

Levens Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Levens Institute on 20 July 2021.

Present: Cllrs. R. Atfield (Chairman), S. Bagot, J. Battye, H. Burrow, K. Holmes (and as District Cllr.), D. Rogerson, R. Mason, M. Willacy, District Cllr. B. Rendell, County Cllr. J Bland and 1 member of the public.

27/21 Apologies for Absence: M.R Curry (Clerk – on leave).

28/21 Declarations of interest: None

29/21 Minutes: Subject to an agreed amendment to Minute 23/21(a)i whereby the breakdown of Clerk's salary was in error by £1.00, it was **Resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 15 June 2021 as a true record.

30/21 Public Participation: Councillors were asked to consider matters relating to building work at 46, Greengate which was causing concern about compliance with the planning permission granted. Photographs were produced and following discussion it was **Resolved** that Cllr. Holmes should raise concerns directly with planning officers at SLDC and the Building Compliance Officer in particular to request to consideration of the issues.

31/21 Reports:

a) Reports from Councillors attending meetings: None

b) Police: No new update had been received for consideration at this meeting.

c) District Councillor: Cllr Rendell reported that a decision on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation was to be announced by the Minister shortly. He also reported that Cllr. Holmes had been appointed to the Shadow Cabinet with responsibility for Climate Action and Biodiversity.

d) County Councillor: Cllr. Bland reported that a further meeting with Levens representatives and CCC officers on proposals for a footpath down Levens Lane was to be held in mid-August.

32/21 Finance

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

i) 06/05/21: Car Park Rents (2) Totalling	60.00
ii) 08/05/21: Land Rents (2) Totalling	30.00
iii) 17/05/21: Car Park Rent	80.00
iv) 20/05/21: Allotment Rent	35.00
v) 21/05/21: Allotment Rent	17.50
vi) 17/06/21: Levens Project – refund PC VAT received by Project	54.71

Thanks were recorded to SLDC (Members Grant) and CCC (Local Projects Fund) for contributions of £250 respectively towards new Christmas lights.

b) Payments: The following payments were **Approved**:

i) M R Curry – Salary: June 2021: (PC: £196.04; Project £190.66; Charity £67.44; Mileage £6.50):	460.64
ii) HMRC: PAYE Months 1-3: Payment approved by email and paid – Ratified :	559.79
ii) SLDC Street Lighting Maintenance annual charge via Precept:	1,343.13

c) Bank Reconciliation and report on Ring-Fenced Funds: The reconciled bank balance of £27,798.47p at 30/06/21 was noted as were unrepresented cheques totalling £877.19, leaving a net balance of £26,021.28. Councillors also noted the Clerk's report that after deduction of ring-fenced funds held for others (Cumbria CC & B4RN) the underlying balance available to the Parish Council is £18,413.51. This includes £3,041.88 ring-fenced for specific Parish Council purposes (£2,000 for woodland management and £1,041.88 for the Christmas event).

d) 2020/21 Audit Arrangements: Councillors noted that the 2020-21 AGAR had been submitted to the External Auditor prior to the deadline. The Period for the Exercise of Public Rights (17-28 July) has been published on the Noticeboard and Website.

e) Banking Arrangements: The Clerk reported that a response to a recent complaint about HSBC customer service had been received but was inconclusive. Councillors agreed the Clerk's

recommendation to continue investigations into on-line banking and the use of a software package for financial management.

33/21 Governance Matters

- a) **Local Government Reorganisation:** As reported by Cllr Rendell, Councillors noted that following a consultation process, an announcement on the several proposals submitted by regional authorities was expected soon from the Secretary of State.
- b) **Parliamentary Boundary Changes:** Councillors noted the consultation on proposals for changes to local Parliamentary constituencies. It was agreed that individual Councillors would make personal representations should they wish to do so.

34/21 Levens Community Project

- a) **Levens Community Project Advisory Working Group:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July, having been circulated were noted. The following items were **Agreed:**
 - i) Cotes: That as a single sale, to include an additional strip of land, £175,000 would be acceptable for Plot 3.
 - ii) Church Hill: The valuation of £160,000 for Plot 3 was approved and agreed that the Plot be made ready for marketing.
 - iii) That additional VAT advice be sought from Simone Hurst at an agreed price of £175+VAT.
- b) **Sale of walling stone:** It was agreed that in response to an enquiry, 20 tons of walling stone could be sold at a price of £80 per ton + delivery + VAT.
- c) **To approve payments:** Councillors noted funds in hand at 23 June were £716,272.29 and that that there were no payments requiring approval.

35/21 Levens Charity:

- a) **Levens Methodist Church:** It was noted that the application had been revised downwards to a sum of £820 for a fridge and crockery but that additional information on Project funds had been requested. The Applicants had undertaken to provide this information as soon as possible.
- b) **Next Meeting:** Councillors noted that the Report for the financial year 2020-21 had been completed and circulated to the Nominated Trustees. Cumulative value stood at approximately £140,000 at 30 March but Investment Fund Managers had warned that dividends may drop significantly in the current financial market. A meeting of the Trustees to receive the Report had not been held pending information from Levens Methodist Church but would be convened as soon as the information was to hand.

36/21 Planning Applications: The Schedule of Planning Applications updated to 14 July (annexed to these Minutes) was reviewed. Updates noted were:

PC Ref	Application No.	Location	Proposal	PC View	SLDC Decision
9	SL/2021/0007	Low Levens Farm	Demolish & reconstruct boundary wall. Listed Bldg application	Objection submitted 01/02/21	ACON 27/05/21
10	SL/2021/0013	Low Levens Farm	Demolish & reconstruct boundary wall.	Objection submitted 01/02/21	ACON 27/05/21
13	SL/2021/0139	Park View, Force Lane	Single storey rear extension	No objection	ACON 22/06/21
18	SL/2021/0323	Low Levens Farm	Steel framed roof over farmyard	No objection	ACON 27/05/21
21	SL/2021/0520	Levens Village Store	Non-material amendment to existing application	No Objection	
22	SL/2021/0555	Hillside, Church Road	Lawful Dev Cert for dormer windows and re-roofing	Agreed: No Objection	
23	SL/2021/0609	1, The Green	Enlarge front porch for wet-room & level access	Agreed: No Objection	
24	SL/2021/0658	10, Hying Court	Demolish c'servatory; erect 2-story side extension & parking	Agreed: No Objection	

37/21 Levens Playing Fields – Proposal for a Pump Track: This matter had already been brought to Councillors' attention and discussed informally. Following lengthy discussion, Councillors confirmed their support in principle for a facility for the older young persons of the village, but reaffirmed their reservations about its location on the Playing Fields and on the MUGA in particular. In respect of the latter, they sympathised with the views of Levens School who had made representations about the conversion of the MUGA for this purpose. The Parish Council however wishes to see a positive outcome to this initiative and **Resolved** to offer a plot of land near to the Hare and Hounds to the Playing Fields Committee (PFC) to develop as a Pump Track. It was further **Resolved** to suggest to the PFC that a joint meeting to discuss this suggestion might be an appropriate way forward.

38/21 The Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Councillors noted the proposal for a national beacon display to be held on 03 June 2022. It had also been suggested that a Jubilee Tree might be planted in the village to mark the occasion. It was **Agreed** to consider the detail at a future meeting.

39/21 Open Actions Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda

- a) **Traffic Management:** Councillors noted that the monitoring strips on Greengate had re-appeared though they have now been taken up again. Cllr Bland undertook to discuss progress with Helen Karaasian at CCC and report back.
- b) **Levens Lane Footpath:** As previously reported by Cllr. Bland, a site-meeting is to be held in mid-August.
- c) **Woodland Management:** It was **Resolved** that Cllrs. Holmes and Mason, together with Andy Banks, should meet to agree management requirements and report back to the next meeting.
- d) **Parish and Other Land**
 - i. Brigsteer Road site: Councillors noted with satisfaction the award of £2,500 from the Nisa/MADL initiative via the Village Store. This will be applied to further improvements to the site. It was **Resolved** to write to Vanessa and Dave at the Village Shop to thank them for their support in this matter. A grant of up to £1,000 is also available from Friends of the Lake District and it was **Resolved** to ask the Clerk to make an application.
 - ii. Registration of Land at Cotes – Most of the HM Land Registry requisitions have been answered but there has been no progress in resolving the outstanding ones. It was **Agreed** that Cllrs Mason, Battye and the Clerk should meet on site to discuss and report back to the next meeting.
 - iii. Land, Parking and Allotments – All rents for land, parking and allotments, with the exception of two of the latter have now been received. Reminders have been sent for the allotment rents overdue. The NW Electricity Wayleave is not due until the winter.
 - iv. Plot of Land on the left going into Greengate: Following email correspondence on this and the fact that the land is registered to SLDC, it was noted that the Clerk has written to SLDC requesting it be added to their Schedule for grass cutting.
- e) **Parish Council Website:** A follow-up meeting with Tom Hecht to discuss next steps has now been suggested for early September for a Report to come to the next meeting.
- f) **SLDC Greening Campaign:** Cllr. Battye reported that online update sessions had been organised by SLDC on 10 August, 6 September and 5 October and recommended Cllrs to join one of these. She is planning on having an information stall at Pam Martin's Recycling event in September and a Public meeting (probably by zoom) at end September/early October, to launch the local initiative soon thereafter.
- g) **B4RN:** Cllr. Rogerson confirmed recent progress with the roll-out of B4RN in the village. Councillors noted that the duct along the roadside at Underhill had been buried deeper. The decision to take out a six month subscription at £15 per month to Just Giving was **Ratified**.
- h) **Post-box:** Return still awaited

40/21 Correspondence: A schedule of correspondence had been circulated. The recent road closures in Levens were discussed and it was **Resolved** to write to Highways and UU to register concern as to why extensive and unnecessary road closures had been put in place for work on a small stretch.

41/21 Future Agenda Items: Items confirmed for the next Agenda were:

- i. Next Newsletter
- ii. Parish Website
- iii. Traffic management at Levens Bridge (UU tankers etc.).
- iv. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

42/21 Date of the Next Meeting: The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for Tuesday 14 September with the venue to be determined in line with the Covid 19 situation.

The meeting closed at 9.56 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date:.....