

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 19 December 2024

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Welti and Hutt (one vacancy)

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 received at the meeting.

4. Public Participation

There were three members of the public present. Two members of the public attended to make representation for a planning application, which included amendments made to a previously withdrawn application (The Bourne). Representation also from Sedbergh Information Centre, to hear updates in respect of the recent WFC Bus Service Improvement Plan (see Item 8).

5. To adopt the minutes of Sedbergh Parish Council monthly meeting, dated 14 November 2024

Members resolved to adopt the normal monthly minutes, dated 14 November 2024, and they were signed by the Chairman, Cllr Arnold.

6. Matters to note from the Minutes of 10 October 2024 not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda

None, all relevant matters were included on the agenda.

7. Notice of Vacancy – Co-Option, advertisement is ongoing with the closing date of 31 January 2025.

The Clerk confirmed that the advertisement was in the local newsletter (Lookaround), Parish notice board and on the Parish Council website. It was noted that it had also been shared on social media.

8. Report/Update from Westmorland and Furness Council

Cllr Hodgson and Mitchell did not attend. The Clerk updated Members in respect of recent information shared over WFC’s response to the Local Government Boundary Commission Review for England (LGBCRE). It had recently transpired that WFC’s response, to the consultation, had included the current ward of Sedbergh and Kirkby Lonsdale being split, with Sedbergh joining with Tebay. Members were disappointed that WFC had not engaged with members of Sedbergh Parish Council to seek their thoughts on this prior to submission. Members resolved that the Clerk should write to WFC advising that they believe a connection with Tebay is tenuous and that two single member wards would, perhaps, have been more appropriate. The Clerk was also able to advise Members that WFC continue to negotiate with the land owner at Spar, in respect of the bring site. **i) any update/progress in respect of BSIP+ (Bus Service Improvement Plan) review and recent tender process/awards.** Members had recently established that Sedbergh would not be receiving an enhanced service under the improvement plan. This had followed an announcement by WFC of successful routes, with the current 563 route (via Sedbergh) not been included. It is now understood that BSIP monies (£1.7 million) have all been allocated elsewhere and that Sedbergh will receive no support in this phase of the review. WFC advise that no viable timetable had been submitted by a commercial operator. Western Dales Bus (WDB) have been asked to run a service Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday (and continue with their Saturday service) and that WFC will operate an ‘in house’ service on Monday and Friday.

Members are advised that these services will operate a 16-seater bus only and the new timetable is currently unknown.

Members were very disappointed that an enhanced service had not been established and that none of the BSIP+ monies would be allocated to support Sedbergh, as a rural community, where public transport is needed and should be encouraged/promoted. Furthermore, there remains some outstanding answers to questions asked to WFC, for example, where had the BSIP monies been allocated (full breakdown) including the £20,000 that had originally been allocated to the Sedbergh area. What was the timetable that had been offered by the existing commercial operator, that was considered not viable by WFC and when will the new time table be available. As noted, Members were very disappointed, not least that the new service will be limited to 16 seat capacity, when it is known that the current commercial operator regularly carries greater than this number. Also, that connectivity to some neighbouring towns/rail will now be lost. It is well documented, for example, by the Information Centre that the current 563 service has been instrumental in bringing visitors to the town too, increasing tourism and footfall for the community as well as being an asset to residents needing to travel. Members are advised that the current Stagecoach service will operate to 31 March 2024, to allow time for the new timetable by Western Dales Volunteer Bus and the WFC in house service to be confirmed/established – therefore, WFC hope there will be no break in service.

Cllr Bromley confirmed that their original complaint about the handling of the BSIP had now been referred to the Ombudsmen and the Clerk awaits any update on progress. Members continue to resolve that should any urgent response be required to the Ombudsmen be required, prior to the next meeting -Cllr Bromley, in conjunction with the Chair/Vice Chair and the Clerk may respond to ensure any deadlines are met. Finally, Members resolved that they would consider writing to the local newspaper, in the New Year, outlining their disappointment in the process and the lack of support for the Sedbergh area.

9. Planning

Due to time constraints, Members had briefly met ahead of the Full Council meeting to run through outstanding applications. All formal recommendations below were resolved at Full Council.

S/03/385L Uldale Farm, Fellend, Ravenstonedale, CA17 4LN Full planning permission for a farm diversification scheme for glamping accommodation comprising of 2 No. mirror pods with associated parking and package sewage treatment plant. Objection - Members have serious concerns for the style of the pods, believing that the woodland will not give sufficient cover and the mirror material proposed, will be detrimental to wildlife/livestock.

S/03/385K Uldale Farm, Fellend, Ravenstonedale, CA17 4LN Full planning permission for installation of a 20kWh solar photovoltaic (PV) system on the roof of an existing animal shed. No objection.

S/03/767A The Bourne, Millthrop, Sedbergh, LA10 5SR Householder planning permission for removal of existing porch and outbuildings; erection of a single storey extension with integral garage with part attic space mezzanine and glazed link to main house. No objections. However, Members did have some concern about the roof material proposed, and would prefer to see matching slate in the design.

S/03/186H/AA 54 Main Street, Sedbergh, LA10 5AB Advertisement consent to display a new ATM surround sign for NatWest - No objection.

S/03/622C/LB Millthrop Bridge, C5101, Sedbergh Listed building consent to take down and reconstruct the vehicle damaged pedestrian refuge to the downstream parapet of the bridge. No objection.

S/03/768 Dairy Cottage, High Oaks, Sedbergh, LA10 5ER Householder planning permission for replacement of 10 No. single-glazed timber sash windows (7 to front and 3 to rear) with double-glazed uPVC sash windows of the same dimensions, layout, and colour as the existing. No objections.

10. Finance

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 9 December 2024, which included the previously approved requests for payments (attached).

i) Draft Budget for 2025/2026 and consideration of Precept – Following recommendation of a draft budget, resulting in a proposed Precept of £57,162.49, the Clerk had circulated all relevant information to Members for their ongoing review prior to the January meeting. Formal Precept requests must be submitted to Westmorland and Furness Council by 15 January 2025. The current figures are based on a 7% increase to an equivalent Band D property (see Finance Committee minutes for full breakdown).

ii) Grant application, Sedbergh CIC, Sheepfest – Members resolved to approve the sum of £1000.00 recommended. However, Members additionally noted that the organisers of Sheepfest should also be looking at ways of raising their own income stream in support of any future event.

11. Amenities Committee

Members have not met. However, it was noted at this meeting that Members were frustrated at the slow responses being received from Westmorland and Furness Council in respect of the project to replace the western doors at Main Street toilets. This includes the hope to widen the disabled access toilet to current minimum standards. Most recently WFC had requested plans/full specification for any proposed works to satisfy building control before they would consider consent and any financial donation. The Clerk was asked, therefore, to ask the contractor, previously appointed, if they could supply this information (also noting that there would potentially be an additional expense for this). Members also wished to note that they would like to see more progress being made in respect of improvements to Joss Lane car park, though acknowledge that the delays are around other factors, including YDNPA planning for connected projects (for example, New Bridge layby and play area/extended parking at Howgill Lane). Members are conscious that the condition of Joss Lane car park is unsatisfactory, and hope that projects can begin to progress further in 2025.

12. Update on Projects

i) Playground proposal – pre-application advice with YDNAP, to include proposed car parking area and disabled access pathway to gym. Cllr Arnold hopes to progress with the formal pre-application advice in January 2025.

ii) New Bridge layby proposal – WFC are now considering the drawings submitted, and will report back to Sedbergh Parish Council in the New Year. Following information received from WFC, an approach will then be made to YDNPA in respect of planning.

iii) Community Resilience/Emergency Plan – updated plan now submitted to Westmorland and Furness Council. Following the recent review, an updated plan had now been lodged with WFC's Joint Emergency Management & Resilience Team. Members noted that this very sadly, resonated even more at this time, following the recent devastating fire in Kirkby Lonsdale. Members wished to share their sympathies and condolences with the Kirkby Lonsdale community, where one resident had lost their life, with many businesses and homes destroyed and several others still unable to open. With this significant impact in mind, Members wished that an Emergency Plan contingency fund should also be considered to support the plan going forward.

13. Queens Garden

Members of the Committee had met on 28 November 2024. No notes were available, however, Members had confirmed the recommended tree works (which included 1 x ash, to fell and 1 x maple, to fell. Sedbergh School 'Gives Back' project had carried out several hours of work in the garden recently – with huge thanks noted from Members. The Committee advised there remained ongoing consideration to the stone steps, and that they hope to carry out a patch test to help remove some algae from the steps.

14. Correspondence

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

- i) **Expression of interest EV Charging sites – WFC are seeking potential sites/locations to consider for additional EV chargers (fully funded 7kWh).** It has been suggested that WFC might consider the parking area at The People’s Hall, particularly regarding the extended area proposed. In addition, Members noted that WFC might wish to consider locating a suitable site in Millthop and perhaps the parking bays created at Maryfell.
- ii) **Former BT phone box area, Millthrop.** Members noted that a query had been received in respect of ownership for the small area of land where the kiosk is located. The Clerk had advised that the Parish Council had adopted the kiosk some years ago. And, that it was understood the community of Millthrop had been tidying the surrounding area. The kiosk now houses a defibrillator.
- iii) **Sedbergh Economic Partnership.** Members noted that correspondence had recently been received, raising several queries over the Council’s proposal to relocate coach parking to New Bridge. Members were advised that an initial response had been sent, acknowledging their email, and that advantages and disadvantages for the project continue to be considered. Also highlighting that the proposal to relocate coach parking was to increase parking provision and improve and enhance the town centre public realm.

15. Date and Time of next meeting. The normal monthly meeting was scheduled for 7.30pm on **Thursday 9 January 2025** and will be held, as normal, in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People’s Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh.