



Skelsmergh and Scalthwaiterigg Parish Meeting

Wednesday 25 May 2022, Skelsmergh Community Hall, 7pm

NOTES

Present:

Parish Councillors: John Chapman (JC) - *Chair*, Freyja Burrill (JB) and Mick Crozier (MC)

Clerk: Karen Little

SLDC Councillors Pat Bell (PB) and Hazel Hodgson (HH)

Other: Four residents were present.

Apologies: Parish Councillors Tim Maggs and Angela Brand-Barker

1. Welcome and apologies

Councillor John Chapman, as the Chair of the Parish Council for 2021-2022, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 19.03. Apologies (as recorded above) were received and accepted.

2. Notes of the last annual parish meeting, held on 22 May 2019, circulated prior to the meeting

The notes of previous parish meeting held on 22 May 2019 were read out and the Chair was asked to sign the notes as an accurate and complete record of the meeting. Note there was no parish meeting in 2020 or 2021 due to the CV-19 pandemic safety advice/lockdown restrictions.

3. Updates, issues and questions to Parish Councillors from registered electors in the parish

3.1 A question was raised whether there had been any progress with the proposal in the 2019 parish meeting minutes for the administration of the Hall letting business to be managed within a PC employment contract?

KL: There had been much debate and discussion about the proposal going back to 2016; legal advice had been received from NALC. The resolution made at the Ordinary PC meeting on 22.05.2019 (following-on after the Parish meeting) was to include the future of the Hall and the proposal for the PC to support operational management of the Hall business in the consultation with residents that the PC was planning to conduct later in 2019-2020. However, with the lockdown due to the global CV-19 pandemic, it was not possible to hold a consultation as planned – to date, there is no definite outcome to this proposal.

3.2 Resident 1 (IK) raised a concern that BT Open Reach seemed to have a statutory mandate to install overhead cable for high-speed broadband provision to residential homes when a. there is no need – there has been a collective community project to contract B4RN broadband services, and b. there is a covenant that prevents alterations to the appearance and integrity, e.g. Laverock Hill. He asked to formally record that neither SLDC planning officers or SLDC Councillors had responded to his written correspondence to challenge BT's authority to proceed with this action. IK also questioned the cost of superfluous poles; whether they would be removed (currently they litter the cul-de-sac) and could be put to good use; and, whether BT were applying this mandate unnecessarily to other local B4RN customers as part of the government's obligation to deliver high-speed internet across the country?

Signed:

Date:

JC: Poles arrived at Oakbank in advance of B4RN installation; they are now erected but not operational – all residents have B4RN.

HH: Asked for a copy of IK's letter; she would pursue this matter with SLDC.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to endorse IK's letter to challenge the unnecessary waste of resources by BT to install high-speed broadband provision in areas when this was already provided by another company.

Action: On behalf of the PC, the clerk will send IK's letter onto Mr Tim Farron (MP) and SLDC planning officers, requesting an official response.

3.3 Resident 2: raised concern about the traffic speed along the A6 past Summer Hill. Vehicles have been clocked overtaking cars travelling at 60mph - the legal limit for that stretch of the A6. The lack of road sign for the turn down to the Kiln Croft residential houses also increases the risk of an accident. It was very sad when a family of otters were killed (hit by a vehicle) crossing the A6.

Resident 3: Have witnessed several accidents as motorists make turns off the A6 along that stretch.

JC: This has been raised before, I attended a joint police/highways meeting to request temporary speed monitoring devices were installed. Unfortunately, the monitoring confirmed that the average speed was compliant with the legal limit. Hence, disappointingly, no action was taken. Explained an effective otter deterrent, composed of reflectors, used on the Isle of Mull. The PC could consider grant support towards employing a similar deterrent if a resident wanted to pursue putting this into practice locally. I have referred the principle to external agencies who I thought may be interested in taking this further (e.g. SCRT, CCC Highways, EA), but there was no reply.

Resident 3: It's not just otters that die on the road, there have been five dead hares in four months. Help and support might be available from wildlife protection organisations.

3.4 Resident 1: The absence of the SLDC Councillor Ali Jama at this meeting, and all last year's Parish Council meetings, is a concern. Could Cllr Jama confirm that he knows where our parish and Skelsmergh Community Hall are? With the reduction from three SLDC Councillors to one in April 2023 - Cllr Jama being the post holder - residents feel it is vitally important that Cllr Jama introduces himself and actively engages to build up a good understanding of the local issues and people's concerns.

With no further business to discuss, the Chair formally closed the meeting at 19.37 pm. The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

Signed:

Date: