

04 May 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

Immediately following the Annual Meeting and Electors' meeting starting at 6.45 pm online.

Attending: Cllrs. P Richardson, A Birtles, M Walker, D Thornton, C Lynch, C Barnes (Clerk), Z Bromfield (Minutes Secretary)

Cllr P Dew (CCC/EDC) & PC A McKirdy

Public Participation,

None

Participation of District Councillor P Dew (CCC/EDC.

Appleby Horse Fair. Cllr Dew reported on two recent meetings of the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordination Group (MASCg) in April to discuss the Fair. The Fair would normally take place over the first weekend in June; however, it is unable to take place then due to the Covid restrictions in place at the time.

Cllr Dew expressed his disappointment at the fair having been authorised to take place on 12th August. He had suggested cancelling the Fair for this year, or holding it in September at the earliest, however the traveller community had wanted it to be held in July or August. The Police representative (Superintendent Matt Kennerley) had preferred July, but the Chair of EDC (Les Clark) had proposed August as a compromise.

Cllr Dew noted that MASCg operates as a 'co-ordinating' group for various statutory agencies, it had within its terms of reference no decision-making powers. The date of 12th August had been discussed and proposed outside the meeting. The locally elected representatives on MASCg including himself had opposed this proposal to hold a later horse fair, feeling that local businesses may be forced to close again, instead of being able to maximise their income during the tourist season. Elected Representatives felt that businesses need the opportunity of trading more than ever this year, following the amount of time they have been forced to close during the lockdowns.

Cllr Dew raised concerns over Watter Yat (Watergate Bottom), as a new owner had restricted access to vehicles and travellers are unlikely to be able to use the land as a campsite during the lead up to the fair. He expressed concern that Eden District Council/MASCg had not provided alternative arrangements, and encampments could therefore be displaced to the A685 trunk road. It was felt that the road would also be extra busy due to it being the tourist season. The police have confirmed that there will be the same deployment as there was in 2019. However, the RSPCA will not be able to attend in the same way they did in 2019, due to having other commitments at that time. ADG

Youth Provision. The decision of whether The Children's and Young People's Working Group of Eden Local Committee would support the Youth Group with a donation of £12k has been postponed until May. A proposal for £4K of the fund to be given towards the

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106 Shap/Tebay bus has been put forward, however Cllr Dew is still hoping the full £12K will be granted to the Youth Group.

Jubilee Park. The Grant panel have approved the application.

Highways – Cllr Dew has asked CCC Highways to look at several issues – a pedestrian crossing on High Street, the road junctions next to Kirkby Stephen Grammar School, parking near the Primary School due to the recent incident there and the continuing issue of speeding on South Road.

Devolvement of Assets has now been suspended by EDC due to the Local Government re-organisation. Cllr Dew recognised the lateness of this decision.

A66 Dualling- Cllr Dew had met with Matt Townsend (Highways England) in April to discuss how the road would affect Warcop. Cllr Dew had stressed the need to upgrade the A685, due to the impact the dualling would have on it. Matt Townsend had said that this was OUTSIDE the scope of the project, and Cllr Dew had stated it should be INSIDE, in order to address issues like Midland Hill Bridge and building a cycle path.

Participation of Police

PC Amanda McKirdy, was present to discuss issues primarily relating to the Appleby Horse Fair. She confirmed that the police intend to follow the 2019 model for staffing, and recognised that there would be challenges.

- 21/020 **Welcome & Apologies.**
Apologies were received from Cllrs Lancaster and Wren.
- 21/021 **To receive any Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.**
NONE
- 21/022 **Minutes**
The Chairman was authorised to sign the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 13 April 2021 as a true record.
- 21/023 **Co-option.**
A statement prepared by John Murray who had applied to be a Councillor had been distributed to the Councillors. Everyone was very happy with it, and it was AGREED that John would take the position. The Clerk informed him he will be in touch with the paperwork.
- 21/024 **Planning - 21/0369 Site address: BRANT HOWE, NATEBY ROAD, KIRKBY STEPHEN, CA17 4JN.** Description: Proposed rear two storey extension, front porch and alterations. SUPPORTED
- 21/025 **Planning 21/0365 Site address: THE OLD FOUNTAIN, 35 MARKET STREET, CA17 4QT.** Description: Discharge of condition 3 (window details), attached to approval 20/0705. SUPPORTED
- 21/026 **Planning 21/0337 Site address: ORCHARD HOUSE, MELLBECKS KIRKBY STEPHEN, CA17 4AB.** Description: Two storey rear extension and alterations. NO OBJECTIONS
- 21/027 **Appleby Horsefair**

Concerns were raised again over the travellers camping on the side of the A685 road, and how dangerous this would be, particularly during the peak tourist season. PC McKirdy recognised the issues and confirmed that there will police presence and they will be having regular meetings with Highways. Daily meetings with the Police will also be organised, probably over Zoom, with the Parish Councils, then hopefully they will receive helpful insights and not just criticism. Cllr Dew reported that he feels EDC should have been more proactive to find camping areas for the travellers. He also raised concerns that the Chief Superintendent Gold Command, Kennerley, who agreed to the proposed later dates for the Fair, is new to the position and has not experienced the Fair yet. Cllr Dew also recognised that MASCG need to be more proactive regarding Phase 1 of the Fair - 'travelling to the fair', and that putting measures in place for Appleby, during the Fair, only deals with Phase 2. PC McKirdy reported that EDC licensing officer Steve Wilder has consulted with the Licensees in Appleby and they are intending to close during the Fair. They will ask the Licensees in Kirkby Stephen in the next few weeks.

21/028 **Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre**

The surveyors report and schedule of works has arrived. The Clerk will forward it to the Councillors and the Youth Group the following day. The underlying estimated costs are broadly in line with expectations. The Surveyor had included provision for fees and Main Contractors overhead/profit which required review. The next step would be to go through the schedule with the Youth Group and split it into – must haves/likes/not necessities and anything the Group could do themselves. The updated list will then need to be brought back to the Town Council for approval.

21/029 **Jubilee Park**

The Clerk reported that he had been told by the Westmorland Dales Board that the grant had been approved on 15th April, and had expected to receive conditions of the grant but they have not yet arrived. He was therefore unable to provide more details and would chase it up the following day.

21/030 **Joan Johnstone – plans to commemorate the contribution of Joan Johnstone to Kirkby Stephen.**

Changing the name outside the Visitors Centre is not possible, as the addresses nearby would also need to be changed, and this would incur a fee. The records held at the Land Registry would also need to be changed and EDC would not support it as their related records would also need to be changed. Alternative suggestions put forward were changing the name of Silver Street Gardens, due to Joan's involvement in the planting and Christmas lights there, and changing the name of either Kirkby Stephen Local Links or the Visitors Centre.

21/031 **Finance**

Receipts and payments up to 30th April 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 £180,352.85.

<https://www.kirkby-stephen.com/app/uploads/20210504-April-Rec-Transactions-1.pdf>

21/032 **Portfolios**

1. Town Council Administration. (None)

2. Community Planning. (None)

3. Community.

The Peter Brittleton Bursary was raised – as there are still restrictions on outdoor activities it was decided to wait until September before considering this.

4. Highways.

Cllr Walker had updated Cllr Dew on the suggestions put forward at the previous meeting to limit speeding on South Road:

- 20m p/hr introduced
- Install speed indication device (SID)
- Install speed control traffic lights as on the A75 in Dumfries

He had also reported to Cllr Dew that the speed awareness group had been disbanded due to all the volunteers being of a vulnerable age.

Cllr Dew said he had referred this to Highways, however reminded Councillors that the speed watch undertaken on Faraday Road had shown that the speeding there had mainly been a perceived problem, restricted access can make the situation look worse. He also felt that if people don't stick to the 30m p/hr speed limit they are unlikely to stick to 20m p/hr. He said that he had been involved in the SID installed at Tebay and suggested that the Council contact their Clerk regarding costs, installation etc. He will ask Highways about installing a Zebra crossing on High Street.

PC Mckirdy will speak to Janet Allinson the PCSO to see about getting the speed awareness group going again and how to appeal to younger people to join as members. She confirmed her colleagues in traffic deal with reports of HGV drivers incorrectly using the A685, but can't promise daily patrols. She expected that this could increase during the roadworks for the A66. There was only one officer in Highways is left to review HGV permits.

5. Open Spaces.

Cllr Thornton confirmed that Vivienne Littlefair has ordered the plants and they will be done next month.

The Clerk reported he had been due to have a meeting at Edensyde with Debbie North regarding disabled access, however the meeting hadn't taken place due to the bad weather. He will arrange it for another time.

6. Property. (None)

7. Tourism & Events.

Stainmore Railway are repairing a bridge which is on a public footpath and is one of the few tourist sites open, and they have approached the council for a donation. A suggested donation of £250 was authorised, and Cllr Walker will update them so that the payment can be ratified at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting - to be confirmed once guidance has been received.

<ends 8.30pm>

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Appendix 1
Report of County Councillor Phil Dew

Report to KS Town Council – 4 May, 2021

[Phil Dew]

Youth Provision – The Children and Young People’s Working Group of Eden Local Committee met on Tuesday, 2 March, 2021, and agreed, in principle, to a grant of £12,000 from its 11-19 Universal Services budget towards the start-up and running costs of the new Kirkby Stephen Youth Centre. This recommended allocation had to be approved by the Eden Local Committee on 23 March, 2021. Liberal Democrat members proposed an amendment to reduce the allocation to £8000 in order to help fund the 106 Bus Partnership to the tune of £4000 – which was a bizarre suggestion. In the event the matter was deferred until the May meeting. I fully expect the funding to be approved.

MASCG – The MASCG met on Tuesday, 20 and Monday 26 April, 2021, to discuss the 2021 Fair. The Fair won’t be able to take place at the usual time [3-6 June] because lockdown restrictions will still be in place. My view was that the Fair should either be cancelled or postponed until September to avoid the peak tourist season [see the notes of the 20 April meeting available on the AHF website]. The Gypsy/Traveller representative favoured a date in July [22-25] or August [12-15]. There was no account taken of pecuniary interest. The Police Gold Command [Superintendent Matt Kennerley] supported the July date and the EDC Chair of the meeting [Les Clark] suggested that August was a reasonable compromise. I pointed out that both dates are equally disruptive from the perspective of the local community. The MASCG constitution doesn’t facilitate decision making because it is designed simply to allow agencies to agree and coordinate their response to the Fair. So August was accepted by default which is wholly unsatisfactory given the implications for the local economy and wider community. In the meantime, the question of landowner liability for temporary encampments is still being investigated as is the use of Watter Yat - which is now owned by Paul Dixon. There is concern about displacement onto the A685 because no other provision has been made. We have been assured that police deployment will be similar to the 2019 Fair. The RSPCA presence will be significantly depleted.

Buses – WDB has recommenced the S4, S5 and S6 services from 12 April, 2021. Funding has been set aside by CCC from the Supported Bus Services grant to trial a new service from Kirkby Stephen West Station to the town centre and Brough. This will be started later in the year – possibly in August.

A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project – Members of ELC met with Matt Townsend, Project Lead for HE, on 29 April, 2021. I expressed concern about Option I [Appleby-Brough] and highlighted the need for thorough preparatory work on the A685 – including the installation of a cycleway – though that has been ruled as ‘outside the scope’ of the project. The formal public consultation process was meant to begin in May but I believe that has been postponed until later in the year.

EDC – the District Council voted to rescind the March ’22 deadline for devolved services at its meeting on 29 April, 2021. The whole rationale of the policy is now in doubt given the suggestion that devolution should be ‘optional’. Clarification of EDC’s intentions is urgently required given the significant financial implications for KSTC.

Local Government Reorganisation [LGR] – the consultation on the four Cumbrian proposals closed on 19 April, 2021. I personally favour the single unitary model put forward by CCC because it is the least complicated and most straightforward to administer. Parish and Town Councils will remain unchanged but an intermediate body – such as the existing Local Committee - needs to be established to deal with local planning and highways issues. A Government announcement is expected at the end of July, 2021.

Highways – The CCC Traffic Management team has been asked to look at several matters including the pedestrian crossing in High Street – the road junctions adjacent to KSGS – parking in the vicinity of KSPS following the recent accident – and the perennial speeding issue on South Road.