

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 23rd February 2023

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

Members reflected on Revd. A Burgess, Vicar to the Benefice of the Western Dales, attendance in March 2022 – now marking one year since the Ukraine Invasion

Part I

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs McPherson, Hutt and Welti and accepted by the Members.

2. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for Dispensations at this meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Items 11, 17 and 21 – Cllr Lancaster as Parish Council appointee to Sedbergh Economic Partnership.

4. Public Participation

There were no Members of the Public present at the meeting.

5. Minutes of the Meeting of Sedbergh Parish Council 12th January and 13th February 2023

Members resolved to adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th January 2023 and the extra monthly meeting on 13th February 2023 and they were signed as a true record by the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Lancaster.

6. Matters noted from the Minutes of 12th January 2023

Members noted that the recent Community grant application, to Cumbria County Council, had been successful – with funds to be received to purchase two benches for the alcoves along the new playing field path. The Clerk was instructed to order the benches as soon as practicable.

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

Cllr Hodgson was welcomed, and Members discussed the ongoing reorganisation. Apologies were received from County Cllr Cotton and Mitchell. Cllr Pye did not attend.

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

The Clerk had attended the information evening hosted by Cumbria Association for Local Council on 8th February 2023. Cllr Lancaster highlighted the desire for election cycles (Parish/Town and Westmorland and Furness) to be aligned going forward, to avoid any potentially expensive standalone Parish Council election. For example, Sedbergh Parish Council’s next planned election year is 2026 but there is no other election due that year.

9. Planning

The Planning Committee had not met, a meeting is due to be convened week commencing 27th February 2023.

10. Finance

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 13th February 2023. **i) Resolved - delegation of routine/planned financial commitments (March 2023) in absence of full council meeting (as agreed on Agenda/Minutes previously).**

11. Grants

An application had been received from Sedbergh Community Trust on behalf of the Sedbergh Economic Partnership - £2,500. Members discussed the application, however, due to the retrospective nature of the request Members were unable to approve. The notion of a contribution toward Project Management fees for the Sedbergh Economic Partnership had first been raised in May 2022, however, an application had not been received at that time.

12. Amenities Committee

The Amenities Committee had not met, with the date for their next meeting to be confirmed.

13. Update on Projects

The following ongoing projects/matters were discussed.

- i) Jubilee Fountain, the contractor had not been in touch. Cllr Arnold is awaiting contact, with Members still hoping that this can be coincided with the Coronation of King Charles III.
- ii) Next steps for EV charging Joss Lane and Loftus Hill car parks – the application to the Energy Saving Trust had been approved. The Clerk is now waiting for decisions on other Grant applications, including Yorkshire Dales National Park (Sustainable Development Fund), Cumbria Action for Sustainability and Community Energy Cumbria.
- iii) Parish lighting review, progress continues with new quotes now received for 26 lights (including 4 x heritage lights). Members resolved to accept the new quotes for the project and the Clerk was asked to proceed. It is understood that the lead time for the lights is some 12/14 weeks, with installation being as and when Cumbria County Council are available in the coming months. It was noted that there continues to be a hope to ‘switch off’ some further lights, particularly those currently attached to electricity poles, as enwl continue to decommission these in the coming years (Thorns Lane, New Street and Loftus Manor). A further light, Railton Yard, was also highlighted for potential disconnection. The Clerk is continuing to liaise with enwl (with the support of Friends of the Lake District) in respect of disconnection fees vs future energy savings as part of the wider project.

14. Queen’s Garden

Members had not met. The Clerk noted that Yorkshire Dales National Park Tree Officer had not yet attended the site to give feedback on two trees that had been highlighted for an additional inspection (due to perceived public perception) at the last meeting. In addition, the officer will look at trees previously highlighted at New Bridge (potential ash die back) for reference. The Clerk noted that the Community Trust required some cost estimates for the proposed restorative works at the stone steps, before being able to consider allowing funds, previously allocated for the Bandstand (no longer progressing), to be considered for any refurbishment project. The Clerk was requested to approach some local builders to establish some indicative costings.

15. Future parking

A draft proposal had been circulated to Members for comment/feedback. Whilst this remained in its draft format, Members were asked to consider the report further and respond to Cllr Bromley – in particular, support/suggestions for a parking survey of the town. It was noted that a Cumbria County Council highways officer is due to visit the town 1.3.23, which would give the opportunity to discuss merits of, say, a parking survey for the town (as suggested in the proposal). For example, they may have a suitable survey that could be adapted from another area.

Members noted that it will also be useful to ask for feedback/recent successes on parking generally, including say permitted parking, in other areas of the county.

16. Highways Matters

The Clerk received a response from CCC Highways (December 2022) in respect of the railings at Cross Keys (advising for pedestrian safety) which had been circulated to Members.

Various other matters reported in recent weeks, had also been concluded, including drain clearing, repair of paving flags on Main Street and repair of street lights.

As noted at item 15, an officer from CCC Highways is due to attend Sedbergh on 1st March 2023, to discuss outstanding/ongoing issues relating to highways. For example, concerns previously highlighted include road markings/parking at Thorns Lane/Castlegarth, Highfield/Station Road, Loftus Hill/Busk Lane and general road sign condition.

17. Correspondence

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

- i) Sedbergh Economic Partnership meeting – the notes from the last meeting had been circulated.
- ii) Antoni Gosiewski – Members noted that the permit had been submitted to South Lakeland District Council, and the Clerk awaited confirmation prior to final order of the interpretation panel style plaque, with installation proposed at the cemetery lych gate (Busk Lane). A draft information page for the Visit Sedbergh website had been created, along with a QR code for the plaque in preparation.
- iii) King's Coronation – the notion of commemorative mugs were discussed, the Clerk will liaise further with Sedbergh Primary School.
(Cllr Bromley left the meeting, approx. 9.20pm)
- iv) Sedbergh Bowling Club – Cllr Longlands had met with representation from the club, with details of the final planning application awaited.
- v) Market stall enquiry – Members noted an application for a new stall (sweet treats/traybakes). Whilst Members discussed the similarity with existing stalls, it was resolved to accept their application on a trial basis. Members noted that it would give additional variety for shoppers.
- vi) Sedbergh in Bloom – request for a bin on the Garden at No72 Main Street. The Clerk was asked to confirm that any request should be made to the Community Trust. The slither of land between the garden and the adjoining building remains in poor condition, with the Council, Sedbergh in Bloom and the Community Trust attempting to make contact with the property owner to clear – and potentially cover with netting in the future (late item of correspondence)
- vii) Highways matters raised verbally as late items, the poor condition of Langstone Fell informal parking area – Members were reminded that this was outside of the remit of the Parish Council – noting previous conclusions over ownership/responsibility. Overgrown hedge/ivy along Birks Lane, cemetery wall – the Clerk was asked to write to South Lakeland District Council, noting that a small stretch of wall had lost some top stones due to potential ivy damage too, close to the pedestrian access gate on the southern boundary. Finally, problematic parking of vehicles on the pavement close to Settlebeck Cottages was noted, forcing pedestrians onto the road.

18. Date and Time of next meeting – monthly meeting of Sedbergh Parish Council, to be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 13th April 2023 (no full council meeting in March). Members had resolved delegated continued authority to the Finance Committee to make all payments, deemed necessary in March to meet the financial year end for 2022/2023 and in conclusion of expenditure for Annual Audit.

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.

19. Legacy monies – any update from Solicitors

The Clerk confirmed receipt of £35,545.95 in respect of one legacy, with agreement from the Executor that funds could be used for children’s play equipment in the future. It was anticipated that the second legacy outcome would be concluded by April 2023.

20. Contractors Review

Members noted that the Amenities Committee were in the process of completing a draft contract for Grass cutting/field maintenance – not yet available. Some further information was requested from the Clerk for clarification.

21. Sedbergh Economic Partnership

Members noted the Grant application (see Item 11). In addition, Members noted an item of correspondence in respect of the Sedbergh Economic Partnership. Namely seeking clarity on democratic accountability, use of public monies (if received), general accounting process, terms of reference, who the SEP is responsible to, who attends meetings (are they open meetings) and concern for perceived gravitas on planning comments with Yorkshire Dales National Park. Members acknowledged the letter and discussed the points raised. It was noted that the Sedbergh Economic Partnership was likely due to require a review soon, where these points could be raised further.