

Levens Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 09 July 2019 in the Methodist Church Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs. R Atfield (Chairman), J. Fitch, K. Holmes, D. Rogerson, R. Johnston, R. Mason, County Cllr. J Bland, M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

17/19 Apologies for Absence: Cllrs. Bagot and Burrow.

18/19 Declarations of interest: None tendered.

19/19 Minutes: Resolved that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 11 June 2019 as a true record.

20/19 Public Participation: Mr S. Read representing Levens Institute requested and received permission to update Councillors on matters relating to the Section 106 Agreement and the Tripartite Agreement at Agenda Items 7(b) and (e).

21/19 Reports

a) From Councillors attending meetings:

- i. Cllr. Holmes reported on the public drop-in session held by Highways England (HE) on 27 June at the Gilpin Bridge Inn when proposals for possible improvements to the eastern section of the A590 had been displayed. It had been a successful event with 200 people attending and HE are now reviewing comments. HE is to attend a meeting of the Joint Working Party on 28 August at which Cllrs Holmes and Burrow will be present.
- ii. Cllr. Atfield reported his attendance at an informative CALC Summer Conference held at Penrith on 22 June. In addition to speakers, Cllr Atfield had attended very useful break-out sessions on Chairmanship and Village Halls.

b) Police: PCSO Jayne Park was welcomed. She reported on a new crime data resource called SAFE, but as this is still in development she had not been able to bring records to the meeting. She did however refer to an online resource called Crime Mapper which can be accessed online. She referred to a spike in thefts of quad bikes and that she was monitoring the behaviour of local juveniles. Councillors expressed concern about safety relating to organised time-trials for cyclists on the A590. Jayne explained that the events are legitimate and that the Police do not generally object except to ensure that events are not held on inappropriate days such as bank holidays. Events must comply with road regulations and Marshals cannot interfere with traffic flow. Apart from safety, there was concern about the quantity of parking on Levens Lane on event days. Jayne advised the Parish Council to write to the National Governing Body for Cycling Time Trials with any concerns.

c) District Councillor: Cllr. Holmes had nothing to add to his report on the A590 meeting.

d) County Councillor: Cllr. Bland had nothing further to add on road or other matters.

22/19 Finance

a) Receipts: The following receipts for the period 01 May – 30 June were noted:

i. 06/05/19 Tenant – car-parking	£	20.00
ii. 23/05/19: Tenants – land rents 2x£25		50.00
iii. 11/06/19: Tenant – car-parking		80.00
iv. 14/06/19: Community Project – refund of wages paid to Clerk		358.00

b) Payments

The following payments were **authorised**:

i. M R Curry: (Salary and Expenses June	£	650.71
ii. HMRC: PAYE/NI Months 1-3		487.17
iii. SLDC: Invoice for street lighting (covered by Precept)		1,214.36
iv. Printing Plus – June Newsletter		149.86
v. Treble3: Website Hosting Costs		144.00

c) Financial Report

- i. Bank Reconciliation 30 June 2019: The reconciled balance of £28,170.73p was noted.
- ii. General Report on Funds: The Clerk reminded Members that the reconciled balance included ring-fenced funds totalling £15,586. £11,234 of this is a Cumbria County Council capital fund for regional projects (not necessarily Levens) and £3,000 for woodland management, particularly a tree-health and safety inspection. The underlying PC account therefore stands at £12,584, though the Community Project owes it £7,200.
- iii. The Clerk confirmed that all necessary financial records had been submitted to the external auditor and undertook to initiate the agreed audit of Charity accounts.

23/19 Levens Community Project: Cllr. Mason gave the following report:

- a) **Levens Community Project Committee:** The first meeting of the Committee had been held on 2 July at which he had been elected Chair and Jenny Berge Secretary. It had approved draft Terms of Reference. The Parish Council agreed to adopt these.
- b) **Sizergh Fell Quarry:**
 - i. S 106 Agreement: The PC noted with disappointment that SLDC had still not signed the new Agreement. Various parties were putting pressure on them to do so and Cllr. Holmes undertook to follow-up directly with senior Officers of the Council.
 - ii. Option to Purchase: Following the recommendation of the Project Committee, it was **Resolved** to extend the back-stop date to 23 September and the Deed of Variation was signed.
- c) **Cotes, Church Hill and Underhill:** Confirmation of approval for full planning consent was awaited, after which initial ground-works would commence as appropriate.
- d) **New Village Hall site:**
 - i. LIPs Funding: It was **Resolved** to sign the Funding Agreement for the offer of £40,000 from SLDC's LIPs fund. The Agreement was signed.
 - ii. It was **Resolved** to appoint Anna Williams of Anna Williams Associates to manage boundary and party wall matters on behalf of the Project in consultation with the owners of neighbouring properties.
- e) **Tripartite Agreement:** Cllr. Mason reported that an amended draft had been received from John Cooke acting for the Levens Institute. As a result of disappointment over its content, an informal meeting had been held with Stephen Read who had agreed that the document did not represent what was required in its current form. SR spoke to the item and confirmed that he had responded direct to John Cooke and was awaiting a reply. Following observations from Mr Read, it was **Resolved** that henceforth the document would be known as the Joint Venture Agreement.
- f) **Financial Position:** The Clerk reported that there was £4,763.83p in the Project account at 23 June and that a further £4,543.50 was in transit to the account as Capacity Grant payment for May/June. Members **approved** a payment of £1,440 to H&H for land agency fees, which would also be claimed from Capacity Grant. Re-payments due to the Parish Council were also noted. Work was in hand to prepare a bid for Infrastructure Grant from SLDC and investigations into grant from Homes England via a Housing Association continue. The Clerk confirmed that he has received a Statement of Truth for his signature from Stephen Read in respect of land at Cotes.
- g) **Project Working Group:** Cllr. Mason confirmed that there was to be a meeting of the Working Group on Tuesday 16 July to consider room plans and design amongst other matters. The Clerk is to prepare Terms of Reference for the Working Group. Cllr. Mason confirmed that he would check on progress with alterations to Mr Edmondson's car parking area via Tim Thacker.

24/19 Planning Applications:

a) Planning Applications determined since last meeting

Application No.	Address	Proposal	Applicant	Type & Status	Comments
7/2019/5386	Lord's Plain Farm LA8 8EN	New milking parlour and feed hopper	Mr D Martin	Full planning	NO OBJECTION

b) To note planning applications still to be determined

Application No.	Address	Proposal	Decision
TR/2019/0067	7 Greengate Gardens LA8 8QL	TPO – thinning and reduction of Yew	NOTED

c) To note planning applications still to be determined

SL/2019/0342	Land south of Wayside Cottage	Full planning for three houses	Levens Parish Council	Target decision date 26/06/19	NOTED
SL/2019/0343	Old allotments on Church Road	Full planning for three houses	Levens Parish Council	Target decision date 26/06/19	NOTED
SL/2019/0344	Old allotments on land at Quarry Foot	Full planning for four affordable houses	Levens Parish Council	Target decision date 26/06/19	NOTED

25/19 Water Supply Plan: Cllr. Fitch reported on long-standing issues with water supply in the village whereby pressure falls and reduces or cuts off supply. This is usually caused by high-demand activities, most recently the filling of a bowser for jetting-out drains associated with the Meadow Wood development. Filling bowzers at Levens Bridge by United Utilities is also a major contributor which causes associated traffic management problems. Cllr Bland commented that the current demand was as a result of water shortage in Ulverston but that reservoir levels were generally down such that further reductions in supply might be inevitable. It was **Resolved** that Parish Council concern should be relayed to United Utilities and that Cllr. Fitch would circulate a draft.

26/19 June Tour: Notes of the informal tour of the village in June had been circulated. It appears that Mr Edmondson would be happy for a reduction of the over-hanging cherry tree at the entrance to Greengate, though it was not agreed how this work would be done. Cllr Mason agreed to talk to Edward Johnson of Levens Estate about the wall adjacent to part of the Meadow Wood development. It was agreed to make further investigations into the AA and brown signs around Levens Bridge.

27/19 Environmental Matters: Members noted representations made by a resident at the June meeting of the Council around climate change and the loss of bio-diversity. SLDC is currently running an initiative called Climate Conversations to which the public is encouraged to contribute with ideas on how awareness can be developed. It was agreed to put information on this on the website. Locally, there was comment on the timing of verge cutting which if done too early reduces floristic quality and associated bio-diversity. Cllr Bland commented that there has to be a balance between environmental matters and road safety, but confirmed that he was to meet with a senior highways officer to discuss the timing of verge cutting to try to secure the optimum balance between the two.

28/19 Open Items Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda

- a) **Highways Matters:** Cllr. Fitch had circulated an update of his Highway Defect spreadsheet on which several tasks had been added. Some works have been done but others remained unattended and it seemed that the 4-week response time was not always being met. It was agreed to wait until the September meeting and monitor the situation then before deciding on whether representations to the County were required.
- b) **Traffic Management:** There has been no follow-up meeting of the Levens Traffic Management Group yet pending a response from Highways on the data provided from the SIDs installations. A letter from a resident with suggestions to ease matters by the playing fields has been received and will be considered. The issue of traffic priority and the lack of road markings in the Greengate area was discussed. Cllr Fitch read out a draft letter on this and it was **Resolved** that the Clerk should send this to Peter Hosking (Senior Highways Officer in Kendal) together with a plan of the area
- c) **June Newsletter:** Positive comments have been received about the most recent edition. It was noted that the print run needs to be extended to 650 to take account of increased number of households.

- d) **Christmas Decorations:** Cllrs. Rogerson and Johnson reported – the working group is due a meeting but things are moving on: the location for the tree has been confirmed near the bus shelter, with electricity supplied from the shop; an outline event programme and entertainments have been identified including school involvement and external performers. Expenditure and projected income is being monitored. A date has yet to be confirmed that doesn't clash with other events, otherwise planning is looking promising.
- e) **Maintenance Plan:** Work is continuing with some strimming on footpaths and verge maintenance where required. Some work has been done to clear the path between Lowgate and Underhill of over-hanging branches as reported by a resident at the last meeting. It was noted that the view from the bench on the footpath near Causeway End is now obscured by tree growth and agreed that this should be reduced. The damaged bench outside the shop has been repaired.
- f) **Woodland Management:** The Clerk reported that there had been no progress with the appointment of a contractor to assess the health and safety inspections associated with trees on Parish Council land. It had been agreed to meet with Mr Richard Jones at the Crossings to discuss a possible reduction in height of trees in front of his property.
- g) **Property Matters:** Cllr. Burrow was not present, but it was understood that progress with Mr Bowker remains positive. It was agreed that Cllr Atfield and the Clerk would arrange to meet Mr Stainton with regards to the Parish Council hedge on Hutton Lane.
- h) **B4RN:** Cllr. Rogerson gave a general update on continuing progress. A crowd funding initiative by B4RN has been successful. We are awaiting their confirmation of the proposed wording for an agreement between them and the Parish Council regarding the LIPs funding package.

29/19 Correspondence

The Schedule of Correspondence circulated by the Clerk was noted. Members noted:

- The letter from Stephen Read thanking the Parish Council for refurbishment work on the bench at the Institute.
- An enquiry requesting a shelter at the bus stop on Force lane. It was confirmed that the Parish Council has previously requested Highways England to consider this and that it will be included as part of HE's review of the A590.
- A letter suggesting road improvements at the playing fields referred to in 28/19(b) above.
- A letter to the Chairman concerning growth on road edges in the centre of the village. Cllr. Bland advised that there is a scheme for vegetation control in urban areas administered by SLDC and Highways, but also that the Parish Council could address the issue itself if it wished. It was **Resolved** to ask Andy Banks to attend to this matter.
- As the result of an ambulance following satnav instructions and subsequently not being able to pass along The Green to the Church Road end, it was agreed that the Clerk should write to County Highways to re-emphasise the need for a No Through Road sign at the western entrance to The Green. County Councillor Bland is aware of the situation.

30/19 Future Agenda Items

- The content of the next Newsletter

31/19 Date of the Next Meeting:

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council is on Tuesday 10 September, 2019.

The meeting closed at 9.52 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date:.....