

**Minutes of the remotely held
Annual Parish Meeting of Seascale Parish Council on
Wednesday 7th October 2020
hosted by David Moore**

Present:

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

Public Ms B Parsons

CCC Rep. Cllr Paul Turner
CALC Chair Andy Pratt

Meeting recorded for minuting purposes

1 Apologises

Cllr E Eastwood

2 Announcements from the Chair

has been unfortunate Seascale has a member of the Parish who has a history of being *“disruptive with their persistent requests, complaints and challenges”*, culminating last year in eight complaints being submitted to various external bodies. Over the years this has hindered the Council’s ability to manage the Parish’s affairs to the extent it would like. The Council received the latest investigative decision in April 2020. The ICO ruled SPC breached sections 1 and 10 of the FOI Act because it failed to respond to the complainant within a 20-day window. No further action from SPC is required. The ICO did not uphold the complaint the Council has contravened any legal requirements, or behaved improperly and considered the complainants’ actions have been *“manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure and that they were vexatious within the meaning of section 14 of the FOIA.”* The ICO further referred the complainant to section 52 of its decision and was advised to bear the ruling in mind; should they consider submitting further requests to SPC on the same or similar topics. All previous complaints over the years have also not been upheld.

3 Ratify Wednesday 8th May 2019 APM Minutes

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

4 Annual Reports

4.1 Chairs Report

See Annex 1 at the end of the minutes

4.2 Report from the Finance and General Purposes Group

See Annex 2 at the end of the minutes

4.3 Yearly Financial Report

See Annex 3

4.5 Report from the Amenities group

See Annex 4

4.6 Report from the Sports Hall

See Annex 5

4.7 Cricket/Bowls Pavilion Report

See Annex 6

5 Questions from members of the public

None

6 Dates of forthcoming meetings

Full Council meeting Wednesday 4th November 2020

Next AGM Wednesday 12th May 2021

Next APM Wednesday 12th May 2021

Annex 1

Chair's Annual Report

This has been my first year as Chair and I have certainly found it more challenging than I had anticipated, even before the Covid 19 virus erupted. I owe a debt of gratitude to my fellow Councillors, without whose guidance and support I would have floundered. For a small Parish Council Seascale has a disproportionately large number of assets to manage and there is an awful lot of work that goes on behind the scenes that largely goes un-noticed and I would like to express my appreciation for the Councillor's efforts.

After a period of delay caused by legal complications, we finally completed the transfer of the Library on 09 August 2019. In the initial 7 months of being open we have established a team of 28 volunteers who have managed the smooth transition to the Library Link while maintaining a high level of service to users and secured a vital asset for the community which we would otherwise have lost. Particular Thanks are due to the members of the management group who act as a vital link with the Parish Council. Going forward, we have ambitious plans for the development of the building as a Community Hub. We are also in the throes of establishing a separate Charity for the Library Link.

Just before the coronavirus 'lockdown' we had commissioned equipment for a revamped Coniston Avenue play area, aimed more at younger children to complete the Beach Front park. This was funded by compensatory funding received from LLWR, for which we are grateful, and is a further indication of the commitment to the Parish Council to build upon and improve the solid asset base we already maintain.

An event of note during the year was the Coast 2 Coast challenge held in June that brought a large number of visitors into the village. Thanks are due to John McElroy, the Sports Hall committee and their team of volunteers for making this possible. Hopefully the event will re-establish itself once the current crisis is over.

Without doubt the greatest challenge we have faced is the Covid 19 crisis. This forced the closure of the Sports Hall, Library and Beach Play Area in line with Government advice, The village has risen to this challenge in the most positive way possible, In particular, I would like to acknowledge the work of Gemma Goulding and Dawn Pennington in setting up the Seascale Covid 19 Support Group, Ros Allam in keeping it going and most importantly the 60+ volunteers who have come forward to help by delivering prescriptions and shopping to people who are self-isolating or shielding. Their response has been magnificent and demonstrates that a strong community ethos continues to thrive in our village.

Finally I would like to give particular Thanks to the Clerk/ RFO Jill Bush, whose tireless efforts have kept the Parish Council functioning effectively in the face of some very difficult circumstances.

Annex 2

Finance & General Purposes Working Group 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 3% precept increase. End of year figures show a -3.2% variation. This is in part due to the contested May election costs of £1,108.78 and the additional cost of the external audit, due to a parishioner raising questions the viability of the financial management and whether it was following procedure. The external auditor was satisfied with the SPC answers and evidence supplied, much of this was already available in the full council minutes.

Additional energy costs have occurred in the energy usage to the Sports Hall and the usage monitored. Since the Covid-19 lockdown and the closure of this amenity the usage has considerably reduced, subsequently ruling out the probability of faulty meters. The cost of running the storage heaters will need to be assessed, as it is considerable and if continued unchanged will result in a year on year precept overspend. Daytime heating usage will also need to be carefully assessed by the Sports Hall committee, as it is unfair to expect the PC to pick up the cost of something it has no control over.

The closing cashbook balance at 31 March 2020 is £82,635.10. We are carrying forward a surplus of £27,636.90 for the year. This is largely due to receipt of LLWR and Sellafield/Avison Young monies. The surplus will be used to upgrade the Coniston Avenue playing field/play area and as contingency towards the running costs of the library for the first year, until we establish what these are, and also towards capital expenditure for reconfiguration of the building to create a community hub. The Council is taking on a significant commitment in retaining the library as a vital asset for the community and it is right that we should adopt a prudent approach to this undertaking.

The independent internal audit takes place on June 1st and the external audit commences in September.

Annex 3
2019-20 Financial Report

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

SEASCALE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	35,026	54,998	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	21,582	22,230	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	56,568	45,488	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	5,100	6,000	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	53,004	34,081	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	54,998	82,635	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	54,998	82,635	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	55,465	56,265	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.
Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

03/06/2020

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

03/06/2020

as recorded in minute reference:

03.06.20 - 7

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Annex 4

Amenities Report

Toilet block refurbishment was completed in May 2019 and a floor buffer/polisher purchased. Following reports of dogs and bikes in the foreshore play area signage was erected to make it clear neither are allowed in this area: dogs to be kept on the lead and there will be dog control orders as per legislation and this was also put on the Notice Board.

The amenities group conducted 2 asset walkabouts and reported asset status and repairs required. It also submitted a recommendation to refurbish the Coniston Avenue play area, designed specifically for little children and toddlers. Agreed by Council. Groundworks to clear and prepare the site for the new equipment commenced late 2019 and early 2020.

Annex 5

Sports Hall Report

Seascale Sports Hall Annual General Meeting 2020 - Chairman's Report.

Once again we have had a very busy and successful year catering for all sorts of groups which includes keep fit, badminton, tennis, table tennis, archery, football, exercise classes, parties including the bouncy castle, Seascale cricket club, venue for various meetings, CNC training sessions and other various events.

The C2C event last year was a resounding success. Normally a large number of competitors camped within the school grounds but that wasn't available due to the building work associated with the new school build. Following a discussion with the committees of the sports hall, cricketers and bowlers it was agreed that the previous competitors who camped within the school grounds were offered to pitch their tents on the cricket field and the cycles were stored within the pavilion. This suggestion was happily agreed by the C2C committee and was a great success because in the comments from the C2C organisers everyone was accommodated in one area. It was so successful that the organisers have asked if the same system could be adopted for this year which has been agreed. Well done to all concerned. Sadly there was a downside to last year's event because there was a tragic loss of life for one of the competitors who crashed on a mountain section of the race.

We did incur some problems within the sports hall due to "misuse" of football activities which appeared to have come about by a number of people causing damage. There were a number of footballs lodged between the roof and beams at high level (which was very difficult to achieve and required several attempts to do so) but had occurred on more than one occasion and also caused severe damage to the old wall heaters. Unfortunately we had to replace all the old heaters which were damaged and replaced them with more efficient new ones which did cost a lot of money and was paid jointly between the parish council and the sports hall.. It was agreed that we removed the footballs from the sports hall and only allow well organised junior groups to have football coaching sessions to take place. There was another concern regarding a spike in electrical usage within the sports hall. The clerk to the PC is investigating the source of the spike but the PC changed the electrical contract last year and the spike occurred prior to installing the new heaters. To assist the clerk in the investigation I have sent monthly photographs of the meters to try and resolve the issue. The electrical usage in the sports hall is complex because the main meter in the sports hall registers the total usage of the sports hall, pavilion and the supply to the PC Christmas lights.

There has also been an increase in the bookings throughout last year and some bookings have come in at short notice and we really appreciate Denise being so flexible about when she is able to get in the hall and look after it so well. With all the increase in bookings and having to overcome all the serious issues we have had to cope with I offer my grateful thanks to all concerned in making the Sports Hall as successful as it is.

We are in a very healthy position because usage has greatly increased, more parties and clubs but mainly because Sellafield have continued to use our facilities for CNConstabulary training every week all year. It provides us with a good buffer for the future as long as they continue to use us.

Annex 6

Cricket/Bowls Pavilion Report

Both clubs had a successful 2019 with the pavilion running smoothly as in previous years.

Due to the unavailability of the school in 2019, the SRA field (for camping) and the pavilion (for bike storage) were used for the start of the annual Coast to Coast bike race. This proved to be enormously successful with the organisers and they were to repeat the arrangements this year but for the cancellation of the race due to the ongoing Coronavirus epidemic.