

## 10 November 2020, Kirkby Stephen Town Council

### Ordinary Meeting

Kirkby Stephen Town Council, Local Links, Vicarage Lane, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, CA17 4QX

Tel. 017683 74854 | Clerk@kirkby-stephen.com | [www.kirkbystephen.com](http://www.kirkbystephen.com)

Via Zoom video conference at 6:45pm

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**Attending:** Cllrs. J Johnstone, A Birtles, M Walker, D Thornton, S Lancaster (EDC/KSTC); Cllr P Dew (CCC/EDC), Mr C Barnes (Clerk), Z Bromfield (Minutes Secretary), PCSO G Threlkeld and 4 members of the Public.

#### **Public Participation,**

Chrissie Hadfield, was present as organiser of Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre to discuss their hoped-for use of The Evergreen Building. It was agreed she would speak to Agenda item 13.

#### **Participation of District Councillor S Lancaster. (EDC)**

Cllr Lancaster had not prepared a formal report owing to pressure of work.

#### **Participation of Councillor P Dew. (CCC/EDC)**

Cllr Dew spoke to a report given as Appendix 1.

**Eden Chief Executive.** Eden District Council's HR and Appeals Committee had met to discuss the appointment of an interim Chief Executive. They recommended sharing a Chief Executive with Carlisle City Council. A decision will be made at a meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> November.

**Local Government Reorganisation.** EDC has submitted its response to the consultation on a Unitary Authority for Cumbria.

**Western Dales Bus service.** Temporarily suspended during lockdown.

**Library.** The reopening of Kirkby Stephen library has been suspended during the second lockdown; however, it will re-open as soon as the lockdown has been eased.

**Flooding Review.** A longlist of needs was drawn up at an initial meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020. These will be considered in greater detail and consulted on during Phase 2 of the process.

**Household Recycling Centre.** Help will now be given to people with mobility problems who cannot climb the steps to the skips. The centre will remain open during the 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown

**Nateby potholes** have been filled in temporarily.

**Eden Youth Council.** A Working Group met with members of Eden Youth Council on 29<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr Dew reported that Eden Secondary Schools had been contacted to discuss the concerns of school aged children which included: exams, anxiety, the Newton Rigg closure and the importance of youth provision.

**Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre.** In view of the above, and having been involved in Chrissie Hadfield's survey for Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre, Cllr Dew fully supported her proposal and hoped the Town Council will do so too.

**Community Rail Partnership,** Cllr Dew supported the suggestion of a Community Rail Partnership for the Friends of the Settle to Carlisle Line. He felt the railway needs to be recognised as a commuter line linked to the National Rail Network.

**Pavement Parking.** A ban on pavement parking was opposed as this would restrict all parking on South Road, instead there should be more robust enforcement where an obstruction has been caused.

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**Area Planning.** Cllr Dew would advise having a shortlist of achievable priorities.

**Participation of Police**

PCSO G Threlkeld introduced herself as the new local PCSO since September. She described how the position covers a wide area – from Brough to Tebay, and how she has been liaising with local businesses during lockdown. She is looking into an on-going issue regarding repeated damage to parked cars. Police are seeking evidence that will identify the perpetrator. Residents with information should contact Police on 101 and ask for PCSO Threlkeld.

20/069 **Apologies.** Cllr G Wren.

20/070 **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.** Cllr Lancaster DECLARED a personal involvement with the Kirkby Stephen Youth Group. Agenda Item 13.

20/071 **Minutes.**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes (Part 1 & 2) of the meeting held on the 6 October as a true record.

20/072 **Planning - 20/0765** Site address: LAND OFF CHRISTIAN HEAD KIRKBY STEPHEN.  
Description: Discharge of condition 13 (archaeological written scheme of investigation) attached to approval 17/0073. NO OBJECTIONS

20/073 **Planning - 20/0779:** Site address: 7 WESTGARTH ROAD, KIRKBY STEPHEN, CA17 4TF.  
Description: Proposed ground floor extension. NO OBJECTIONS

20/074 **Planning - 20/0759** Site address: WELLFIELD FARM HOUSE, APPLEBY ROAD KIRKBY STEPHEN CA17 4PE, Description: General purpose agriculture and vehicle store.  
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

20/075 **Area Planning** – The Town Clerk referred to the list provided by Kellie Bradburn Sims which had been drawn up for an Area Planning meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> October at which Kellie Bradburn-Sims, Cllr Dew, Cllr Johnstone and The Clerk were present. The items highlighted in green were noted to be potentially deliverable/developable within the year. Councillors were asked to comment on priorities and to Agree which should be given the green light.

1. **Transport Audit**– The Clerk reported that he and Cllr Walker had had a meeting with ACT regarding a transport audit prior to lockdown, ACT would be approached to reengage. Cllr Walker updated that he had been working with a group in Appleby to work with CCC for an improved local bus service, but that this had been suspended when lockdown came. Cllr Dew confirmed that the funds are still there and have been ring-fenced for this use. It was AGREED that the transport audit should be progressed. Cllr Walker noted that this would also tie in with Item 12, the future plans for the Community Rail Partnership. Cllr Walker also confirmed that the early train to Carlisle, and the 16.18 train back have also been re-instated. There was interest in the development of a local ‘Hitching App’ using smart technology that had been suggested as a possibility that might arise from the audit together with the provision of charging infrastructure for Electric Vehicles.
2. **Good Neighbours.** It was AGREED that the Council would continue to support the Good Neighbours Scheme once it was safe to do so, and that the

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measures which had been put into place by the Local Links staff meant that it won't take much to reinstate visits, once it is considered safe to do so.

3. **Health.** It was AGREED that now would not be the right time to contact the Health Centre Practice Manager to discuss social prescribing due to the pressures they will be currently under due to the Covid-19 surge in cases, and the possible rolling out of a vaccine.
4. **Improved signage.** It was AGREED to work with Highways about improving the signage to the available car parks.
5. **Request better monitoring of HGV's using the A685.** Cllr Dew reported that he has worked with Cumbria Highways about this, and that it requires local residents to report it.
6. **Development of Jubilee Park.** The Clerk reported that he had had a meeting on site earlier in the day with the consultant Maria Luczac the specialist recommended by the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership. She had an exciting and very relevant resume. It had been agreed to follow up the site visit with a zoom call with Councillor Wren and following that to re-engage with Kirkby Stephen Community Arts/Stomping Ground whose proposals for adventure play had kickstarted the project. It was AGREED that this initiative should be progressed in the new year. A report would be brought to council at the first opportunity.
7. **Monday Market** – it was AGREED that this needs promotion. It was felt that the pitches should continue to be free into the New Year. Attempts at improving the market would need to be left until spring.
8. **Development of a Local Business group** – it was agreed that this would benefit local businesses, however currently some were struggling to survive because of the Coronavirus Pandemic. If a network were to be set up, it could help businesses to recover and adapt. It was agreed that the Business Development Scheme which had been funded by Eden District Council had been a benefit to the community, and it would be good if it could be reinstated. Cllr Birtles said he would look into this, noting that it was a service which could be delivered remotely.

It was AGREED that 1,2,4,6,7,8, of these projects should go forward in association with the Area Planning process.

20/076 **Finance**

Receipts and Payments up to the 31<sup>st</sup> October were approved including forward approval in principle of regular/budgeted payments, Salaries, PAYE & NIC. The bank reconciliation was presented and approved with a closing balance of £115,504.44. <https://www.kirkby-stephen.com/app/uploads/20201104-October-Bank-Rec-Payments-for-Approval.pdf>

20/077 **Finance**

**Budget review** - The Clerk spoke a paper circulated before the meeting on the budget for the year to date and likely outturn. The impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic had been significant. During his presentation he shared a spreadsheet looking forward to the 2021 22 year which it was agreed would be circulated to councillors for information

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### **Outturn 2020 2021**

Savings arising from the resignation of the Council and Community Centre Manager at Local Links, delays to the maintenance of the Cloisters, grass cutting and the cancellation of the Easter Rally had led to a currently projected surplus of @£9k. The council has already spent or will be spending from and reducing the balances of some of the restricted reserves this year as follows: Calor Fund, Clock Fund & Lady Anne's Way Fund. These reducing balances will be reported with the quarterly budget monitor which will next be updated in January 2021.

**'Properties'** The Clerk sought feedback on his proposal to establish 'Properties' as a budget heading so both leased and owned properties would all be in one category in anticipation of the receipt of further devolved assets. This linked to a proposal for a 'Finance and General Purposes subcommittee' to keep these items under regular periodic review and the proposed establishment of an assets reserve fund. Councillors were 'in principle' supportive of the proposal.

**'Assets Reserve Account'** The council has received agreements and agreements 'in principle' to transfer devolved assets as follows: Footway Lights, Stoneshot Toilets and Carpark and Upper Eden Visitor Centre. In addition, it owns one property of value in the Cloisters. All require periodic maintenance and present cost liabilities. It currently looks as if the council will not now take ownership of the Evergreen Building on Redmayne Road and that this will be vested in a soon to be created charity. The Asset Register shows a current insured value of £993,202.50. This will figure will increase significantly when these properties are added. In addition, the 2007 refurbishment of the Market Place although high quality shows signs of deterioration and it is reasonable to anticipate that maintenance will be required. All these Assets should benefit from the establishment of a sinking fund ('Assets Reserve'). The effect of this fund over the long term would be to help stabilise demand on the precept in respect of the risk of repairs and reduce the risk of borrowing. Councillors were 'in principle' supportive of the proposals.

It was said that KSTC needs to build up its unrestricted reserves to at least the same level as the precept. It was noted that the external auditor would query a reserve that exceeded 2.5 times the precept, though there could be a justification for reserves that exceeded this level. Restricted reserves would not be included in this calculation.

#### **20/078 Refresh of Covid Aware KS Signage**

It was AGREED that the existing banner and signage needs updating against a Winter Trading proposition. The Councillors looked at the one proposed by Sarah Harvey, but AGREED that this one was too similar to the existing one and should be made noticeably different to make the update more obvious. The Clerk reported he would go back to Sarah to amend the proposed update, and to make the 'Covid Aware' part smaller, and the 'Open for Business' part bigger, and to include 'masks must be worn'.

#### **20/079 Clerk's update**

1. **Poetry Path** – The Clerk reported that he has written to all the landowners to clarify ownership. The stones were commissioned by the East Cumbria Countryside Project, which no longer exists, and the licences granted to the East Cumbria Countryside project for the stones to remain in place by

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landowners have expired. The early indication is that landowners are happy for the stones to remain in place, and that there is support to maintain the walk as an asset to the Town. The Clerk reported that the part of the path between Bollam Lane and the Viaduct is in a poor condition owing to 'scouring' during flooding events and that he has spoken to CCC who have earmarked funds for repairs but have made these repairs conditional on the resolution of the flooding off the highway that causes the damage to the path between Bollam Lane and Swingy Bridge.

2. **Jubilee Park** – The Clerk had had met with a consultant recommended by the Westmorland Dales Project, Maria Luczac in the morning. It had been agreed in a prior meeting with the Westmorland Dales Partnership that the council did not have the expertise/capacity necessary 'in house' to develop a project/management plan for the park and the introduction had been made by them with the intention of supporting the council. Maria would debrief the Clerk and Councillor Wren by Zoom on her visit with advice to come to a future meeting. It was hoped to develop a bid to the Westmorland Dales Partnership for funds in the new year and to reengage with Kirkby Stephen Community Arts and Stomping Ground over their proposals for adventure play at Jubilee Park.
3. **Pest Control** – The Clerk has been approached by 'Rabbit Express' who have been brought in by landowner adjacent to the carpark. They have also made links with Christian Head & KSGS They would clear rabbits using ferrets. They would charge £104 and fill in the holes afterwards. They are fully insured. It was recognised that this approach, partnership with adjacent affected landowners and the use of ferrets had significant benefits over the use of poisons. It was AGREED to employ their services. Cllr Lancaster also raised that she has been approached about a potential pigeon problem, after some pigeons have been displaced following the renovation of barns which they had previously inhabited. The use of birds of prey had been suggested to her. Enquiries would be made.

20/080 **Community Rail Partnership**

KSTC has been approached by John Carey to support a bid by the Friends of Settle & Carlisle Line (FOSCL) to become a Community Rail Partnership, thereby protecting it as a commuter line, and part of the national rail link, and not just a tourist line. This was fully SUPPORTED by all Councillors.

20/081 **Young People's Charity**

Following her Declaration of Personal Interest, Cllr Lancaster did not take part in the discussion.

A letter, previously circulated, was read out by Chrissie Hadfield, representing 'Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre', setting out hopes and aims for use of the Evergreen Building. Cllr Walker wished to clarify his comments from the last meeting, he did not 'object' to the proposals, but he thought the building shouldn't be exclusively reserved for young people so as not to exclude future projects.

Cllr Birtles' recommendation would be that a new charity should be set up, with the Town Councillors as Trustees. The aims of the Charity would need to be decided, and whilst making it primarily for children and youth projects, he agreed that it should not be reserved solely for this purpose. He proposed that the building (the Charity's asset) should then be leased to Chrissie Hadfield/Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre for a suggested 3 years, which would allow them to establish and achieve

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their goals, free of interference in the immediate term. Access to the building would be managed and controlled by Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre during the period of their initial lease.

Cllr Birtles reported that he anticipated that the establishment of a new charity would take about 40 days. Funding could be applied for as soon as there is a constitution set up. Chrissie Hadfield confirmed that a constitution had been prepared for Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre.

All Councillors SUPPORTED Cllr Birtles proposal. Chrissie Hadfield confirmed that she feels that the Young People's Charity will be able to raise the money for the equipment they will need inside.

20/082 **Portfolios**

**Proposal to establish sub-committees.** The clerk sought councillors' views on the following:

A Finance committee: 5 Councillors to meet four times a year, (3 Councillors needed to make it quorate) to review the budget and monitor targets, to review the asset and risk register and to deal with property issues and staffing matters. Decisions would need to be ratified at full council.

A Planning Committee: 5 Councillors to meet fortnightly by Zoom (3 Councillors needed to make it quorate), to discuss and respond to minor planning applications and refer larger or controversial applications to full council. This would result in shorter agendas for full council.

Councillors were generally supportive 'in principle'. The Clerk asked for councillors' feedback before the proposal was formalised.

**Community** – None

**Highways** – it was felt that pavement parking could not be banned totally from Kirkby Stephen. It was AGREED that bay markings should be used, and then further issues should be considered on an individual basis. It was DECIDED that the Councillors would reply as a Council, and then also individually.

**Open Spaces** – it was reported that Ash Die Back has been identified in the wood at Edensyde, the trees will be thinned out as had already been decided.

Cllr Johnstone wished to thank Alan Simpson for the excellent work he had done in tidying the Market Square in time for the Remembrance Service.

Cllr Johnstone also reported that a new planter is needed for the corner of Redmayne Road. Cllr Johnstone would look for one. It was proposed that funds could either be used from the Open Spaces budget or with appropriate consent, the Calor Reserve.

PCSO G Threlkeld asked if the tree outside the Police Station is the responsibility of the KSTC as it is overhanging the police station sign. The Clerk will look into this.

Cllr Johnstone reported that the Rotary Club are intending to do a major painting program and improve some of the seats.

**Property** – None.

**Tourism and Events** –the Christmas lights team will be installing as soon as it is appropriate to do so, Lights should be in place at the beginning of December, even if there aren't as many as last year. New icicle lights have been purchased for the Market Square.

**Christmas trees** – Cllr Lynch reported that Ian & Rachael Gowing have kindly donated the Christmas Trees for the town this year, any donations could be made to Kirkby Stephen Community Support. He updated that John Popple has identified the Christmas Trees to be cut down, and that Ian Gowing will organise this and the

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transport into Kirkby. John Popple has also offered to install the trees for free this year. This proposal was AGREED by all Councillors and Cllr Lynch agreed speak to Eden Valley Produce.

**Christmas window display and judging** – it was AGREED that this year, due to restrictions on judging due to Coronavirus, Cllrs Johnstone and Thornton would judge the window displays, and that the judging period would be extended until 11<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Johnstone and Zelda will update local businesses re the Christmas Trees and the window judging.

**Window Wanderland** – Cllr Lynch would like to suggest Kirkby takes part in Window Wanderland in February/March, involving business and home windows being animated. This will be discussed further at the next meeting. A short video was shown.

**Christmas in the Cloisters** – has been organised primarily by KSCS, giving Kirkby Stephen children chance to meet a socially distanced Santa Clause. Cllr Lancaster raised a suggestion that local children were encouraged to ring a bell for Santa at 6pm on Christmas Eve, as has been discussed for other areas. Cllr Johnstone said that concerns had been raised that the Christingle will not go ahead this year, and thought this could be a replacement. Cllr Johnstone will speak to the Vicar.

<meeting ends 21:40>

## Appendix 1

### Report of County Councillor Phil Dew

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- Covid-19 [Item 10] – the rate of confirmed new cases in Eden is slowing down – 93 [week ending 30 October, 2020]. The Director of Public Health, Colin Cox, is seeking to improve local contact tracing and links with national testing. The vaccine breakthrough is a big step forward.
- Local Government Reorganisation – EDC submitted an Outline Proposal on 9 November, 2020, but no decision has been taken on the final model. This will have to be decided by 9 December, 2020. Discussions/negotiations are ongoing but the preferred combination is Carlisle, Allerdale and Eden.
- EDC – the HR & Appeals Committee met on 10 November, 2020, to discuss the appointment of an interim CE. The recommendation was to share the CE - Dr Jason Gooding - with Carlisle City Council. The Full Council, which meets on 26 November, 2020, will make the final decision.
- Western Dales Bus – services have been suspended during lockdown
- Pavement Parking [Item 14.4] – the Government is carrying out an online consultation. Options range from a complete ban to more robust enforcement where an obstruction is being caused.
- Area Planning [Item 7] – a ‘long list’ of potential projects has been drawn up which I have contributed to. Priorities will have to be agreed which should be SMART [specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound]
- Flooding – the Stage 1 Initial Flood Assessment is nearing completion. I met with officers on Friday, 9 October, 2020, to discuss local concerns. A long list of options has been drawn up and these will be considered in greater detail at the Stage 2 Appraisal phase when there will be a public consultation
- Library – lockdown has prevented the re-opening of the library but the decision to re-open has been taken in principle - and I have been assured that there are no plans in place to close the library
- CYP Working Group – we met virtually with members of Eden Youth Council on 29 October, 2020, and discussed issues of relevance to the YP including next years exams, mental health, Newton Rigg, digital connectivity, the Make Your Mark Ballot and the importance of universal youth provision
- Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre – following the last Town Council – and at your request - I arranged for Chrissie Hadfield to carry out a comprehensive youth survey in KSGS with the cooperation of the HT Gary Hartley. Chrissie will refer to the results under Item 13. I fully support the initiative being led by Chrissie - which is more vital than ever.
- Care Leavers – last year 42 Christmas hampers were given to Care Leavers in Carlisle/Eden and we’re running a similar campaign this year – notices have been posted on various FaceBook pages - donations can be left at the Local Links – by arrangement. I sit on the Care Leavers Forum and the YP were hugely appreciative of the effort made last year
- HWRC- the local site is remaining open and arrangements have been made to assist those who have mobility issues and cannot climb the steps to the skips

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- Eden Local Committee – met on 28 October, 2020 when we discussed various Highways issues including the Brough/KS cycleway. A study was carried out by Capita Symonds in 2009 and the cost was estimated as approximately £750k which is prohibitive. However I keep pushing for HE funding in the light of the A66 dualling and the fact that the A685 is the official diversion route in the event of a closure west of Brough. Discussions are ongoing!
- Nateby Road Potholes – following the last TC meeting I contacted Highways about the potholes which were duly filled in on a temporary/emergency basis. Operatives will return to do a more permanent job in the future
- Police Presence – Gemma Threlkeld - our PC based in Appleby - stopped by recently to introduce herself
- Broadband – B4RN are currently progressing down Mallerstang and also in Brough
- Town Council Organisation [Item 14.1] – I think sub-committees for planning and finance are a good idea but you can go too far given the small number of councillors.
- Community Rail Partnership [Item 12] – I am in regular contact with John Carey [Friends of Settle Carlisle Line] and fully support the bid for Community Rail Partnership status which will give the group a say in timetabling and help secure the future of the line which is more than simply a tourist/leisure attraction but a vital rural commuter transport link in an integrated transport network.

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## Appendix 1

Pre Budget Review/Briefing, Christian Barnes Clerk/RFO KSTC

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## Pre-Budget Briefing

**Budget Outturn 2021**

The Council set a balanced (+£500 surplus) budget last year. In addition, it planned to make a £5,000 contribution to its reserves in line with a commitment made in 2018 to build back depleted reserves. Turnover was budgeted as follows:

**Income**

Actual 2019 2020*	Budget 2020 2021	30 Sept 2020 YTD	%	Remaining
£112,988	£113,912	£107,910	95%	£6,002

**Expenditure**

Actual 2019 2020*	Budget 2020 2021	30 Sept 2020 YTD	%	Remaining
£102,186	£113,412	£51,350	45%	£62,062

*\*(excludes £75k Signature Fund Award)*

**Changes to Outturn**

The Budget income will be reduced by loss of advertising income in relation to the website and newsletters and other income compromised by the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Receipts not balanced by corresponding expenditure are expected to be reduced by an estimated £3.3k when the following are taken into account:

Remaining	Actual 2019 2020	Budget 2020 2021	30 Sept 2020 YTD
Community Newsletter	£2,394	£1,700	£464
Market Fees	£964	£500	£0
Parish Contributions	£400	£700	£400
Room Hire	£554	£360	£0
Website Listings	£1,513	£1,000	£63
	<b>£5,825</b>	<b>£4,260</b>	<b>£927</b>

The Budget expenditure will be impacted by savings rounded down to £16,000 when the following significant changes are taken into account:

1. The resignation of the Council and Community Centre manager (estimated saving £9,365)
2. Underspend in Open spaces (estimated saving £3,000)
3. Easter Vehicle Rally (estimated saving £650)
4. Cloisters Maintenance (estimated saving £3,000)

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**Estimated 2020 21 Outturn**

<b>Item</b>		
1 April 2020 b/fwd.		£68,979
Budget Income 2020 21	£24,867	
Adj.	-£3,333	
Sub total		£21,534
Precept 2020 21		£94,046
Budget Expenditure 2020 21	-£113,412	
Adj.	£16,000	
Restricted reserves.	-£8,990	
Sub total		-£106,402
30 March 2021 Bal.		£78,157

A surplus of £9,178 is now estimated. The revised estimated closing balance of £78,157 will include significantly reduced 'restricted' reserves. The budget monitor presented at the end of the first quarter projected a closing balance (including restricted reserves) of £74,480 on the 30 March 2021.

**Reserves**

As a result of the estimated surplus (£9,178) at the year end, the unrestricted General Reserve (Bank) is expected to increase.

The council has already spent or will be spending from and reducing the balances of some of the restricted reserves this year as follows: Calor Fund, Clock Fund & Lady Anne's Way Fund. These reducing balances will be reported with the quarterly budget monitor which will next be updated in January 2021.

**Recommendations for discussion.**

The council has received agreements and agreements 'in principle' to transfer devolved assets as follows: Footway Lights, Stoneshot Toilets and Carpark and Upper Eden Visitor Centre. In addition, it owns one property of value in the Cloisters. All require periodic maintenance and present cost liabilities. It currently looks as if the council will not now take ownership of the Evergreen Building on Redmayne Road. The Asset Register which has yet to be revised in the 2020 2021 year (I am planning to bring it to the March Meeting) shows a current insured value of £993,202.50. This will increase significantly when these properties are added. In addition, the 2007 refurbishment of the Market Place although high quality shows signs of deterioration and it is reasonable to anticipate that maintenance will be required. In relation to revenue needs of the soon to be devolved assets, the Town Council will need to make financial provision in its precept for the costs of operating the toilet block (the current annual cost to Eden is @ £17,000). I anticipate and recommend that the Upper Eden Visitor Centre when it is transferred will be leased to the CIC on terms to be agreed but that it will not represent an immediate cost to the council. Nonetheless these assets should benefit from the establishment of a sinking fund ('Assets Reserve').

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1. I recommend that the council establishes and commits to building up a restricted 'Assets Reserve'. I would welcome councillors input and discussion of this idea.

The council decided not to appoint a replacement for the Council and Community Centre Manager in the current situation and the Chairman has asked councillors to respond to her with their ideas for how the council might restructure and reorganise itself to deliver its functions and services in a very changed environment. These changes include the proposed local government reorganisation. It is reasonable to assume that the proposed move to a unitary authority in Cumbria will also require a review and reorganisation of Local Councils and that devolution will require Local Councils to improve service delivery capacity. As we move forward and hopefully the impact of the Pandemic recedes, the council should plan and formalise what these changes are. I favour an approach that is based on costs linked to project delivery roles associated with specific projects/initiatives rather than inflating core costs. The Area Planning initiative led by the County Council presents a good summary of what these priorities might be.

2. I recommend that the council makes provision in its 2021 22 budget for a facilitator to draw councillors suggestions together and help us match them to opportunities.

Christian Barnes (Clerk/RFO) 4/11/2020.

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