

## LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 October 2016 in the Methodist Meeting Room, Levens at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Cllrs. R Atfield (Chairman), R. Mason, J. Thacker, S. Bagot, S Hargraves, D. Rogerson + Cllr. A. Rawlinson; M. R. Curry (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

**54/16 Apologies for absence:** Cllrs. H. Burrow (illness), K. Holmes (holiday) and PCSO J. Park (clash of duties).

**55/16 Declarations of interest:** None

#### 56/16 Minutes

It was **resolved** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 13 September 2016, as a true record.

#### 57/16 Parish Matters

- a) Election of Vice-Chair: Cllr S Bagot was nominated by Cllr Mason, seconded by Cllr Thacker. There being no other nominations, Cllr Bagot was elected unanimously.
- b) Re-allocation of former Cllr Martin's roles:
  - Maintenance Officer: Cllr Hargraves
  - Woodland Officer: Cllr. Holmes

**58/16 Public Participation:** On behalf of the Playing Fields Committee, Mr Simon Hill advised Councillors that funding arrangements with the Primary School for grass cutting were in jeopardy due to pressure on school finances. Mr Hill stressed that he was not requesting funds (and that the school may yet be in a position to make a contribution), but wished the Council to be aware of a developing situation. Councillors noted that both the costs and frequency of cutting were under review and **requested** Mr Hill to report back if there were further developments.

#### 59/16: Reports:

- a) **Police:** The Clerk read PCSO Park's written report highlighting one crime of theft of a Stihl saw from a vehicle. She also raised concern about the possible use of nitrous oxide capsules as a form of 'high' by youngsters locally and will monitor this situation.
- b) **District Councillor:** Cllr. Rawlinson reported as follows:
  - Carpet Shop: As anticipated, the owner has advertised the property for sale. Cllr Rawlinson confirmed that SLDC retain an interest to ensure a satisfactory conclusion to this situation;
  - Re-cycling: It is still expected that all cardboard and plastic waste will be collected from kerbside by the Spring of 2017;
  - Story's planning permission: Cllr Rawlinson will follow-up to confirm the current position;
  - Members Budget Scheme: To be allocated;
  - Water Level Water Management Board: Cllr Rawlinson will be attending the update meeting on 19 October;
  - Section 106 complaint to SLDC: Cllr Rawlinson has advised the new solicitor of concerns associated with this matter.

## 60/16: Finance:

**a) Receipts:** Councillors noted the following receipts:

- SLDC Environmental Partnership Fund for village benches: £970.00

**b) Payments:** It was **resolved** to authorise the following payments:

- MilneMoser: legal costs relating to S106 Agreement £3,021.00
- BDO: External Audit Fees £ 276.00
- M R Curry: Clerks salary £ 330.84
- HMRC: Clerk's PAYE £ 82.80
- M R Curry: Printer and stationery expenses £ 58.98
- Thomson Hayton Winkley, Solicitors: Land Registry costs £ 20.00

**c) Bank Reconciliation:** The Clerk reported that at 30 September the current account reconciled at £18,166.64 (£18,151.89 taking into account unpresented cheques). He further reported that the projected balance of funds (unconfirmed) attributable to the Levens Community Project were £3,753.91, leaving a 'normal' operating balance in the PC current account of £14,397.98p.

**d) Annual Accounts:** The Clerk reported that External Auditors had confirmed that the Annual Accounts for 2015-16 had been successfully concluded. The following documents were presented which the Council **resolved** to approve and accept:

- Notice of Conclusion of Audit (currently on public display)
- Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements 2015-16
- The External Auditor Certificate
- The Issues Report (from which Councillors noted two minor matters that do not require action to be taken).

**e) Precept and Budget:** The Clerk reported on the commencement of work on the Precept for 2017-18. To assist this, he confirmed that he had reviewed the annual budget at the half-year which, subject to confirmation of the amount attributable to the Levens Community Project, was on target.

**f) Revised Financial Regulations:** The Clerk circulated copies of revised model Financial Regulations which CALC had recommended be adopted. The Clerk confirmed that in his view there were no items of concern and it was **resolved** to adopt these at the next meeting subject to Member approval.

## 61/16: Planning Applications

**a) New Planning Applications**

- New applications at Frosthwaite Farm, Sizergh (SL/2016/0920) and at Park Head, Force Lane (SL/2016/0923) were noted.

