

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10 January 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, J. Thacker, M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

94/16 Apologies for absence: Cllr. D Rogerson, District Cllr. A. Rawlinson, County Cllr. J. Bland, PCSO Park

95/16 Declarations of interest: Cllr. Bagot declared an interest in planning application SL/2016/1144 & 1160: Levens Hall – Erection of café building

96/16 Minutes: Resolved that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 29 November 2016, as a true record.

97/16: Public Participation:

- a) Mr J Watson reported that the B4RN leaflet had been printed at a cost of £220 and asked the Council to settle the invoice as previously proposed. The comment was noted for consideration at Agenda Item 7.
- b) Mr Watson reported that having failed to get a satisfactory response to his complaint about the S106 process it was now intended to refer the matter to the Ombudsman. The comment was noted for consideration at Agenda Item 8.
- c) Mr Andrew Taylor was pleased to note that grit had been provided on the hill behind the Strickland Arms – credit to Highways Department
- d) Mr Taylor also asked if further detail could be given on the boundary issue at Sizergh Fell Quarry. The comment was noted for consideration at Agenda Item 8.

98/16: Reports:

- a) **Reports from Councillors on any meetings attended not otherwise on this Agenda:**
None
- b) **Police:**
 - i. On behalf of PCSO Park, the Clerk reported that there had been three incidents of theft from vehicles (two on Greengate and one at Hying Court) and one incident of vehicle interference at Hying Court. All had taken place on the night of the 23 December and were obviously linked. Enquiries are ongoing.
 - ii. Cllr. Holmes referred to the warning in Allan Steward's village circular for people to guard against cold calling and rogue traders. For the avoidance of doubt the advice is to call the police on 101 with the registration numbers of any vehicles if possible and the matter will be forwarded on to CCC Trading Standards.
- c) **District Councillor:** On behalf of Cllr Rawlinson (AR) the Clerk reported that:
 - i. AR was continuing to explore possibilities for a footpath along Levens Lane which SLDC are treating as a Locally Important Project with funding potential. This led to discussion about the pros and cons of the initiative. **Resolved** to await details of a tangible proposal before taking a view on the scheme.
 - ii. There had been no progress with the sale of the Old Carpet Shop and Councillors voiced their disappointment at the lack of progress. **Resolved** that the Clerk should now send a pre-prepared letter to SLDC requiring their formal re-engagement with the issue.

iii. AR wanted to allocate her Member Budget Allowance. **Resolved** to advise her that B4RN was proposed as the appropriate recipient for support.

d) **County Councillor:** No report and Councillors expressed their best wishes to Cllr Bland for a speedy recovery.

99/16: Finance:

a) Receipts

i. Cumbria County Council Allotment Grant received 08/11/16 £ 500.00

b) Payments Approved:

i. M R Curry: Salary & expenses (November / December) £ 507.98
ii. HMRC: Clerks PAYE and NI (November / December) £ 127.00
iii. CALC: Clerks Induction (£55); Finance (£35) and Forum (£5) £ 95.00
iv. R M Mason, Heaves Farm: Allotment Costs £ 309.79
v. Levens Village Hall: Room Hire for B4RN inaugural meeting £ 11.00

c) Financial Report:

i. Councillors noted the satisfactory bank reconciliation at 30 December 2016
ii. Councillors noted a satisfactory budget out-turn at 30 December and forecast out-turn for the financial year 2016-17
iii. Councillors considered and approved a draft budget for 2017-18 including agreement to raise woodland management costs to £1000 in anticipation of the development of a woodland management plan.
iv. On the basis of figures approved, it was **resolved** to require a Precept of £12,753.52 for 2017/18

d) **Revised Financial Regulations:** The Clerk reported that it had not been possible to convene a meeting to consider clauses in the proposed Regulations. This would be arranged as soon as possible after Cllr. Rogerson's return from holiday.

100/16: Levens and Savin Brow Charities

a) To receive the Annual Report on Levens and Savin Brow Quarry Charities

The Clerk reported that he had presented the Annual Report to year ending 31 March 2016 to the appointed Trustees at a meeting in the evening. It was noted that the total assets of Levens Charity had amounted to £109,310.90 with interest accrual of £17,017. The assets of Savin Brow Quarry Charity stood at £2,326.09. **Resolved:** that the Trustees accept the Report, which is available for inspection on file.

b) **To approve payment of £500 towards publication of 'The Ague' by Levens Local History Group: Resolved** to approve payment from Levens Charity as previously agreed in principle (Minute 190/15 April 2016).

101/16: Levens Community Project

a) **Section 106 Agreement:** The Clerk reported on a letter (01/12/16) received from SLDC's Solicitor concluding that there was no unreasonable delay in finalising the S.106 Agreement caused by SLDC. Councillors noted that it was the intention of Messrs

Watson and Read to engage the Ombudsman in this matter. **Resolved:** The Clerk to circulate an electronic version to Councillors and Mr Watson for further consideration.

- b) **Sale of Plots at Sizergh Fell Quarry and Cotes:** Cllr. Mason confirmed that the Land Registry had issued a notice of proposed alteration of the register to reflect a claim by the Strickland family of Sizergh Castle. This relates to part of Sizergh Fell Quarry including the quarry face and ground adjacent to it. Tony Hills is considering whether a reconfiguration of the development plan can be achieved without serious compromise to the overall financial viability of the Community Project. If the Council wish to challenge the claim, notice must be given to the Land Registry by 12noon on 27 January. Given the position at Sizergh Fell Quarry, Cllr Mason concluded that the position at Cotes remains that the Council should not sell until it has an offer for the primary site at SFQ and as a result no bids are currently under consideration. **Resolved:** to convene a Parish Council Working Group to consider updates when further information on legal and development options are available.
- c) **Tripartite / Joint Venture Agreement:** Remains on hold pending clarification of other issues.
- d) **Allotments: Resolved:** that the Allotment Agreement with Levens Hall be agreed subject to clarification that any ratchet-up in rent for additional plots will not create a new baseline should the number subsequently decrease, subject to an agreed minimum of nine.
- e) **Project Working Group:** There were no further updates

102/16: Planning Applications

- a) **New Planning Applications**
SL/2016/1144 and 1160: Levens Hall for the erection of a new café. Cllr Bagot left the meeting during discussion of this item. **Resolved:** no objection
- b) **To note Planning Applications determined since last meeting:**
SL/2016/0923: Park Head, Force Lane. Decision to grant consent noted.
- c) **To note planning applications still to be determined:**
SL/2016/0888: Land to the east of Greengate, Levens: Story Homes. The Clerk referred Councillors to SLDCs response (email of 6 January 2017) to the seven concerns raised in a letter dated 14 November (Minute 75/16/c). Councillors noted the developer's stated reluctance to amend the scheme, particularly in relation to the layout and increase in the number of 5-bed houses, with negative impact on existing properties. It was considered that a number of other concerns had not been satisfactorily addressed. **Resolved:** that as a result of the unsatisfactory response from the developers to concerns raised, the Clerk should write to Development Management to confirm the Council's **objection** to the scheme.

103/16: Open Actions Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda:

- a) **B4RN:** Cllr Holmes reported on the formation of a local committee to work with B4RN. Leaflets were due back from the printers within the week for delivery to every house in the Parish. **Resolved:** that Levens Charity would meet the costs of this print run. Mr Watson provided additional information on the options and costs of the initiative.

b) Levens Village Traffic Management: The Clerk reported that, whilst appreciating the proposal, the School Governors had concluded that Cllr Bland's scheme for a drop-off point on the playing fields would not solve their concerns. It was however noted that Cllr Bland had offered funding for the installation of flashing lights for the school and it was agreed to follow this up as well as asking the school if there was any particular solution that they would like to promote. Councillors acknowledged that, in addition to the school, this was a wider and complex village issue which might require a range of interests to come together to discuss. **Resolved** to pursue current initiatives and keep the item under review.

104/16: Correspondence

In addition to items reported during the meeting, the Clerk drew attention to the following correspondence received:

- a) Allan Steward's email circular which noted death of Brian Gray. Councillors expressed their sadness and sympathies to the family at this news.
- b) Levens payphone is not currently identified as a candidate for removal
- c) Buckingham Palace Garden Parties – agreed to consider making a nomination
- d) Early notice of a proposal for a nationwide beacon tribute to mark the centenary of the end of WW1 planned for 11 November 2018.

105/16 Future agenda items:

- Revised Financial Regulations
- Sale of plots
- B4RN
- Village Traffic Management
- Newsletter

106/16 Date of next meetings:

- Next Ordinary Meeting: Tuesday 14 February, 2017

The Meeting closed at 9.38 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date