

**Draft Minutes of the remotely held
Annual Parish Meeting of Seascale Parish Council on
Wednesday 5th May 2021
hosted by David Moore**

Present:

Chair Cllr David Halliday
Vice Chair Cllr Lizzie Mawson
Councillors Cllr Catherine Harvey – Chadwick
 Cllr Paula Leggett
 Cllr Ken Mawson
 Cllr David Moore
 Cllr Julie Savage

Public Andrew
 Rob Harper
 Gerard Hughes
 Brenda Parsons
 Craig Smith

CCC Rep. Cllr Paul Turner

Meeting recorded for minuting purposes

1 Apologises

Cllr E Eastwood - exemption

2 Announcements from the Chair

The Chair was pleased to welcome the members of the public and advised the meeting was recorded, purely for minuting purposes. He also advised in June and thereafter the meetings will return to face-to-face meeting, subject to covid restrictions.

3 Ratify Wednesday 7th October 2020 APM Minutes

Proposed a true record of the meeting by Cllr Moore and seconded Cllr L Mawson

4 Annual Reports

4.1 Chairs Report

Little did I think when I sat down to write my first annual report as Chair that we would still be living in lockdown 12 months later. At that time there was a great feeling of uncertainty over what the future might hold and the past year has faced us all with unprecedented challenges.

Although the pandemic has proven to be it is a tragic event on an unimaginable scale nonetheless it was heartening to see how quickly local communities rallied round. On both a formal and informal level support mechanisms quickly sprang into life that helped to make people in needs' lives at least a little more manageable and tolerable.

I am pleased to say that the Seascale Parish Council has managed to keep functioning

through the mechanism of holding our meetings virtually. These are certainly a poor substitute for 'face to face ' meetings but are preferable to the alternative, which is to do nothing. I would like to thank Councillor Moore for setting up and hosting our Zoom meetings and all the Councillors for their patience during the meetings. Apart from the obvious technical issues, with which I have struggled as much as the next man, I have found these meetings much more difficult to manage than a face-to-face meeting where it is easier to gauge peoples' reactions and the mood of the meeting.

The pandemic has forced us to put our plans to develop the Library into a community hub in suspended animation for the time being. It was particularly frustrating to have to close the Library after a successful initial 7 months when we were starting to build momentum and I would like to Thank the volunteers for their commitment to the project. The Library is due to re-open on 24 May and I am confident that we will be able to re-build that momentum and continue to progress.

However, we did manage to move forward on the Coniston Avenue play area, referred to in my previous annual report, which is being well used and the letters of Thanks we have received are an indication that this has been appreciated by residents. The Beach Play Park area continues to be popular and has provided a necessary release valve for children and parents alike during lockdown.

An exciting development is the creation of our Facebook page and I would encourage residents to use it as a way of keeping in touch with what the Council is doing. Particularly thanks go to Councillor Savage for her work in setting the Facebook page up. Following the co-option of Paula Leggett as a Councillor our Council now has a majority of female members, plus our age profile is one of the lowest in the County. So we are far from being the stereotype of 'grey middle-aged men in suits' that people tend to associate with Parish Councils.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to our long-suffering Clerk/RFO Jill Bush who continues to show a commitment to the council that goes above and beyond the line of duty and who has managed to keep the Council functioning effectively in the face a particularly difficult combination of circumstances.

4.2 Yearly Financial Report

The RFO continues to maintain accuracy and detail of the financial information to the Council. Figures produced for the precept calculation were submitted for consideration and subsequently agreed a 2% precept increase, as per Copeland BC statement. End of year figures show a -2.55% variation. This is well within the allowed 6% variation. The external auditor was satisfied with the SPC answers and evidence supplied for the 2019/20 audit and the accounts were signed off with no issues, by the internal auditor and the external auditor.

The closing cashbook balance at 31 March 2021 is £80,725.27. The previous year's surplus has been used to upgrade the Coniston Avenue play area.

The 2020/21 audit documents have been forwarded to the internal auditors. This audit will take place in May, followed by the external audit, with completion in September.

4.3 Report from the Amenities group

As with every aspect of our lives Covid 19 has impacted on what has been achieved this year. Despite the obvious challenges we have however continued with the improvements to the

parish assets.

The biggest investment made this year was to the Coniston Avenue playing field. Working with the Copeland open spaces team the beck was re-fenced, the surrounding areas cleared of much overgrown scrub and bushes and some large self-seeded sycamores dug up and removed, this reclaimed a significant amount of ground which was then levelled, top soiled and reseeded. The old and tired play equipment was removed and replaced with a new small scale toddler focused selection from Playdale, the design and lay out is as such as if needed or wanted in the future this could be added to. We are in the process of sourcing additional seating and improving the waste bins.

The toilet block has also seen improvements, the taps have been replaced to reduce the water used and the external guttering cleared and repaired to address an internal damp problem. The toilets are a source of much praise to the parish, many comments are received about their cleanliness and they prove an invaluable asset to people visiting and working in the area. We send our thanks to Mrs Dawn Dennett for her hard work and dedication to keeping this asset in such good order.

The beach front play area is still proving as popular as ever, a testament to the quality of the equipment is the lack of maintenance it requires despite its heavy use. The bucket on the digging unit has been removed and a replacement sourced, it will be fitted as soon as it arrives. The sea facing areas on the play tower see the worst of the weather and would benefit the wood staining being renewed, it has been decided to do this rather than let it weather to natural wood.

The village has seen unprecedented numbers of visitors in the last 12 months, lock down aside. There have been challenges with the amount of litter generated and we hope that the new more flexible use of trade waste bins will allow us to address any overflowing bins in a more timely and efficient manner. The foreshore would benefit from more of the hard wood double bins as installed during the beach park renovations, we are sourcing and pricing the replacement of all bins with this type.

Unfortunately, the flagpole was found to be in a sorry state and we had to remove it, a replacement is being sourced.

The Victorian style lamp posts on the foreshore were in need of some tlc, after trying repeatedly to find a contractor to do this we were absolutely delighted to be approached by Jacobs Ground Services. A contractor in the Sellafield supply chain they had the resources available to help us, the lamp posts were prepared, treated with an anti-rust treatment and repainted. We are extremely grateful for this generous investment in the community and have already spoken with them about other projects they can help support us with.

4.4 Report from the Sports Hall

The Sports Hall has very little to report this year.

It started the year in lockdown and hasn't really got started again yet due to current restrictions of use. It is now contacting users again and making them aware of regulations.

It does however have a very healthy bank balance as it qualified for grants available through the government scheme. This will set it up for the future to cover costs and buy some new

equipment when necessary.

5 Questions from members of the public

None

6 Dates of forthcoming meetings

Next AGM Wednesday 4th May 2022