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

Determination of the following planning applications was noted:

- SL/2015/0891: Shepherd's Mill, Levens - Withdrawn
- SL/2016/0722: 4 Greengate - Approved
- SL/2016/0888: Land to east of Greengate, Levens – Invalid, No Decision
- SL/2016/0718: Cragg Foot, Levens – Reserved Matters. It was **agreed** to seek further information on the status of this application
- SL/2016/0796: Levens Hall - Approved

## 62/16: Levens Community Project – (Reports by Cllr. Mason):

- a) **Sale of Plots at Sizergh Fell Quarry and Cotes:** After amendments to the draft, the particulars of sale had been finalised and Michael C L Hodgson are to commence marketing in the Westmorland Gazette on 13 October. Sale is to be by informal tender based on best and final offers received by 21 November.
- b) **Tripartite Agreement:** At a joint meeting between the Parish Council, the Levens Village Institute (LVI) and the Project Working Group held on 14 September it had been agreed, amongst other things that Cllr Mason and Stephen Read would work together to facilitate the appropriate agreement which might be better styled as a Joint Venture Agreement to establish a Limited Company. Membership and governance (via Articles and Memorandum of Association) of the latter was discussed at some length, with contributions from Stephen Read on behalf of the LVI. It was acknowledged that neither the membership of the limited company nor details of when it needs to be established were yet determined and it was **resolved** to have further discussion, including with Paul Davies of MilneMoser (Solicitors), to make recommendations that are satisfactory to all parties.
- c) **The Business Plan:** It was **agreed** that the Business Plan would not yet be posted on the website as it contained figures that were commercially sensitive in the context of the current sale of land.
- d) **Story Homes:** The Company had justified their lack of willingness to work with the Community Project on the question of affordable homes as an economic one and had offered sight of their costing model. Councillors shared Cllr Mason's disappointment that contrary to their claim to work with local communities they had appeared reluctant to engage constructively with the Community Project.
- e) **Section 106:** Following receipt of Milnemoser's time record, Councillors **resolved** that representations should be made to SLDC on the question of costs incurred and instructed the Clerk to circulate a draft note for approval. John Watson and Stephen Read confirmed that they had complained to SLDC in a private capacity and in view of the Parish Council's resolution, undertook to forward their complaint and SLDC's response for information.
- f) **Allotments:** Mains water supply was now in place and it was noted that the insurance company was to be contacted regarding cover to guard against the cost of leaks. The Agreement with Levens Hall was close to finalisation which will trigger individual agreements and invoices to tenants. An article for the website, with pictures, was planned.
- g) **Other updates:** The Gazette has agreed in principle to do an article on the Community Project which should highlight the availability of affordable homes and promote interest in the sale of land for development.

## 63/16: 20s Plenty

The Clerk reported that he had received a note from Mr Darren Wilson who was unable to speak to this item as he had hoped. Councillors had also been circulated with a letter from Jane Farraday (Head Teacher of the school) concerning the route from the Green onto Church Road. It was **resolved** that Cllr Bagot would arrange to visit the school to discuss the speed initiative and safe routes to school.

## 64/16: Parish Newsletter

The following items were agreed for the November edition of the Newsletter:

- a) Chairman's Report and updated list of Councillors and contact details
- b) Update on the Community Project
- c) WI land on Brigsteer Road: update and request for ideas for use
- d) B4RN Meeting
- e) Dog fouling in the Village and on farm land
- f) Village Benches, street lighting
- g) Item on proposed de-commissioning of the village payphone

The Chairman **agreed** to confirm dates for the next circulation.

## 65/16: Open Actions Not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda:

- a) Woodland Management – a new grant scheme re-open in the Spring.
- b) B4RN: The Clerk has written to Barry Forde requesting dates for November and will publicise a Village meeting when confirmed.
- c) Transfer of WI Land: completed.
- d) Environmental Partnership Fund: Quotes for work to benches still to be commissioned.
- e) Village Maintenance Plan: Cllr Mason has located a large scale and detailed map of the Parish which will enable woodland management and maintenance plans to be developed. The Clerk will coordinate a date for a working group to consider the latter.
- f) Investigate the possibility of road-signs / signs on road indicating possible presence of pedestrians etc. on A6 from Levens Bridge to A590 slip-road (west) – next meeting.

## 66/16: Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence received:

- a) SLDC-Parish Council Workshop on 12 October: Cllr Rogerson will attend
- b) Lyth and Witherslack Water Management Board Meeting on 19 October: Cllr Thacker and others will attend
- c) South Westmorland LAP on 12 October: Cllr Hargraves will attend
- d) LDNPA on 3 November at Brigsteer: noted
- e) BT proposal to remove village payphone: it was **resolved** to object strongly to this proposal and to include an item on this in the Parish Newsletter
- f) CALC AGM 12 November: noted
- g) Kent and Leven Catchment Area: update
- h) Helsington Community Land Trust – availability of affordable housing

## 67/16 Future agenda items:

- a) Precept
- b) B4RN
- c) 20s Plenty
- d) Confidentiality Policy
- e) Road signs on A6 from Levens Bridge to A590 slip-road (west)

## 68/16 Date of next meeting:

- Tuesday 8 November, 2016

**The Meeting closed at 9.48 p.m.**

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date