



Skelsmergh and Scalthwaiterigg Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting

Wednesday 25 March 2023, 7pm at Skelsmergh Community Hall

Present:

Parish Councillors:

John Chapman (JC) – Chair
Tim Maggs (TM)
Angela Brand-Barker (AB-B)
Mick Crozier (MC)
Freyja Burrill (FB)

Cumbria County Councillor:

Stan Collins (SC)

SLDC Councillor:

Pat Bell (PB)

Clerk:

Karen Little (KL)

Attendee:

Ron Anderson (RA) – Clerk-elect, start date 01.04.2023.

(KEY: MA = papers are uploaded to the Members Area of the PC website: <http://www.skelscalpc.org.uk/Members/?Home&normal>)

84/22 Welcome

The Chair warmly welcomed everyone and formally opened the meeting at 19.09. The meeting was quorate. All Councillors were present (no apologies).

85/22 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Chapman declared that both he and his spouse (Chair of the Skelsmergh Hall Management Committee) are Trustees of the Skelsmergh Community Hall. Cllr Brand Barker declared her role as Trustee of the Skelsmergh Community Hall. JC also declared an interest in the planning application 94/22f as a neighbour. There were no other declarations, either to personal interests or prejudicial interest in any agenda item.

86/22 Open Forum

a. Progress with the transfer to Westmorland & Furness Council

- JC: Thanked the present County and District Councillors for attending this PC meeting as their last in their current official capacity. Their faithful attendance and helpful contributions over the last few years has been much appreciated. Very best wishes were given for their future plans.
- PB: Hopes to meet-up again, she is planning to go forward as a Parish Councillor in her area.
- SC: Gave hand-over advice – keep an eye on the river Sprint course upstream of Gurnal Bridge to be alert for a repeat landslide. Expect the services under the unitary authority to continue to operate much the same as the current county council arrangements, but with fire services as part of the local police service. Both new unitary authorities are going forward with closed accounts. Recommended that the PC prioritise drain repairs as higher need than potholes - resolving drain issues will prevent potholes developing. A Cumbria-wide tree survey is being undertaken to identify and serve notice to

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landowners that they will be held accountable if big trees on their land (in particular mature ash trees vulnerable to ash dieback) and cause routes to become impassable after storms. Large trees causing concern can be reported via the Highways Hotline.

SC: Going forward, it is expected (not finalised) there will be three locality Boards to identify the specific needs and issues for local communities – we await clarity on the role of Parish Councils in this model. The Boards will meet 4 times a year.

CLRs: All hoped that Cllr Ali Jama would be able to attend the May meeting of the newly elected S&S PC; his attendance record to date has been disappointing. It is hoped that the family matter he explained was the reason for his past non-attendance will be resolved before the summer.

87/22 Minutes of the Last Meeting, paper MA

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 25.01.2023 were confirmed as a true and complete record. The Chair was authorised to sign them as such.

88/22 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. Clerk appointment

JC: Welcome to Ron Anderson, and a thank you for attending tonight to ‘shadow’ the outgoing Clerk. This is in addition to a number of hand-over meetings with KL, and the training completed to date or scheduled in with the CALC programme. The Council is very pleased to have you aboard!

b. Completed precept, paper MA

Noted, for reference.

c. Highways – Correspondence, paper MA

A ‘thank you letter’ was sent as requested. The salt delivery in Garth Row was very timely and much appreciated just before a serious cold episode.

89/22 Formal Announcements by the Chair

a. Parish Council elections - Thursday 4 May 2023, poster MA

The Clerk provided coloured posters for the notice boards (taken from the NALC website on the role of a Parish Councillor), to hopefully raise awareness and promote new interest in volunteering for the role. RA was thanked for attending timely training on the election process – this proved very helpful for Councillors to complete their application forms prior to the start of this meeting. Current terms of office will cease four days after the election date concomitantly with Councillors commencing a new 4-year term of office.

90/22 Grant Applications

There were no grant applications received to consider.

91/22 Finance

a. To consider payments to be made as per Clerk’s report, papers MA

RESOLVED: To make the following payments:

Payee	Expenses/Services	Amount(£)
Karen Little	Clerk’s salary 01.02.2023 to 31 03.2023	475.29
Cumbria Payroll Services	March 2023 payroll (<i>includes VAT</i>)	14.40
HMRC	Clerk’s PAYE tax (March 2023)	8.40
Karen Little	Expenses 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023	112.24
	TOTAL	610.33
Income since last meeting:		
	Sale of woodland produce (<i>Note: commitment reported last meeting was received</i>)	60.00
	Electricity Northwest Wayleave	41.50
	TOTAL	101.50

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- b. To receive and note the bank reconciliation and predicted year-end position, papers MA**
A carry-forward of ~£2.5k is expected; this complies with the original set budget plans, but the (£1k) commitment to replace the Garth Row noticeboard was not realised. The Transparency grant funding (~£407) is ringfenced to provide the Clerk with IT equipment/training required for the role.
Action: The outgoing Clerk will transfer the remaining petty cash to the new Clerk before her end of office, also to provide a final 2022-2023 year end accounts report for publishing.
- c. Online banking - protocol for online payments**
The unexpected difficulties with making online payments were explained – not a straight forward process. It was agreed that the Clerk and two Councillors would stay on at the end of this meeting to make online payments for all the above payees (except the HMRC - this was paid by cheque). *Post meeting note:* With the Clerk setting up the payments, only one Councillor was needed for online authorisation on this occasion. Online payment works and provides cost savings (stamps/stationary), however, further work is required to define the best reliable and efficient process.
Action: Parish Council to agree a protocol for online authorisation of payments at the next meeting(s).
- d. Update on new bank signatories**
MC confirmed that he is now formally a recognised signatory for the PC account with working access. RA's form is completed and signed by two Councillors – he is in the process of renewing formal identification papers to take into the bank as part of the mandate change/authorisation process.
- e. Internal auditor appointment, paper MA**
Mrs Barron has confirmed that she is willing to continue as the internal auditor. Information for the year-end process has been received by email (east.midlands@moore.co.uk); it was agreed that the audit template on the CALC website will be used for the internal audit.
Action: RA to contact Mrs Barron to make arrangements for the internal audit; report to be presented at the May Ordinary PC meeting.

92/22 Update Reports

- a. Environment and Community Woodlands:**
- 1. Income - sale of woodland products**
As reported under item 91/22a, there has been further sale of woodland products; however, demand for hedging stakes has noticeably declined. A supply remains from coppicing at Coldharbour Quarry if new requests are received. Overall, the woodland income covers current maintenance costs. Cllr Chapman was thanked for his commitment and great efforts to successfully and effectively manage the PC woodland. A question was raised whether offering woodland products to those who volunteer to work in the woods was fair reimbursement for their time and efforts. The point was noted, but not pursued.
- 2. Progress with rights of way project**
Action: Cllr Collins offered to request more copies of the parish public rights of way map from the Countryside Access Team – to deliver them to JC's house. If it's possible to scan, a copy will be published on the PC website.
- 3. Gurnal Bridge – developments with new licence, paper MA**
Correspondence received from the Carter Jonas agent was noted – potential contractors are being sought to complete the site safety work (mature trees) before the end of March. The next stage will be to construct a fence to keep the public away from the cliff, divert the path and plant more trees. Signs will be displayed to confirm that access is permissive only, and that the site will be locked one day per year. A new licence will be re-negotiated with the newly-formed PC when the site work is finished.
Action: JC to reconnect with Mr Girling, to discuss whether to continue with the initial plans to hold a 'pole- lathe turning' day.
- b. Highways and Transport:**
Paddy Lane is now fully open to traffic; the remedial structural work has been completed. Councillors are very disappointed with the perceived lack of urgency to restore the Laverock bridge stonework

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and install a protective post to minimise further damage by industrial vehicles. The bridge is the adopted Parish Council logo and a listed building.

SC: Money has been committed (£4,500) for the protective posts; the PC need to continue dialogue with the Unitary authority to ensure a swift successful outcome. The Highways hotline will continue as a legacy system from Cumbria County Council - as the most effective way to report potholes and any highways issues: [Streets, roads and pavements | Westmorland and Furness Council](#). Images of the issues can be uploaded directly at the site. Or by phone, new number is 0300 373 3306.

c. **Communication:** www.skelscalpc.org.uk.

A discussion followed with suggestions made on how to improve the website. It was noted that attractive and helpful websites require a lot of manual input, i.e. time and finance which the PC is not set-up with. The current PC website is compliant with statutory publication requirements. It was agreed that the options worth pursuing are:

1. Further discussion with the website provider on ways to liven-up the appearance/enhance content.
2. Seek/offer IT-development opportunities to secondary school pupils (project work/DofE award).
3. Discuss ideas with other website managers, e.g. the Community Hall website was commended.

d. **Community:**

1. **Report on community quiz event, 10.02.2023**

Cllrs agreed that it had been an excellent event, well organised, very entertaining, good food, good company and that the raffle prizes had been well received.

