

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF SEDBERGH

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Sedbergh held at the Committee Room, People's Hall, Sedbergh at 7.30pm on Thursday 14th July 2016

Present: Councillors Atkins (Chair), Allan, Mary Macpherson, Capstick, Arnold, Ian McPherson, Longlands, Dawson and Lancaster.

1. Apologies

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

2. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations

3. Declarations of Interest

Item 17 – Correspondence, Cllr Atkins (United Utilities)

4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council 9th June 2016

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair Cllr Atkins.

5. Alison Kinnon, Assistant Director of Customers and Communities – South Lakes Housing

Alison Kinnon was welcomed to the meeting to give Members an overview regarding the recent announcements relating to sheltered housing and communal lounges, with particular reference to Maryfell and Gladstone House in Sedbergh. Following the news release (attached) on 7th June 2016 there had been lots of speculation and Alison was able to give further background to the news release. Nationally it is considered that older adults would rather remain at home, with a care package, than move into sheltered schemes. The result was that sheltered schemes generally began to suffer, and properties were becoming difficult to let out. The Government has also announced proposed changes to the levels of Housing Benefit that tenants will be able to claim from April 2018. From that date, housing benefit for new tenants from April 2016 will be capped at the Local Housing Allowance rate. This could result in sheltered housing becoming unaffordable and no longer viable as Housing Benefit would no longer cover the higher charges applied to sheltered/supported housing due to the additional 'service' charges applied. Alison was able to confirm that where a scheme remains viable, it will continue, but that this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. South Lakes Housing would also consider de sheltering individual properties that became unviable/void and that the same could apply to an entire scheme if practicable. Cllr Lancaster (also District Councillor) was able to highlight a recent response received from Cllr John Homes (Chairman for SLH) which reiterated the points made by Alison. At this point members of public in attendance at the meeting were invited to ask questions. Various points were raised, including the concerns over availability of Scheme Managers, continuity, lack of emotional support and potential isolation of individuals. Another strong point raised was the perceived complete lack of communication to tenants at Maryfell/Gladstone House in regard to the ongoing situation following the original announcement in June. Alison apologised for any deficiency in communication and reiterated that Scheme Managers would still be in place, albeit from the Hub in Kendal and would still be visiting the area regularly and be available to make daily/weekly welfare phone calls. However, Alison reminded those present that Scheme Managers were not in situ to give care.

It was recognized that there were two main issues 1) the communication with residents at Maryfell/Gladstone House and 2) the financial issue. Cllr Lancaster expressed concerns over the apparent policy that communal lounges were not allowed for private functions and that recently two groups in Sedbergh had wished to hire the newly refurbished Gladstone House but were informed that was not possible unless a resident from the scheme was also in attendance. Members thought that it would be prudent for SLH to reconsider this policy as it would be a way to generate additional income. Alison was able to advise that the National Housing Federation were currently wishing to lobby government over the decisions to cap costs in sheltered/supported housing and were looking for case studies to present. It was suggested that someone in Sedbergh might be willing to fulfill this role and work along with SLH. The Start at Home Campaign is to highlight the importance of

sheltered/supported schemes. Alison advised that she will provide SPC with details of the recent findings by the NHF.

Members agreed that they would continue to liaise with SLH over the issues raised, including the possibility of lobbying Government along with the NHF, for reconsideration of the way in which changes to proposed housing benefit will impact on sheltered housing.

Cllr Mary Macpherson wished to express to Alison that she appreciated that SLH were doing the best they can in these unpredictable financial times. Cllr Atkins thanked Alison for her attendance and this was echoed by Members and the residents attending from Maryfell/Gladstone House.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes of 9th June 2016

Item 15 – Market Layout/Joss Lane car park future resurfacing – the Clerk has begun to make enquiries with the District and County Council in regard to procurement and further updates will be reported at future meetings. Due to the scale of the project, specialist firms that would fulfill the whole process would be considered, including tendering and supervision of works.

Item 17 – Parish Council Website – the website now includes a list of Members under each relevant Committee.

7. Report from District/County Council

Apologies were received from Cllr Nick Cotton and Cllr Mel Mackie. Cllr Lancaster was able to advise that one of the main concerns recently had been the uncertainty of sheltered housing, but also wished to note the recent resurfacing work on the Kirkby Lonsdale road and the continuing problem of drain clearing.

8. Planning

The attached Planning Report was adopted by Members. Points to note included the approval of application S/03/91G for re-modelling of Ingmire Caravan Park, Marthwaite which included conditions requested by Sedbergh Parish Council. Also noted was the approval of application S/03/320C for two affordable and one open market dwelling at the former Aqua Engineering site, Guldrey Lane. This application has been ongoing since 2011 (and includes retrospective planning permission for a dwelling built in 2010). Full details of the approval can be found on the YDNPA website.

Regarding the **Yorkshire Dales Local Plan** comments submitted by SPC, Cllr Ian McPherson advised that the YDNPA had recently held a meeting and had decided that in relation to Policy L2 (Conversion of Traditional Buildings) that the Conservation Levy be removed.

Also noted at this point were congratulations to Cllr Ian McPherson following his recent appointment as Deputy Chairman at YDNPA.

9. Finance

a) The meeting received the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on the 12th July 2016 and noted the points raised in connection with possible future virements within the Budget to accommodate anticipated expenditure, including that in relation to the boundary wall at the People's Hall (Item 13). Also noted was the agreement to obtain donation boxes for the toilets at Main Street (Item 12). The wording for the signs should be notified to Cllr Arnold and thanks were extended to Cllr Allan for volunteering to count monies collected. It was further agreed to adopt the Publication Scheme recommended by the committee along with the new Public Participation at Meetings Policy. This included moving Public Participation to a much earlier slot at future meetings.

b) The Council agreed a list of payments presented at the meeting.

10. Grants

There had been one application for a Grant this month and it was agreed to discuss this at Item 14 in light of the recommendations of the Queen's Garden Committee.

11. Public Participation

Dorothy Blair – wished to express thanks on behalf of Sedbergh in Bloom over the commission of four flower containers to be built by students at Sedbergh School in the new academic year. These would be of substantial size and quality. Two would be positioned at the Sedbergh School library, but Sedbergh in Bloom would welcome suggestions for positioning of the two remaining containers from Members. Also noted was the unsightly black wheelie bin on Main Street and the Clerk was asked to contact CCC as this appears to be permanently positioned on the highway. Finally, Mrs Blair wished Members to consider seeking a cost analysis for the Sedbergh Business Hub (now closed) and Cllr Lancaster agreed to take this question forward to the next District Council meeting requesting a profit and loss summary for the project.

12. Amenities Committee

A verbal report was given to Members following their meeting on 6th July 2016 and minutes from the meeting would be circulated in due course. It was noted that more permanent donation boxes for the toilets had been identified and the Clerk would order these soon. Further noted was the previous report of a tree that seemed unsafe/dead by the Rawthey River, near the weir, which now needed further investigation. Thanks were also noted to Cllr Arnold in regard to a sign for boot washing at the toilets on Main Street and for the repair to a bench on the corner of Joss Lane close by the phone box.

13. Sedbergh Townscape Project

An updating report was received by the Council and accepted. Cllr Atkins advised of a meeting with YDNPA on 15th July 2016 to discuss the ongoing renovation works at Jubilee Fountain. The completed fence works at the recycling site at Spar were also noted and received positive feedback. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to James Hall and Co, once more, and request a donation towards the costs. Finally it was noted that Cllr Atkins, Mary Macpherson and Longlands had recently met with representation of the People's Hall in regard to the proposed boundary wall and access improvements. There were two main factors for Members to consider 1) agreement to the design (attached) and 2) agreement to run the scheme as two separate tenders. SPC would be responsible for the resurfacing of the car park and the lower access and the People's Hall would be responsible for the pedestrian access, vehicular access, remodeling the steps/paving and landscaping. It was agreed by Members to submit the drawings to YDNPA to allow them to determine whether the works will be deemed as permitted development.

14. Queens Garden

The attached report was received by Members. There had been a request at the SPC Meeting in June to hold a music event at the Garden and George Hinson attended the Queen's Garden Committee Meeting to discuss/present further his request. There was general support for the request to hold a music event and this was agreed by Members. It was noted that the wall collapse at 4 Queen's Drive had now been rebuilt. Further noted was the recommendation to hold a meeting with Hilary Taylor Associates and Sandy Roy in regard to options for the future development of the Garden. This item runs on from the Annual Parish Meeting where the Garden was the main item for the Agenda and the proposed meeting was agreed by Members.

In relation to the Grant request for £500 from George Hinson for the proposed Music event at the Garden on 3rd September 2016, following the recommendation of the Committee this was agreed by all Members with one abstention. The approval is subject to various conditions being met (these to be agreed by the Chair and the Clerk).

15. Parish Council Award Scheme

Following a recommendation from the Policy & Resource Committee it was agreed to suspend this item from the monthly Agenda until further clarification had been received from CALC in relation to their proposed communications with NALC over the viability of the scheme for smaller rural parishes.

16. Yorkshire Dales National Park Visitor Centre

CLr Ian McPherson was able to advise that a collaborative meeting was due to take place with Kathryn Beardmore on 20th July 2016 to discuss future options being considered by YDNPA in relation to Visitor Centres/Information points following the Park boundary extension.

17. Correspondence

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

- a. Free Parking for Artisan Market Days – a request had been made for Members to consider free parking on Artisan Market Days, however, Members were doubtful of the benefit and did not wish to set a precedent and the request was refused.
- b. United Utilities – representation from UU had recently visited Sedbergh further to SPC's recent correspondence. A summary is attached.
- c. Empty Homes – SLDC has sent up to date information and guidelines on how to register an empty home.
- d. Phil Rushton – Connecting Cumbria has requested attending a future meeting, the Clerk is to liaise further.
- e. A Vision for Sedbergh – it was noted that the latest Vision for Sedbergh statement agreed by the CIO, was not the updated version discussed by Members in June. The Clerk with liaise with Andy Cobb and the Chamber of Trade to confirm the correct statement.

19. Date and Time of next meetings –Thursday 11th August 2016 at 7.30pm, the monthly meeting of the Parish Council to be held in the Committee Room of the People's Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh