

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF SEDBERGH

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Sedbergh held in The People's Hall, Sedbergh on 12th December 2013

Present: Councillors Hodge (Chair), Atkins, Longlands, Macpherson, Allan, Capstick, Pearson, Jameson and Thomson.

The Chairman introduced Janey Hassam (who has been appointed as Clerk to the Council from 1st January 2014) to the meeting.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Cllr Lancaster and accepted by the meeting.

2. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations

3. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Capstick (item 7)

Cllrs Hodge and Longlands (item 9)

4. First Responders

The meeting received a presentation from Jenny Pilgrim, Chair of Dent First Responders Group, who explained how the existing service was provided and that Sedbergh was now within the Group's area of operation.

Resolved - that the Chairman of the Council would meet with GP's and representatives of the Dent First Responders in January to discuss the practicalities of a defibrillator being provided in the town and that an article be placed in the 'Lookaround' to seek volunteers willing to be trained as First Responders.

An application for grant assistance (submitted at the meeting) by the Dent First Responders would be considered in the first instance by the Council's Audit Committee.

5. Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 14th November 2013

The Minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the chairman Cllr Hodge.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes of 14th November 2013

- a. Item 5 (Parish plans) – it was resolved that, for the time-being, the Sedbergh Townscape Project should continue to provide the basis for the Council's future strategy but that this be kept under review as circumstances changed, particularly in respect of criteria to be met in securing grant funding.
- b. Item 7 (community use of swimming pool) - it was reported that further consultations would take place with Sedbergh School. It was resolved to invite Peter Marshall to attend the next Council meeting.
- c. Item 17 (withdrawal of County Council bus subsidies) – resolved that the Council should express its deep concern regarding the impact of the reduced 564 service which would further disadvantage the social and economic well-being of this scattered rural community.

7. Planning

- a. A written report was adopted by the meeting including the Committee's comments on planning applications.

- b. In respect of application S/03/518B, it was agreed to comment as follows:
The Council, having obtained further information from the applicant, supports the principle of the development which seeks to promote the sustainability of the farm in terms of energy use whilst having regard to environmental concerns.

In relation to the proposed AD unit, the Council has no objections although it would appear practicable for the building and associated works to be sited slightly to the north so as to allow some planting to filter views of the development from the riverside public footpath. It is understood that machinery will be located within the buildings and that there will be little discernible noise associated with the CHP.

In relation to the proposed solar array, it appears that a number of alternative arrangements might be practicable and the Council would prefer to have seen these thoroughly examined. For example, a more compact clustering of the panels immediately adjacent to the proposed buildings might appear more satisfactory in the wider landscape. However, should the submitted arrangement be considered most appropriate, the Council recommends that amendments be made in order that the visual impact of the panels is minimised (particularly as viewed from the riverside public footpath). Such amendment should include fixing the panels in a 'landscape' rather than 'portrait' orientation, re-building the stone boundary wall to a greater height (say 1.4m) and lowering the panels to the minimum practicable above ground level which allows grazing by sheep (published guidance suggests this could be as low as 700mm?).

It is understood that no security lights or CCTV systems would be required and that all cabling and the connection to the electricity grid will be underground. Should your Authority approve the development, the Council recommends that any permission, in so far as it relates to the solar array, is time-limited and that conditions are imposed requiring removal of the installation in the event of redundancy, prolonged non-use or significant disrepair. In addition, conditions should be imposed to ensure that glint or glare from the PV panels is minimised by the use of dark, non-reflective finishes as far as is reasonably practicable.

(Cllr. Capstick left the meeting when this application was being discussed.)

- c. In relation to the former Aqua Engineering site, it was reported that the YDNPA had deferred a decision in order that a revised proposal (to provide affordable housing) submitted by the applicant could be considered.
- d. In respect of the Tree Preservation Order on land to the north of the new housing development on Joss Lane, the meeting resolved to support the Order being confirmed but on the understanding that the trees would be properly managed in the future.

8. Finance

- a. The meeting received the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 6th December 2013. Arising from those minutes:
Car parking - resolved that the Audit Committee would again examine possible ideas for the introduction of limited free parking on Joss Lane car park in the light of the suggestions made by the Amenities Committee

Loan to the Sedbergh CIO (to facilitate the acquisition of 72 Main Street) - it was reported that the Council had been advised that the making of such loans is permissible. This would be considered further at a subsequent meeting in the event that an application is formally submitted by the CIO.

Cumbria in Bloom (request for funding to undertake work at the gardens of 72 Main Street) - it was resolved that the Amenities Committee be delegated to determine the precise nature of the work to be undertaken, the funding thereof and how this related to the required regular maintenance, including grass cutting. It was also agreed that the relationship between Cumbria in Bloom and the Council required clarification.

- b. The attached requests for payments were agreed.
- c. Budget 2104-15 - resolved to approve the budget presented, subject to there being no requirement to make amendments following any announcement by Government on the operation of the Council Tax Benefit Support Grant (in which event a revised budget would be presented to the January meeting of the Council for approval).

9. Grants

- a. Application by the People's Hall (£5,000) – resolved to defer a decision pending further consideration by the Audit Committee in January and the receipt of the 2013 accounts of the People's Hall (if available).
- b. Application by the Western Dales Community Bus Service (£500 p.a.) – resolved to defer a decision pending receipt of detailed accounts from inception to the present, a breakdown of grants received and expected, together with passenger numbers.

10. Public Participation

There were two contributions from the public:

Cllr Ian McPherson – advised the meeting that South Lakeland District Council had resolved not to increase parking charges for next year. He suggested that the Council, in responding to the consultation on the withdrawal of bus operating subsidies, should liaise with Andi Chapple, the Support & Transport Co-ordinator. He also advised that a YDNPA members' Policy Forum would be taking place in the New Year and this would be an opportunity for him to raise issues on behalf of the Council.

Carole Nelson – explained the national 'Walkers are Welcome' scheme and the criteria to be met for a town to participate. These included endorsement by the Parish Council. The meeting agreed that a formal letter of support for the scheme should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Sedbergh & District Chamber of Trade & Business, the organisation that will be heading the submission on behalf of the town.

11. Amenities Committee

A written report of the November meeting was received by the meeting. (The withdrawal of bus subsidies was discussed under matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting – item 6 above) .

12. Sedbergh Townscape Project

A written report was received

- a. Main Street footway widening – resolved that a letter be sent to the Highway Authority expressing the Council's disappointment that the scheme could not be progressed having regard to the fact that external funding has been assembled and a Private Works Agreement signed. Also resolved that the Clerk should make preliminary enquiries of possible contractors who might be able to undertake the work.

- b. Boundary Wall to People's Hall – resolved that a meeting be arranged of representatives from the Parish Council, the People's Hall Committee and the YDNPA to discuss possible schemes for the improvement of the boundary wall and, in particular, whether or not the concrete 'tank traps' should remain in situ.

13. Queens Gardens

Cllr Thomson reported that it was planned to continue discussions with relevant parties with a view to a further grant application being submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

14. Correspondence

The attached Clerk's Report was considered by the meeting.

- a. Sustainable Communities Act – resolved that no requests be submitted.
- b. Replacement street light, Loftus Hill – resolved that the Council proceeds to erect a replacement street light in accordance with the estimate received from the Street Lighting Officer of Cumbria County Council and that Sedbergh School be invited to consider a contribution towards the costs of this and any further replacement lights that may be required on the Dent road abutting the School estate..
- c. Highway Authority 'Meet & Greet' event – Cllrs. Atkins & Lancaster and Janey Hassam to attend.
- d. Suggestion or free parking on Sundays – resolved not to entertain the suggestion.
- e. MRWS consultation – resolved, by a majority vote, that the Council respond to the consultation as follows:

Whilst the Council accepts that procedural improvements have been made to address some of the previous concerns, it is noted that Government remains committed to an approach which seeks to identify a willing host community as a pre-requisite to detailed geological investigations to assess the suitability of sites.

The Council is not persuaded of the appropriateness of this approach and supports the view of those organisations and individuals who urge that an independent nation-wide geological assessment should be undertaken to evaluate the most suitable sites for an underground repository before seeking to involve the participation of potentially affected communities.

The Council also has concerns that a 'community benefits package' would be initiated prior to any particular site being proven as suitable.

15. Date and Time of next meeting

7.30 pm on Thursday 9th January 2014 at the People's Hall.