2. **Community resilience**

RESOLVED: Further discussion is needed with the Hall Management Committee, as this would be the proposed venue to provide residents with essential resources, safety and warmth in the event of a local calamity. The PC is preparing a 'good neighbour' response to help vulnerable people through challenging times; a national emergency response and funding will apply for a major catastrophe, e.g. plane crash in the area.

Action: FB to provide JC & AB-B with details (include risk assessments and model protocols) to raise at the Hall management meeting, 25.05.2023, to support joint planning initiatives to build-up local resilience.

SC left the meeting.

3. **Report from Skelsmergh Community Hall Management Committee meeting**

JC: No formal meeting has been held this year; an extraordinary meeting to change the banking arrangements had, however, taken place. Plans are afoot to replace the external decking and install floral containers – grant applications may be submitted to the PC to assist with this expenditure, as minuted at the last PC meeting.

93/22 **External Meetings**, [CALC website](#)

a. **South Lakeland District Association**, Thursday 26.01.2023 – via Teams.

JC: Gave a short summary of the items discussed. Councillor suggestions **would be** very welcome on effective use of grant money available to address the impact of local hidden deprivation/child poverty.

Action: KL to ask CALC if these meeting minutes will be made available on their website (last minutes published are for September 2022 meeting).

94/22 **Planning Applications**

a. [SL/2023/0009](#), **Plot A, Holme House Farm, Skelsmergh**, KENDAL. Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval SL/2019/1032 (Demolition of existing buildings and erection of five dwellings and shared use buildings) & access, appearance, landscaping, layout & scale of plot A. *PC no objection – plain and unobtrusive design*. SLDC: No decision yet.

b. [SL/2022/1142](#), **Thorneyslack Farm, Garth Row**, KENDAL. Change of use from a dwelling with an agricultural worker restriction and an aged persons' annexe to an unrestricted dwelling. *PC – no*

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objection. SLDC: granted with 3 conditions for only one dwelling.

- c. [SL/2022/1116](#), **Benson Hall, Scalthwaiterigg**, KENDAL. Formation of concrete slurry tank, partially submerged with floating cover. *PC – no objection*. SLDC: granted with three conditions.
- d. [SL/2023/0085](#), **Logwood Cottage, Mealbank**, KENDAL. Two storey gable extension, new flat roof dormer, wrap around flat roof canopy and internal alterations. *PC – no objection*. SLDC: granted with 6 conditions.
- e. [PN/2023/0003](#), **Land to the North East of Jenkin Cragg Farm**, Fowling Lane, KENDAL. To determine if prior approval (proposed) is required for a development by or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator for a 22.5m communications mast, antennas, ground based apparatus and landscaping. *PC – no objection*. SLDC: prior approval is required.
- f. [SL/2023/0192](#), Oak Bank Mill, Skelsmergh, KENDAL. Demolition of the single story lean-to of the existing workshop and replace with a two-story workshop and office space.
RESOLVED: JC declared an interest; Cllr FB to formulate PC response.

95/22 **Correspondence:** To consider correspondence highlighted by the Clerk, *x3 papers on MA*

- a. **Westmoreland & Furness - National and local planning validation requirements** – the new authority's process for planning applications was noted.
- b. **Lake District Challenge**, 10 & 11 June 2023 - route noted.
- c. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

RESOLVED: The Clerk was authorised to inform SLDC that S&S PC had used the annual CIL (£30.50) on the upkeep and pad replacements for the community defibrillator equipment, installed outside Skelsmergh Community Hall.

96/22 **Dates for Next Meetings:**

RESOLVED: Annual Parish, Annual Parish Council and Ordinary Parish Council meetings:

Wednesday 24th May 2023, commencing 7pm, Skelsmergh Community Hall.

Action: RA to co-ordinate other convenient dates for Councillors when the Hall is available for the other five meetings for the financial year 2023 and 2024.

The chair thanked everyone for their contributions and formally closed the meeting at 21.09. Mrs Little was thanked and given a leaving gift as a token of Councillor's appreciation of her work over several years as the Parish Clerk. Best wishes for the future were exchanged.

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