

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF SEDBERGH

Minutes of the monthly Meeting for the Parish Council of Sedbergh, held in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People’s Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh at 7.30 pm on Thursday 10th November 2022

Present: Councillors Lancaster (Chair), Brooks, Arnold, Longlands, Capstick, Welti, McPherson, Sedgwick, Hutt and Bromley.

Part I

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Cowperthwaite and accepted by the Members; all other Parish Councillors were present.

2. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for Dispensations at this meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Item 10 – Planning, Cllr Longlands (S/03/64C)

Item 11 – Finance, Cllr Capstick (Grants)

There were no other declarations of interest at this point, however, Cllr Hutt took no part in Public Participation, when it became apparent which matter was to be discussed.

4. Public Participation (taken out of order, due to late arrival of Member of the Public)

A resident attended the meeting to express her upset following the Council decision to block the cut through in the southern boundary of the playing field, leading to a private lane beyond (Pedestrian Gate, playing field - 6th October 2022 Item 18 viii). Members noted that there was no footpath or public right of way at this point and the Minute from the October meeting was read out for clarity. The resident stated that she believed the Parish Council’s actions were illegal (unlawful) and that there was an easement and that she regularly used the cut through and that residents should have been consulted. The Chairman and other Members stated that they did not agree with the resident on this matter, however, she was invited to write to the Council, for future note, and that they may also write to Cumbria County Council Public Rights of Way Officer, if desired. Members confirmed, however, that she had been challenged on using this informal cut through in the past as there is no recognised footpath though the Parish Council boundary, additionally noting that she has been asked to refrain from walking her dog across the football pitch area, where there are clear signs advising ‘no dogs’ on the recreation ground/children’s play area, on several occasions. Members advised that the matter would not now be considered/discussed further until May 2023 due to the ‘six month rule’ pertained in the Council’s Standing Orders. **Previous Resolutions** (7 a and b) a resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least (3) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee. When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months. The resident left the meeting following this discussion. Members asked the Clerk to seek information on Public Space Protection Orders for the future. (Cllr Hutt took no part in this item).

5. Minutes of the Meeting of Sedbergh Parish Council 6th October 2022 2022

Members resolved to adopt the Minutes of the meetings held on the 6th October 2022 and they were signed as a true record by the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Lancaster.

6. Matters noted from the Minutes of 6th October 2022

There were no matters to note, all ongoing items were included on the agenda.

7. Report/update from District/Westmorland and Furness and County Council

Cllr Mitchell (unable to attend) had raised the following i) Tim Farron MP had presented the recent petition to parliament about the proposed closure of Sedbergh Sorting Office. A meeting was scheduled with the Royal Mail, who said, no decision had been made in regard to closure. Cllr Mitchell is due to meet further with Tim Farron MP to discuss next moves. The Parish Council had also received a response from the Royal Mail and Post Office, following their letters issued in October (attached) ii) Boundary Commission Review have announced the latest draft for parliamentary boundaries, Sedbergh ad Kirkby Lonsdale ward, under the proposals, will be in the ‘Morecambe and Lunesdale’. Cllr Lancaster also discussed the final consultation, noting that under the current boundaries, Killington and Firbank would be within a neighbouring constituency. Whilst Members discussed the review, it was agreed that any comments/observations that Members may have, should be recorded individually and that Sedbergh Parish Council would not make a collective submission. Apologies were received from County Cllr Cotton. Cllrs Hodgson and Pye did not attend.

8. To receive an update on the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Regular Newsletters continue to be circulated to Members, and the Clerk confirmed there was an online Question-and-Answer session arranged for Town/Parish Councils on 16th November 2022.

9. Planning

The Planning Committee had not met and hope to convene a meeting as soon as practicable. The following application was discussed at Full Council. S/03/64C 30a Main Street, Sedbergh, LA10 5BL. Full planning permission for change of use of part of the first floor of the building into a 1-bedroom apartment, repositioning of external staircase and change of use of old restaurant kitchen to domestic accommodation associated with upper existing apartment and to retain the existing commercial use of the front part of the first floor for use by a E class use (commercial, business and services). Members discussed the application, and resolved to object due to the loss of key business space in the centre of Sedbergh, seen as an essential commercial building for the town. In addition, Members noted the lack of parking and the reliance, once again, on resident parking permits on the Parish Council’s car parks (already under extreme pressure). Cllr Longlands took no part in the resulting discussion/resolution.

10. Finance

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 7th November 2022 and resolved to pay all payments recommended for approval. i) Budget requirements/considerations 2023 – 2024 (draft attached) Whilst Members recognised the significant proposed uplift in the potential Precept request (10%), it was resolved that with unprecedented increases in utilities and general expenditure, there was no alternative and a significant uplift was inevitable. Final figures would not be confirmed until SLDC had sent their annual Precepting letter, which would include confirmation of the tax base for Sedbergh Parish. This would also include details of any potential grant that would still be distributed by SLDC. The latter being unknown currently, due the potential impact of the Local Government Reorganisation budgets. The current figures would see an increase from £37.23 to £40.95 (average Band D property) per annum.

11. Grants

Gladstone House Social Fund/Community Group - £150.00. Members resolved to approve the increased sum of £500.00 following recommendation from the Finance Committee. Noting that the group provided Afternoon Teas as a benefit to the community, where everyone was welcome.

12. Amenities Committee

Members received the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 26th October 2022. It was noted that Sedbergh Bowling Club had submitted a copy of their latest draft plan for remodeling the pavilion and Members further discussed the proposed enhancement scheme (draft plan attached). It was resolved that Members were generally supportive of the proposal and that any forthcoming application should be submitted by the Parish Council under permitted development. However, Members took the opportunity to note that if the scheme involved the removal of the Parish Council storage shed (adjacent to the old toilet block) then alternative space/storage should be provided at the expense of the club as part of the project. Members additionally asked the Clerk to confirm with the Club how they were hoping to fund the project in the future, noting that the Parish Council do not have any funds available.

13. Update on Projects

The following ongoing projects/matters were discussed.

- i) Joss Lane car park – Members noted that there was no update available at this time, with no funding bids planned for some time.
- ii) Loftus Hill car park lease, the new seven-year lease had been completed
- iii) Jubilee Fountain, the contractor had not been in touch. The Clerk awaits a response on how this might be progressed in the spring of 2023 with Members hoping that this can be coincided with the Coronation of King Charles III.
- iv) Next steps for EV charging Joss Lane and Loftus Hill car parks – the application to the Energy Saving Trust has been submitted and a further quote was still awaited from a 2nd contractor.
- v) Parish lighting review, progress continues, with grant applications now submitted to Yorkshire Dales National Park (Sustainable Development Fund) and Cumbria Actions for Sustainability (CAFS). The latter now requiring a Community Engagement plan to be included in the application.
- vi) Festive Lights – The clerk has progressed the permit (Cumbria County Council) for installing festive lights over the highway, as previously.

14. Queen's Garden

Members had not met. The Clerk noted that a fallen branch had now been removed.

15. Future parking

Cllrs Bromley, Lancaster and Capstick discussed their further meeting with representatives from Sedbergh Economic Partnership. Confidential notes had been circulated to Members, for reference only, in respect of future potential areas to consider parking. A further meeting was proposed with Cllr Bromley, the Clerk, and the Economic Advisor to the Sedbergh Economic Partnership, so that further thought could be given to creating a draft parking ambitions plan for the town. Early thoughts including the potential to relocate coach parking from Joss Lane car park, and for the Clerk to liaise (again) with SLDC in respect of the recycling area allocated on the car park, to consider possible reduction/relocation requirements. Members also noted that at this item, that the Council should consider Assets within the town (SLDC/CCC owned/leased) and the potential to request future transfer to the Parish Council (with appropriate commuted/legacy sums).

16. Highways Matters

i) Proposed footpath at Howgill Lane and Highways connection – update on works and signage (dogs) works were now complete for the path, with only minor remedial works required on the fencing. It was noted that benches were now hoped for the two alcoves (Finance Committee) and agreed that spring flowering bulbs should be costed to abut the new path. Members noted correspondence from a resident in respect of walking dogs along the path and it was agreed and resolved that dogs were permitted along the path (to be always kept on lead) and that new signs would be ordered to reflect the change along the footpath.

In addition, Members noted a response from CCC Highways (following the October meeting) in respect of Rigmaden Bridge (attached) and a further response in respect of reported damaged/vandalised signs in the Parish. CCC Highways had responded to advise that each sign should be logged, individually, on the reporting system. Members resolved that this would take an extraordinary long time, as it was estimated that some 50% of the road signs in the Parish required attention, from damaged signs to unclear/poor condition/illegible signs. The Clerk was asked to respond further to CCC Highways, asking them to reconsider their response and complete their own visual inspection, or invite them to attend the Parish and drive around with a Member of the Council. Finally, Members noted that the highlighted hedges (October 2022) had now all been cut.

17. Correspondence

The attached Clerk's Correspondence list was noted by the meeting:

- i) Sedbergh Economic Partnership meeting – the next meeting was scheduled 25.11.22.
- ii) Antoni Gosiewski – the Clerk is progressing the permit for the cemetery and a draft plaque.
- iii) SLDC, Sedbergh Cemetery –there had been no further update received. Members noted that SPC should consider general asset transfers going forward, including requests that would potentially be considered as part of LGR (see Item 15 also).
- iv) Lifebelt, New Bridge – a response had been received from SLDC confirming that they inspect the belt each month.

18. Date and Time of next meeting – monthly meeting of Sedbergh Parish Council, to be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 8th December 2022 in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People's Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh.

Part II

It was resolved and agreed that the public should be excluded from the meeting for reason of the financially sensitive and/or confidential nature of the items to be discussed.

15. Future Parking

A car parking report was circulated.

19. Legacy monies – any update from Solicitors

The Clerk had circulated a summary of the legacy monies, with a brief report on how the monies may be distributed in the future (all funds not yet received). This included, monies for Arts, Music, Farming and Economy and infrastructure and benefit of local people for one legacy. With the second being for a capital project, acceptable by the Executor/s and Members were mindful to request a meeting with the Executor/s to discuss further.

20. Contractors Review

The item was deferred.