

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF SEDBERGH

Minutes of the monthly meeting for the Parish Council of Sedbergh, held at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People’s Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh on Thursday 8 August 2024

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr McPherson.

2. Requests for Dispensations

There were no new requests for additional Dispensations at this meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4. Public Participation

Members welcomed members of the public to the meeting. One resident had attended to raise their continued concern for the uncertain future of public transport. Advising that for anyone unable to drive, it makes living in Sedbergh very difficult. With little connectivity for onward and, importantly, return travel into town. Another advised Members that they had submitted a Subject Access Request for information relating to ongoing BSIP+/Sedbergh bus routes. The Chairman reassured the members of the public that they have the full support of the Parish Council, who have already been in contact with Westmorland and Furness Council (WFC) in respect of the review. Including raising it at WFC recent Cabinet Meeting (See Item 6) in July. Members also welcomed a representative from Sedbergh Economic Partnership (SEP), who attended to review/present their recent Main Street Survey. Members noted that the survey largely told them what they already know, and covers various matters that the Council are already working on. For example, enhanced welcome/attractiveness of the town, including improved parking. Members have been liaising with WFC for several months (and with District and County Council prior) on hoped improvement proposals. Some of which form part of a larger scheme currently being worked on by Sedbergh Parish Council. These involve several interlinking projects, each allowing the other to become more viable. Members noted that it was unfortunate that the SEP and the Parish Council were still not working together, and had not received a reply to their correspondence in July. The impasse was due to previous difficulties/breakdown with the current Chairman of the SEP. There is a hope, therefore, that the SEP can make suitable adjustments in the future in respect of an independent Chairperson, increased transparency of finances and publicly open meetings. These changes will allow Sedbergh Parish Council to reconsider future collaboration. The representative from the SEP advised that all issues, previously raised by the Parish Council, are currently under due consideration and that the SEP are due to meet again in September. The SEP are also hoping to host a Business Network event in September, and Members of the Council are welcome to attend.

5. To adopt the minutes of Sedbergh Parish Council monthly meeting, dated 11 July 2024

Members resolved to adopt the normal monthly minutes, dated 11 July 2024, and they were signed by the Chairman, Cllr Arnold.

6. Matters to note from the Minutes of 11 July 2024 not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda i) any update on public transport/Westmorland and Furness Council Cabinet Meeting 16 July 2024

Members discussed their recent attendance at WFC Cabinet meeting and the strength of feeling around the public transport review - Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+).

Following the informal question and answer session that followed the WFC Cabinet meeting in July, various correspondence had since been exchanged with WFC, and with the Western Dales Bus.

Following responses received from WFC, Members continue to challenge their decision to tender any future public transport, around the Western Dales Bus service. Whilst it is acknowledged that running two buses at almost the same time is preposterous (as currently happening on some days), Members cannot see why WDB are reluctant to adapt around a commercial service (as priority) and ultimately deliver an improved/extended service for the town. Members remain very concerned that WFC is not understanding the gravitas in relation to residents wanting to feel confident in a resilient, future proof commercial service, giving a sense of security and increased connectivity for residents. Members remain grateful for the service the Western Dales Community Bus is giving, particularly their vital Saturday service (which is sometimes oversubscribed). However, feel strongly that a daily commercial service should have priority, and that WDB should adopt a supporting role. Noting, as a registered charity, their ethos to ‘provide a community transport service, including private hire, for such of the inhabitants of the Western Dales (inside and outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park) who need such a service because of age, sickness, or disability (mental or physical) or poverty or because of a lack of availability of adequate and safe public passenger services’. This tailored service would allow visitors to come into and out of the town over an extended period, providing vital links to other towns and improved onward/inward travel for all those visiting or living in the community. All these factors are representative of passengers. With public transport being key to maintain and improve the future economy of the town. Members strongly resolved, therefore, that Cllr Bromley, in conjunction with the Clerk, will draft a further letter for circulation to Members, before final submission to WFC Cabinet for their September. Finally, it was noted that, depending on location of the next Cabinet meeting, representation from Sedbergh may wish to attend/submit a formal question/statement.

7. Report/Update from Westmorland and Furness Council i) to include any update relating to collision on J37 M6 Motorway – 28 July 2024

Apologies had been given for the meeting by Cllr Hodgson. Whilst not present at the meeting, some additional correspondence regarding public transport had been received. Members will continue to liaise further with Cllr Hodgson and thanked her for her input. Cllr Mitchell did not attend.

8. Planning

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 16 July 2024. The Chairman will liaise with Members of the Committee, over any future meeting required, for ongoing applications.

9. Finance

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 6 August 2024, which included approval of all payments recommended (attached) along with adoption of Data Protection Policy, Privacy Notice, Public Participation at Meetings, and new Volunteer Policy **i) Recycling Amenity, Spar site, Station Road – request (by site owner) for Members to reduce number of containers, cover recent maintenance cost, agree to fund future maintenance costs (any update)**. Members noted that all correspondence relating the recycling/bring site at Spar, had been handed over to Westmorland and Furness Council.

10. Amenities Committee

No Amenities meeting had taken place. However, the Chair of the Committee highlighted the lack of response from WFC in respect of the disabled access toilet door improvements (Main Street). Members resolved, therefore, that the delay was unacceptable by WFC. The Clerk was asked to establish the additional cost, from the contractor, as soon as practicable and progress with the planned improvements. Members additionally noted that Sedbergh & Dent United Football Club had not yet given their annual donation toward the maintenance of the football pitch. Members resolved that another request, for the donation, should be issued asking for their donation before 1 September 2024. If the donation is not received, the Council will begin formal liaison with The People’s Hall, so that the joint use of changing facilities (current lease expired) and the pitch area can be jointly discussed.

11. Update on Projects

i) Playground proposal – Cllr Arnold hopes to progress and meet with a consultant to consider professional management of the playground proposal, including tendering process.

A sketch for the proposed car park extension (where the park is currently located) will be requested. The sketch will provide further illustrative detail required for general planning/advice from Yorkshire Dales National Park. Finally, it was noted that potential funding sources for the playground proposal had been raised provisionally with WFC Cabinet on 16 July. Members were pleased that those present, at the Cabinet meeting, seemed positive/supportive of the playground project.

12. Queens Garden

i) Any feedback on tree inspection. Members of the Committee had not met. (see also Item 15, Correspondence).

13. Future Parking

The Chairman and the Clerk had met with WFC Highways on 16 July 2024, and were able to report that WFC will be conducting a parking survey of the town in the coming months, with findings anticipated in early 2025. The survey will be completed over an extended period, to account for changes in visitor numbers and additional parking around term time. **i) New Bridge layby proposal, feasibility study.** Members noted that the Clerk had been requested to submit the feasibility study to WFC Highways, for their further consideration, before progress to YDNPA over potential planning.

14. Highways Matters

The Chairman was able to advise that there was a series of lining work due to be commenced in the Autumn, including refreshing many faded symbols/lines in the town. For example, the mini roundabout at Back Lane/Finkle Street/Loftus Hill. Future consideration of parking/TTRO/yellow lining etc will also follow their review (see Item 13).

15. Correspondence

Receive items of correspondence (late items to be tabled at the meeting) and additionally consider any items for future Agenda.

- i) Sedbergh Economic Partnership (SEP) – (see also Item 4). Following correspondence sent to the SEP in July, no further response had been received.
- ii) Public Space Protection Order – Members noted the ongoing consultation period. WFC had suggested that a fence may be beneficial at the playing field/play area, at Howgill Lane. as part of project to relocate the play area. This might assist future consideration of a PSPO ‘dog exclusion zone’ by establishing a linear boundary for an order to be implemented in the future.
- iii) Lune Gorge (M6) Project – attending September 2024
- iv) Sedbergh Booktown Literary Trust – Members received general correspondence from the Booktown, advising of their hopes to complete a structural survey of 37-39 Main Street (former Udales) and their future aspiration to consider a Community Benefit Society or Co-operative to purchase and develop the redundant building.
- v) Market stall requests – Members welcomed recent enquiries, and asked the Clerk to liaise.
- vi) Sedbergh Bowling Club – Members were advised that the Club is making progress with necessary estimates, to allow future potential grant applications as they progress their project to significantly improve and extend the pavilion.
- vii) Sedbergh Tennis Club – The Club continue to look at ways of increasing membership.
- viii) Kings Court – concern from a resident regarding youths cycling on paths around Kings Court. Members suggested that the resident raise their concern with the local PCSO.
- ix) Sedbergh CIC Parking Permits – Members noted a request for the Council to review their current annual donation for parking permit sales. Members resolved to include this on the Finance Agenda in September (and for the Clerk to obtain comparable information from previous years).
- x) Overnight Parking New Bridge – Members noted correspondence regarding overnight parking/camping at New Bridge, however, acknowledged that there were no restrictions.
- xi) Westmorland and Furness Council – Customer Commitment, members noted the recent draft.

15. Date and Time of next meetings. The normal monthly meeting, commencing 7.30pm on 8 August 2024 in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People’s Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh.