportunity.

12/15 Recruitment of new clerk

The Chairman advised that one application had been received to date.

13/15 Finance

a) **Internal Audit:** the clerk advised that the internal audit had been completed, with no issues identified.

b) Annual Return

It was **resolved** that the Annual Accounts for 2014/15 be approved and that the Chairman be authorised to sign Section 1 of the Annual Return. Council considered Section 2 of the Annual Return and it was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign Section 2.

c) Receipts

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| • SLDC: precept | £13763.92 |
| • Rents | £240.00 |

d) Payments

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

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| • Mr A.Hartley: internal audit fee | £50.00 |
| • Levens Institute: room hire | £11.00 |
| • CALC: annual subscription | £214.00 |
| • Clerk's salary & expenses: April + May | £620.97 |
| • Clerk's Levens Charity allowance: April/May/June | £125.00 |
| • SLDC: to correct overpayment by SLDC of precept | £1436.53 |

14/15 Open actions not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- Land adjacent to Wayside Cottage: the clerk advised that a response was awaited from Mrs Mallinson.
- Offer from Mr Bannister of purchase of land: Michael Hodgson Estate Agents had advised the Council that an offer for the land has been made. Council **resolved** to accept this offer, although the clerk was asked to seek clarity on whether registration of the land was a prerequisite.
- Twining: the clerk reported that Mr & Mrs Barton are visiting French Levens in May. A number of small items had been gathered together, representing our village, which Mr & Mrs Barton were taking with them to present to the clerk/mayor of French Levens.
- Woodland management: Cllr Mason reported that he had been in contact with Cumbria Woodland, who were offering free advice.
- Levens Charity grant application from Revd.Crossley: the Trustees Committee reported that Revd Crossley had obtained additional quotations for the work on the church wall. The lowest quotation was for £13463, which included a £5000 contingency. Trustees considered it unreasonable to include the contingency in any grant award. Therefore, on the basis that the church had requested a grant covering 75% of the costs, the Trustees Committee recommended that a grant of £6400 should be awarded. Council **resolved** to endorse this recommendation.
- Village website: the clerk reported that he had obtained a quote from Treble3 of Milnthorpe, which was similar in value to the quotation received from Designworks. Councillors agreed that the quote from Treble3 was more comprehensive and it was therefore **resolved** to place the contract with Treble3. It was noted that funding should be available from District Cllr Rawlinson's member's allowance to cover the costs of this project (see **9/15** above).
- "No cold calling" signs: the clerk reported that he had checked on the Trading Standards website and "no cold calling" stickers were available at minimal cost. The clerk was asked to order 20 stickers.
- Alternative site for allotments: Cllr Mason reported that Richard Bagot had offered the kitchen garden site as allotment land. This piece of land would be ideal for allotments. An initial meeting had been held with residents and existing allotment holders, to explore interest in the proposal. This meeting had been very successful, with much interest shown in the proposition.

15/15 Correspondence

The clerk reported that two FOI requests had been received from Mr Andrew Taylor, asking for various information, relating largely to Sizergh Fell Quarry. The clerk read out these requests to the meeting and summarised the responses provided.

The clerk also advised that two emails had been received from residents, expressing concern at the presence of asbestos in Sizergh Fell Quarry. The clerk was asked to respond to these emails, outlining the action the Council had already taken, in authorising an environmental survey to be undertaken urgently, and in restricting access to the quarry.

16/15 Future agenda items

- Nelson Square: removal of stones
- Items for the newsletter
- Review of village maintenance tasks
- District Cllr Rawlinson’s member’s allowance –confirmation of receipt of funds and allocation to village website.

17/15 Meetings dates for council year 2014/15

Council **resolved** that council meetings for 2014/15 should be held as follows:

2015	2016
9 June	12 January
7 July	9 February
8 September	8 March
13 October	15 March: Annual Parish Meeting
10 November	12 April
	10 May: Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

All meetings will be held in the Methodist meeting room, apart from the Annual Parish Meeting which will be held in the Village Institute. All meetings begin at 7.30pm.

Signed (Chairman)

Date