

## 13 April 2021, 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. P Richardson, A Birtles, M Walker, D Thornton, C Lynch, C Barnes (Clerk), Z Bromfield (Minutes Secretary)

One member of the public.

**The meeting opened with the Chairman and Council offering sincere condolences to Cllr Phil Dew, on the sudden death of wife Anne.**

**The council observed one minute's silence to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh.**

#### **Public Participation,**

Cllr Richardson provided details of a request from Nateby & Wharton WI to restart their Chip and Chat evenings in the Masonic Gardens. The first one will be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. There were no objections.

Cllr Walker reported that the matter of speeding on South Road had been raised with him, however he felt it would be more appropriate to discuss this further in Item 18, point 4.

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

Cllr Lancaster reported a split within the Independent group, she is now in opposition. She also reported that EDC are discussing extending the grants for the devolution of services for another year. When it goes to Committee she will be supporting this.

#### **Participation of Police (None)**

It was noted that the Clerk had collected all the Circulars received from the Police and forwarded them to the Councillors before the meeting. There was nothing else to report.

20/138 **Apologies.** Cllr P Dew (bereavement), Cllr G Wren (work).

The resignation of Cllr Girvan was announced, and the Chairman and Council thanked her for her contribution. The Clerk would notify the monitoring officer and advertise the vacancy.

20/139 **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.** Cllr Birtles noted his interest in Agenda Item 4.

20/140 **Minutes.**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 as a true record.

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20/141 **21/0140 Site address: SPRINGSIDE REDMAYNE ROAD KIRKBY STEPHEN CA17 4RL**  
Description: Proposed alterations and extension and outbuilding.  
Cllr Birtles temporarily left the meeting for the discussion of this item.  
No objections

20/142 **21/0131 Site address: LAND AT CHRISTIAN HEAD, CHRISTIAN HEAD KIRKBY STEPHEN, CA17 4HA** Cllr Birtles rejoined the meeting.  
Description: Discharge of condition 5 (materials), attached to approval 19/0696.  
No objections

20/143 **21/0309 Site address: ORCHARD HOUSE, MELLBECKS KIRKBY STEPHEN, CA17 4AB**  
Description: Removal of several trees. Received date: 23/03/2021  
No objections

20/144 **Policy on Co-options**

1. It was RESOLVED to adopt the draft policy on co-options
2. The Clerk was authorised to advertise vacancies.

20/145 **Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre**

The Clerk reported that 2 meetings of the project group have taken place. Lewis Surveyors Associates have been appointed to cost the works needed, and the report is expected shortly. The Clerk and the Fundraising Officer for Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre, Naomi Parker, had met with Ellen Clements of Cumbria Community Foundation, regarding a grant towards the costs. The maximum grant would be between £10,000 and £20,000. Eden Community Fund could make a maximum grant of £10,000. KSYC/KSTC would then need to look to the Lottery Fund or the Garfield Weston for the remainder of funding. The group will require two sorts of funding – capital funding for the building, and then revenue costs once the project is up and running.

There is no news yet on funding from CCC, on whether KSYC will receive the full £12k, or will have to share it with another applicant.

The Clerk anticipates building repair costs to be high. The roof needs insulating, however it has been suggested that the walls should be insulated too. This would be best done externally at the same time when the roof is insulated.

The builder had raised concerns about cracks in the walls, however the surveyor (having examined them) has confirmed there is no need for a structural survey and that the building is in sound structural condition.

The Clerk is having problems transferring the utility bills. The gas supply has been disconnected after the surveyor smelt gas, however the leak was found to be outside the building. The Council/Charity when it is established, will need to carry out electric testing, asbestos testing and, acting as landlord, Energy Performance testing for which a result of Grade E or better will be required. In the surveyors opinion the scope of works proposed would comfortably achieve this. The Clerk was authorised to transfer £1,500 at the year-end to a restricted reserve dedicated to the Youth Centre to fund costs incurred to date.

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Cllr Birtles reported that the constitution is ready to be submitted to the Charity Commission. Kirkby Stephen Town Council will be the sole trustee of an unincorporated charitable trust. It was AGREED the chairman would sign the papers the following day.

**20/146 Joan Johnstone**

Two ideas have been put forward to date:

- 1) The creation of a Bursary named after Joan, which will be linked to Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre.
- 2) The renaming of an area of Market Street outside the Visitor Centre to Joan Johnstone Place. The Clerk reported that he has written to Eden District Council to check the procedure on renaming streets and will report back.

Other suggestions may still be put forward.

**20/147 Market Place Consultation**

The first part of the consultation has now been concluded. All freeholders have been contacted there had been a good response, the deadline for replies has now passed. The Council will now need to make a final decision on the proposed area to register, and the number of registrations necessary after taking further advice from the legal department at Eden District Council and the Highways authority. It was expected that a further report would come back to the council in the Summer.

**20/148 Unitary Consultation**

The various options were considered. Concerns were raised that being part of the Upper Eden Valley means that the area is often overlooked. It was recognised that whichever proposal is adopted the danger of this will remain the same. The Council will need to stress rural isolation and the difficulties of accessing services in Upper Eden. It was suggested that the rural parishes will need to come together to voice their concerns and needs, whichever proposal is imposed.

Councillors could not agree on which proposal would best meet the needs of Kirkby Stephen and the surrounding area. It was AGREED that Councillors would submit individual responses.

**20/149 Footway Lights Update + Mill Gardens**

The Clerk reported that he did a survey of all the street lights in Kirkby Stephen in May 2020. He is disappointed to report that despite being in the last year of the devolution agreement (from EDC to KSTC), the work has not yet been completed. He has reported this to EDC who say that they are having difficulty in getting Electricity NW to complete outstanding works, a number of complaints had been received from residents relating to this.

Mill Gardens lights. Following the last KSTC meeting, the Clerk and several Councillors had a meeting at Mill gardens. Other neighbours also came along, some of whom said they did not wish the light to be repaired/replaced. The Clerk reported that the light lights up the path to Mill Gardens, and raised concerns that if no light was erected, once residents had left the pathway from Mill Gardens which is very well lit, they would struggle to see. He therefore suggested that Mill Gardens be approached to extend their lighting circuit to support the installation of a bulkhead light on their perimeter wall.

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It was AGREED that the Clerk approach the Housing Association who run Mill Gardens to suggest this, and offer a one-off payment of £250 for the installation of a light (but not for future running costs).

20/150 **High Street Reopening Update on funding opportunities.**

The Clerk has not yet received details of the £47K Fund which EDC have earmarked to support High Streets reopening. It was noted that new banners will be required. Cllr Lynch has spoken to Kellie Bradburn-Sims and she has agreed to give a presentation on funding previously granted to Kirkby Stephen and what it was used for. Kite Innovations – who are currently providing business support on behalf of EDC – would also give a presentation. These could be used to help businesses set up a business network to replace the Town Forum.

20/151 **Finance**

Receipts and Payments up to the 31st March 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 £93,699.07. <https://www.kirkby-stephen.com/app/uploads/20210405-March-Bank-Rec-Payments-for-Approval.pdf>

20/152 **Finance 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Budget Monitor**

The Clerk referred to the budget monitor which had been forwarded to all the Councillors. He explained that the reserve at the bank at the year-end was £93,699, which was an increase from the £87,173 budgeted figure.

Income: Market income was lower than budgeted due to the fact that market charges were stopped during the March 2020 lockdown and have not yet been reinstated. Income from the Council & Community Centre was also lower due to the loss of advertising income from the website and newsletter due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The VAT reclaim had been much higher than anticipated due to VAT recovery on the commission of 'Lady Anne's Way.

Expenditure: Council & Community Centre costs were significantly lower than budgeted, primarily due to the resignation of the Centre Manager who had left in August. Maintenance had not been undertaken in the Cloisters and therefore its costs were also lower than budgeted. VAT on purchases was lower than anticipated.

The council APPROVED proposed alterations to the budget monitor and authorised the publication of restated budget monitors for the 3 preceding quarters. It was noted that a statement of Variances would be produced from Audit Purposes and presented at the next meeting.

Councillors APPROVED the final budget monitor for the year.

Cllr Walker queried the balance in the Calor Fund. The Clerk will liaise with Cllr Walker and report back.

20/153 **Finance Restricted Reserves**

1. The transfer of £1,500 to the Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre Reserve was confirmed.

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2. It was AGREED that expenses incurred in respect of the former Evergreen Building could be charged to this reserve.
3. It was agreed to establish a dedicated restricted 'Assets Reserve' – the Clerk advised on the need to make a provision for future costs for the Council's Assets including the devolution of assets from EDC, which is currently taking place.
4. It was also agreed that provision would also be made for the Joan Johnstone Bursary connected to a surplus of revenues received in respect of the former Evergreen building.

20/154 **End of Year Accounts**

The Council APPROVED the end of year accounts for publication

The objective of increasing the councils unrestricted reserve to the equivalent of one year's precept had been achieved meaning that future budgets should seek to maintain rather than increase reserves.

20/155 **Portfolios**

**1. Town Council Administration.** Plans to change the use of the Community Centre were raised which includes the Clerk having a desk in the Community Room, thereby changing the Centre into more of an office. Two computers will continue to be provided for access by the public. It was suggested that the white board should be replaced with a monitor which could be used in meetings and during the day as a 'What's On' Board. The changes were SUPPORTED. The need for computer support was discussed. It was felt that KSTC were overpaying for IT Support, and that it would be better to employ IT services as they are needed. Remote meetings - The Clerk reported that current government legislation only allows for remote meetings to be held until 7 May. The government need to address this, and either extend it, or provide support and advice to Parish Councils on how to hold meetings in person safely. The relaxation of Covid restrictions were not envisaged before the 21<sup>st</sup> June meaning that the June meeting would possibly need to be delayed.

**2. Community Planning (None)**

**3. Community.** Cllr Walker confirmed that the replacement Tuesday bus service to Penrith by Westmorland Dales had started today. He noted that seating is restricted, in order to be able to meet Covid regulations, but hopes that 3 runs a day will help with this. 3 services a day also means that it can bring visitors in to Kirkby Stephen.

**4. Highways (Speed watch & 20 MPH limit?)** Cllr Walker is unlikely to resurrect the Speed Watch group due to the fact that many of the volunteers were over 70. A 20mph speed limit has previously been suggested to Highways, however they had rejected this due to it being a trunk road, though it was thought that other trunk roads have had 20 mph speed limits introduced on them. Three other suggestions were put forward:

- a) Install a permanent speed monitor
- b) Install alternate direction traffic lights
- c) Install speed control traffic lights which are triggered by speeding. It was reported that these have been installed in Dumfries on the A74 Trunk Road, they are proving to be very effective.

Cllr Walker said he would speak to Cllr Dew about the suggestions made when he returned.

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**5. Open Spaces**

NW Arb had now chipped the trees that they felled at Edensyde.

It was confirmed that plants have been ordered for the town planters.

The Clerk expects to receive formal notice of the Jubilee Park application within the next week.

Forecourt Litter at Edensyde – the clerk had received 3 reports in 3 weeks about the amount of litter in the area. He has met with EDC and asked them to install an additional bin. The garage has changed their bins so less waste blows out, and the staff are sometimes asked to go out and pick litter up, however there is still a lot of litter, some of which ends up in the river, especially forecourt gloves. Cllr Lynch recommended a product designed to deal with this problem. It was also suggested that the car registration number could be written on the receipt to identify who it belonged to. Netting being installed above the current hedging to act as a barrier, to stop litter blowing over the fence and into the river and Edensyde, was also suggested. It was agreed that the Clerk will write to the garage owners with these suggestions.

**6. Property (None)**

**7. Tourism & Events (None)**

20/156 **Date of Next Meeting.**

4 May 2021 three meetings.

20/157 **Calendar of meetings 2021/2022**

- 04/05/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 04/05/2021 (Electors' Meeting)
- 04/05/2021 (Annual Meeting of the Council)
- 08/06/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 06/07/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 07/09/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 05/10/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 02/11/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 07/12/2021 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 11/01/2022 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 08/02/2022 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 08/03/2022 (Ordinary Meeting)
- 12/04/2022 (Ordinary Meeting)

20/158 **Exclusion of the Press and Public.**

To resolve to exclude the press and public by a resolution of the council on the grounds that publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business in respect of the following agenda item.

20/159 **Staffing Matters (Confidential Minute)**

<ends 8.45pm>

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Chairman

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Date

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