

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14 February 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, County Cllr. J. Bland, M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

107/16 Apologies for absence: None

108/16 Declarations of interest: None

109/16 Minutes

It was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 10 January 2017, as a true record.

110/16: Public Participation:

- a) Simon Doddrell introduced himself as Chair of the village B4RN initiative, an update on which is reported at Minute 119/16(a).

111/16: Reports:

a) Reports from Meetings:

- i. Mr Read reported that the Levens Village Institute AGM had been held on 6 February. The Minutes would be circulated, but other than a very small annual operating loss of £60, there were no other items of significance to report.

- b) **Police:** The Clerk reported that PCSO Park had phoned to report no incidents in Levens in the previous month.

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

- i. The Old Carpet Shop: AR has met with Simon Fawcett and Mr Bowker. The property will be advertised in the local press and a local keyholder is available to provide access to interested parties. Councillors repeated their ongoing concerns with the situation. AR confirmed that SLDC have received the Council's letter requesting that the appropriate Planning Officer contacts the Clerk to explore options and that Mr Fawcett is making a site visit on 15 February.
- ii. Story Homes: AR was pleased to report that in approving the planning application, Members of the Planning Committee had indicated that Story Homes should make a contribution to the Parish Council towards the new village hall. Cllr Mason confirmed that they had sent a funding / sponsorship application form and that a response was being prepared using CIL as a basis for the approach.
- iii. The possibility of a footpath along Levens Lane is still under active consideration.
- iv. It was confirmed that the £330 from AR's Member Budget would be allocated to support B4RN.

d) County Councillor: Cllrs. welcomed Cllr. Bland (JB) back after his recent operation.

- i. He confirmed the 18 month extension to the Notice period up to end of December 2020 before the Environment Agency stops operating the four land drainage pumping stations serving the Lyth Valley.
- ii. He is still talking to Stagecoach about securing a bus service to the village, but the requirement for a turning circle needs to be resolved.
- iii. JB confirmed that Highways are aware of the need to renew the white lines at the A6/A590 road and junctions at bottom of Levens Lane.

112/16: Finance:

- a) **Receipts:** £118.46 Wayleave from Electricity Northwest was noted.
- b) **Payments Approved:**
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| i. M R Curry: Salary & expenses (January) | £ 408.80 |
| ii. Parish On-Line Subscription | £ 57.60 |
| iii. R Atfield: reimbursement of costs of B4RN leaflet | £ 227.04 |
- c) **Financial Report:**
- Bank Reconciliation: The Clerk reported a successful reconciliation as at 31 January 2017.
 - Budget and Forecast Out-turn: The Clerk reported that there were no significant variances. Cllrs Burrow and Mason agreed to work with the Clerk to produce a full financial account for the Levens Community Project.
 - Submission of the Precept claim in the sum of £12,753.52 was noted.
- d) **Revised Financial Regulations: Resolved:** Cllrs. Atfield and Rogerson and the Clerk will consider clauses in the proposed Regulations and return to Council with recommendations.

113/16: Levens Community Project

- a) **Sale of Plots at Sizergh Fell Quarry and Cotes:** Cllr Mason reported that further to the claim to part of Sizergh Fell Quarry by the Hornyold-Strickland's of Sizergh Castle, the Parish Council has taken legal and planning advice. In addition to the preparation of an alternative layout of the development on the site, new information that has come to light on the legal position and the Parish Council solicitor has advised that an objection to the claim should be lodged with the Land Registry. **Resolved:** The Clerk to instruct the solicitor to lodge an objection to the amendment of the Register with the Land Registry. The Council was pleased to endorse Cllr Mason's thanks to Mr Read for his voluntary and informal research into circumstances surrounding the Sizergh Fell quarry issue. Cllr Mason also reported that legal advice had been taken in respect of a separate claim of access rights across the quarry which had been rejected as a result. The position at Cotes is as before that the Council will not sell until it has a satisfactory offer for the Sizergh Fell site and as a result no bids are currently under consideration.
- b) **Section 106 Agreement:** The Clerk summarised SLDCs response to the complaint about the S106 process which he had circulated. Councillors agreed that SLDC's interpretation was not consistent with its record of events, but acknowledged that pursuit of the case would involve legal involvement and potentially significant costs. It reluctantly agreed not to pursue further. Mr Read reported that the private complaint to the Ombudsman had not been accepted. **Resolved** that the Clerk should advise SLDC of significant discrepancies between SLDCs version of events and the Council's own record and that it did not therefore accept SLDCs response as satisfactory.
- c) **Allotments:** Having previously received the draft Agreement, Councillors offered no further amendments and, subject to confirmation of a point about the movement of rent in relation to the number of allotments occupied, which could be clarified by an exchange of letters, it was **Resolved:**
- That Cllrs Mason and Burrow should sign the Agreement on behalf of the Council;
 - The Clerk will circulate the Agreement between the Parish Council and individual allotment holders for Councillors to agree;

iii. Cllrs Mason and Burrow will organise a pre-season meeting of allotment holders to confirm arrangements and to encourage them to form a group for the day to day management of the site.

d) **Project Working Group and any other Updates:** Cllr Mason reported that the value of the land at Cotes could be enhanced by the removal of trees and scrub. Up to 10cu.metres could be removed without the need for a felling licence between now and early April. It was **Resolved** that, subject to evidence of adequate public liability insurance and qualifications, the timber could be felled, removed and retained by a suitable operative.

114/16: Planning Applications

a) **New Planning Applications**

SL/2017/0026 - Wedgewood, Brigsteer Road: Dormer Window – **Resolved:** No objection.

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

- i. SL/2016/0606 - Frosthwaite Farm, Sizergh: Two dwellings – Refusal noted
- ii. SL/2016/0888 – Land to the east of Greengate: Story Homes – approval noted. It was also noted however that the submitted plans were different from those put before the Parish Council and agreed that the Clerk should procure a full set of plans as agreed by SLDC. Councillors also noted the efforts of Sylvia Jackson to seek an amendment of the plans in relation to the proximity of 5-bed houses to her property.

c) **To consider a Street Naming Consultation in relation to the Greengate**

Development: Councillors considered SLDCs request for comment on street names proposed by Story Homes. After careful consideration and mindful of the local name for the area to be developed together with its historic and geographic connections, Councillors unanimously **Resolved** to strongly recommend the name Hying Meadow as its preferred name for the site.

115/16: Levens Village Traffic Management: Councillors welcomed Darren Wilson who expressed his concerns for the safety of residents and children as a result of traffic movement and speed around the village. He also referred to the speed of cyclists and the likely increase in traffic when the Greengate development is complete. He explained that he had suggested a 20s Plenty initiative, but recognised that this might not be the only solution to the issues. He was aware that Councillors had discussed this subject for several months, particularly in relation to safety around the school. After further discussion, including observations on driver behaviour and the merits of flashing lights, it was suggested that a traffic management working group might be an appropriate way forward. Mr Wilson confirmed his willingness to be involved (work permitting) and Cllr Bland confirmed that he would support the group. It was hoped that representatives of the school and police would engage and Cllr Rogerson undertook to contact Paul Holdsworth who has considerable experience in these matters. Cllr Hargraves volunteered to represent the Parish Council. It was **Resolved** to invite interested parties to a public meeting at a time and date to be confirmed to explore interest in setting up such a group. Also to explore the opportunity to apply to the Police Commissioner for funding for this project.

116/16: Parish Newsletter: **Resolved** to include Chair's Report and articles on B4RN, possible Traffic Management Group, Levens Community Project, the Annual Parish Meeting and the Levens Webteam request for support. The Newsletter will be printed and ready for distribution by 22 February.

117/16: Trees at Underhill: The Clerk reported that as a result of concerns expressed by two residents he had contacted Electricity Northwest but had not yet received a reply. Other trees were deemed to be in need of management, but safe, and it was agreed to confirm the current availability of grant funding from the Forestry Commission.

118/16: Annual Parish Meeting: Arrangements for the meeting on 21 March in the Levens Village Institute commencing at 7.30 were confirmed, including a talk from the Environment Agency and an update from B4RN. Cllr Bagot volunteered to organise refreshments. Posters will be prepared and Cllr Rogerson will promote the event on the Village Facebook page.

119/16: Open Actions not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda:

- a) **B4RN:** Simon Doddrell, Chair of the local B4RN group, gave a detailed update on progress. Headlines are that fundraising is going well, though efforts continue to increase the number of subscribers. Identification of the best route into the village will focus on the crossing the river and the A590. The favoured site for the cabinet is on the Playing Fields which has the approval of the Committee, but permission from Dallam Tower Estate will be required. It is disappointing that Story Homes have not committed to take the infrastructure, but Mr Doddrell will write to the Chief Executive to explore this further. The value of the subscription to Getmapping was noted. The Parish Council recorded its appreciation to Mr Doddrell for his efforts and those of his group in pushing this forward.
- b) **Heversham School:** Cllr Bagot reported that the consultation on the future of the school concludes on 17 February. A decision is therefore awaited on whether the Heversham catchment will be focused on Levens School or split between Levens and Milnthorpe.
- c) **Street Lighting:** Cllr Mason reported that a recent query over ownership of pole 224 in a recent audit had now been resolved.
- d) **Village Website:** Cllr Burrow highlighted the recent call for new volunteers to join the Webteam and Cllr Rogerson volunteered to represent the Parish Council on the Team.

120/16: Correspondence: Other than that discussed on the Agenda, the only other correspondence of note was in relation to footpath maintenance in the area now included in the National Park which Councillors noted.

121/16: Date of Next Meeting:

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council is on 14 March 2017
The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 21 March 2017

The Meeting closed at 9.29 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date.....