

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12 March 2019 in the Methodist Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. R Atfield (Chairman), H. Burrow, J. Fitch, K. Holmes (also attending as District Councillor), R. Johnston, R. Mason, D. Rogerson, + County Cllr. J. Bland, M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

107/18 Apologies for absence: Cllr. S. Bagot

108/18 Declarations of interest: None

109/18 Minutes: It was **Resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12 February 2019 as a true record.

110/18 Public Participation: The Chairman reminded the meeting that, unless invited, members of the public may not participate outside this Agenda item. No items were raised by members of the public.

111/18 Reports:

a) Reports from Councillors on Meetings Attended:

- Cllr. Atfield reported his attendance at a CALC course for experienced Chairs on 21 February which had been instructive.
- Cllr. Rogerson reported that he and the Chairman had attended CALC's South Lakeland District Association meeting on 7 March. Community Police Inspector Paul Latham had spoken on community policing in the locality. His report presented a mixed picture of police attendance at Parish Council meetings, but referred attendees to the on-line resource 'Crimetracker' for details of local incidents. Kendal police station is a local hub where a number of specialist representatives can be contacted including those involved in the local CRASH (Casualty Reduction And Safer Highways) Group. Cllr. Atfield had raised the issue of "delegated authority" enabling planning officers to make decisions on applications and was advised that CALC will take this up with SLDC.

b) Police: There was no report available from the Police. Cllr. Holmes passed on some informal feedback regarding an increase of thefts and break-ins from around areas of South Lakeland.

c) District Councillor: Cllr. Holmes reported on:

i. Highways matters that had been brought to his attention including:

- Near-misses stemming from traffic exiting Greengate;
- Difficulties in using pavements in a number of locations as a result of cars parked half-on / half-off the pavement;
- The height of the kerb at Levens bus shelter which is difficult for wheelchair users. It was agreed to add these to the HIMS reporting system.

ii. A full District Council meeting on 26 February at which details of an increase in Council Tax were confirmed. It was noted that the Levens Parish Council precept had gone down slightly.

d) County Councillor: Cllr. Bland reported that the work at Sampool Bridge is complete and that though time consuming the end result was good. He confirmed that he had spoken to Highways about the status of the bridleway and that signs are to be provided. He also referred to a planned public consultation on proposals for works on the A590.

112/18 Finance:

a) Receipts for the period 01-28 February 2019: The following receipts were noted:

i.08/02/19: Member budget receipt via Cllr. Holmes:	£350.00
ii.12/02/19: Allotment Rents and N W Electricity Wayleave	242.11
iii.17/02/19: Allotment Rent:	35.00

- b) Payments:** It was **Resolved** to authorise the following payments:
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| i. M R Curry: Salary February 2019 | £ 615.63 |
| ii. Printing Plus: February Newsletter: | 149.86 |
| iii. CALC: Experienced Chair course: (Cllr. Atfield) | 45.00 |
| iv. Levens Playing Fields Association: Grant from Cllr. Bland reserved fund | 1,000.00 |
| v. Cllr. H. Burrow: refund of expenses (paint for village benches): | 117.71 |

c) Financial Report and draft Budget 2019-20:

- i. Bank Reconciliation at 28 February: The reconciled balance of £21,827.17p was noted. The usual caveat regarding ring-fenced funds was received leaving an underlying balance of Parish funds of £11,545.17p.
- ii. Budget Review 28 February: The Clerk reported that the 2018-19 budget remained satisfactory.
- iii. Audit Matters: The following documents were reviewed and approved:
 - Asset Register
 - Risk Register
 - Standing Orders
 - Financial Regulations
- iv. Clerk's Annual Appraisal: The Clerk left the meeting whilst Members considered a report from the Chairman and Cllr. Burrow on a Staff Appraisal conducted with him on 15 February. Members confirmed their approval of the outcome which indicated performance above expectation and **Resolved** a pay award to Point 20 on the NJC Payscale with effect from 1 April 2019.

113/18 Levens Community Project: Cllr Mason reported as follows:

- a) **Sale of Sizergh Fell Quarry:** The planning application to the Lake District National Park Authority had been deferred to 3 April to allow the submission of further information on drainage proposals.
- b) **Sale of Plots at Cotes:** Progress on sale of plots awaits the production of architect's impressions of possible build design and site clearance. Costs for both await confirmation of a bid for Capacity Building Grant from the Community Led Housing Fund.
- c) **Report on Financial Position:** The Clerk reported that after commitments, the Project balance is around £2,000 in credit. He confirmed:
 - The award of £350,000 from the Community Led Housing Fund (subject to completion of a Funding Agreement being prepared by SLDC Legal Team);
 - The outcome of a bid for just over £50,000 to SLDCs LIPs Fund will be announced on 14 March;
 - A bid for Capacity Building Grant from the Community Led Housing Fund for £60,000+ is close to finalisation;
 - Plans for a bid to the Infrastructure Fund from Homes England via SLDC are underway;
 - A significant bid for Revenue Grant from Homes England is under preparation. Lorraine Smyth, CEO of Action with Communities in Cumbria has volunteered assistance with completion of this complex bid. District Cllr. John Holmes, who has considerable experience funding for affordable housing has also agreed to meet representatives of the Parish Council to offer help.
- d) **Project Working Group and any other Updates:** There was nothing to report from the Project Working Group. Cllr Mason reported that Mr John Cooke, solicitor acting for Levens Institute had raised several queries on the latest version of the Tripartite Agreement. Discussions to resolve these are taking place.
- e) **Levens Allotments:** The Clerk confirmed that 9 out of 10 tenancy renewals had been received.

114/18 Levens and Savin Brow Charities

The Clerk summarised the outcome of an interim report previously circulated to Members. This showed an overall fund value for Levens Charity at 30 September 2018 of £126,436 (compared with £122,802 at 31 March 2018). This includes a figure of £13,454 of accrued income from interest which is available to the Trustees for distribution. The Clerk reported that the fund value for Savin Brow Quarry would be little changed from the figure of £2,232 at March 2018 with a subsequent increase of just under £100 in accrued interest to £532.81. The Clerk reported that he had commenced discussions with the Charity Commission to explore the amalgamation of the Savin Brow Quarry with Levens Charity. Also that he was arranging for an audit of Charity finances after the close of the current financial year.

115/18 Planning Applications: the following planning applications were considered:

a) New Planning Applications

Application No.	Address	Proposal	Parish Council Comments
TR/2019/0016	Ringing Stones, Levens LA8 8NQ	Fell 1 sycamore; 1 beech	No Objection
BE/2019/0005	Pasture View, Nelson Sq LA8 8PR	Large rear extension	No Objection
TR/2019/0029	20 Nethercroft, Lowgate LA8 8LU	Thin mid & upper branches by 30%	No Objection

- b) To note Planning Applications determined since last meeting: None
c) To note planning applications still to be determined: None.

With regard to SL/2018/0592/0619 (Lakesway Holiday Homes and Lodgepark) Cllr Fitch reviewed a response from SLDC to an earlier letter from the Parish Council raising questions about the decision making process. Following discussion, which highlighted a number of concerns previously raised, it was concluded that the response did not adequately address the questions raised and **Resolved** that the Clerk should write a follow-up letter to express the Parish Council's continued concerns and require a more detailed response to specific points raised.

116/18 Annual Parish Meeting: Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting on 19 March were reviewed. Posters had been displayed and the draft Agenda was approved. The Clerk undertook to circulate this to appropriate locations, including the noticeboard and website. He confirmed that he had written to village organisations and had received a number of positive responses. Plans for the presentation on the Levens Community Project were in hand. Cllrs Rogerson and Johnston confirmed their apologies.

117/18 Highways Matters: Cllr. Fitch reported that following communication with the Highways Department on the deteriorating condition of the road to Cotes, repair work was underway and would be finished by the end of the month. As a result of this experience he had considered a number of other highways issues in the village, including the section on the Brigsteer Road that regularly floods, and how these are reflected on the County Council's fault reporting system (HIMS). He had concluded that it might be useful to monitor this system with regard to progress with individual issues and circulated a Highways Defect Monitoring spreadsheet. His offer to monitor highways defects was welcomed with thanks and it was **Resolved** to keep this as an open item on future Agendas.

118/18 Open Actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda:

- a) **Levens Village Traffic Management:** Cllr. Burrow reported that the CRASH sub-group had not yet been formed. Cllr Fitch offered his help to Cllr Burrow to represent the views of the Parish Council.
b) **Maintenance Plan:** Paint for refurbishment of the village benches had been purchased and was awaiting collection by Andy Banks who will also attend to the growth of saplings on road verges at several locations.

c) Woodland Management: The Clerk reported that further estimates for a tree health and safety survey have not yet been sourced.

d) Property Matters:

- i) Hedge on Hutton Lane: The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's ownership of the hedge had been asserted and it was agreed that at least part of it required reduction for the sake of road safety. Cllr. Holmes urged that the Parish Council should give reasonable notice to interested parties and his offer to inspect and make recommendations on the work that should be done was welcomed.
 - ii) The Old Carpet Shop: Cllr Burrow reported on very fruitful discussions with the owner of the property and read a letter that she had sent to him setting out the current position. The owner is very receptive to resolving this matter and Cllr. Burrow will continue to work with him to explore development options for the property.
- e) B4RN:** Cllr Rogerson reported on continuing progress with the initiative and confirmed that installation of the cabinet was now likely to be in June with mole-ploughing held-off until after the first cut of silage in May.
- f) Spring Newsletter:** The Spring edition had been well-received, though the Chairman asked for Members for a greater supply of articles to the Clerk. It was **Resolved** to increase the print-run to 625 to take account of increased households.

119/18 Correspondence: Councillors noted the schedule of correspondence circulated by the Clerk. It was proposed to submit a question on the delegation of planning decisions to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

120/18 Future agenda items:

- a) Shepherd's Mill (The Old Carpet Shop)
- b) Christmas decorations in the village

121/18 Date of next meeting:

**The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council is on Tuesday 9 April 2019.
The Annual Parish Meeting is on 19 March 2019 in Levens Village Institute**

The Meeting closed at 9.42 p.m.

Signed (Chairman) Date