

Silloth-on-Solway Town Council
Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 19 February 2024 at 7.00pm

Present:— Cllr. O. Martin (OM)

Councillors

M. Irving (MI), J. Scott (JS), C. Searle (CS) & A. Reynolds (AR).

Also present: Wendy Jameson (Town Clerk) & Lorraine Smyth (via Zoom).

087.	Apologies Apologies received from Cllrs. A. Emmerson, A. J. Markley, J. Cook & W. Jefferson were accepted by the Town Council. Absent: Cllr. M. Orchard.	
088.	Declarations of Interest None.	
089.	Exclusion of Press and Public None	
090.	Adjournment of meeting There had been no requests from members of the public to speak at the meeting.	
091.	Town Plan Members of the Council were sent a copy of the first draft of the Town Plan by email and paper copies were available at the meeting. The Town Clerk had pulled everything together to produce the first draft. The Council needs to look at the plan as a whole and then look at the action plan, putting some priorities against the actions. From a population of 2805, there were 653 responses which is 23.3% response, although a few of those are from visitors. As a potential visitor destination, it is helpful to get their input. 49 people gave their addresses and want to help deliver the plan, with 28 people offering to help with a community speed watch. Need to include everything that was said in the plan but when it comes to the Acton Plan the Council needs to decide what it wants to make happen, what they would support other people to make happen and who we would need to lobby to make things happen on our behalf. It was agreed to go through the separate action plans for each main section. Accessibility – Charging for the use of the toilets was discussed. Counter devices are to be obtained to monitor the usage of the toilets and the Council will be looking again at the use of the Skinburness toilets which is the least used. Some respondents felt it was immoral charging for the use of the toilets but acknowledged the costs involved. It would be useful to work out the costs of running the toilet facilities. Visitors use the toilets more than residents but if residents do use them, they would be getting charged twice. Consideration could be given to charging for car parking as an alternative. The plan currently shows more smaller items rather than bigger projects which would attract bigger funding. Access into businesses is an issue. Cumberland Council have High Street Building grants available. Facelift grants of up to £5k are available to improve the frontages of commercial properties and can be used for new shop fronts, disabled access improvements, repainting, and signage. Dropped kerbs have been highlighted as an issue. There needs to be some sort of permanent marking speak to Cumberland Council to see what can be done. This could link in with the TRO although no timescale has been provided on when Silloth's TRO will take place. A lot of issues fall under the responsibility of Cumberland Council but there is nothing stopping the Town Council from lobbying to get things done. On some things, we may already be having the conversations. We need to tell them what we are doing and ask them what they can do, with the Town Plan providing the supporting evidence. Clear pavements are also a priority, and it was suggested that letters be sent to all businesses highlighting the rules and something put in the Solway Buzz. Need to reinforce what has been said in response to the surveys. Sustainability – 67% of respondents had requested more information about how they can be more sustainable. It was suggested that CAfS (Cumbria Action for Sustainability) be contacted, and an article put in the Solway Buzz. 86% would welcome more recycling on the Green. We already have	

	a recycling centre on the car park but some additional recycling bins at key locations i.e. Community Garden and Splash Pad would be beneficial. 61% support the provision of bottle filling stations and 91% support solar panels on public buildings. The Council should try to look at the greenest options available when doing projects. The main toilet block on Criffel Street would be the most suitable for having solar panels installed. A meeting could be arranged with CAfS to look at sustainability. Wellbeing – Information about what is taking place in the town needs to be included on the Solway Buzz and social media etc. Library in Silloth is staffed and is open 3.5 days a week. There is an exhibition in the back of the building and Cllr. Baty is keen to see it improved but that would be part of a long- term project and is currently looking into the funding side of things. Looking at the sustainability of the building and the addition of solar panels may attract additional funding. WEA courses were organised in the Community Hall but there wasn't a very big take up. It was felt the Council should focus on promoting our own facilities – Parkrun and facilities on the Green i.e. focus on what we can control. Something can be included as a high priority even when it's something we need to lobby for. Fitness equipment on the promenade is a high priority and would complement the Parkrun which has proved popular. Various other ideas were mentioned which included a slide down one of the hills on the seafront for kids, a natural swimming pool and a bandstand. Improvements to the tennis courts to incorporate a pickle ball court have been discussed previously and could be part of a bigger project. Grange Town Council have done a lot of work refurbishing their seafront, including gym equipment and it may be an idea to share experiences. Anything done needs to be sustainable and with minimal maintenance. The Council needs to agree the main priorities and timescales. Transportation – 80% want cheaper travel and the introduction of £2 bus fares have helped. 39% think the bus timetables need amending. Bus use has gone up by 11%. The reduction in services is a problem here having lost the Sunday service to Carlisle and services to Maryport and Skinburness. More promotion is needed. Cumberland Council have new money to reinstate services and the Council needs to work with our local Cumberland Councillor to encourage the services to be reinstated. There is currently a pilot scheme happening of a demand responsive service in Aspatria or Wigton. Vehicles can be shared. A taxi is booked which is shared by 4 people and covers the cost of the taxi. A budget is set to cover any potential losses at the start. 53% were interested in sharing journeys. 41% wanted unadopted roads improved. 66% commented on speeding and concerns about monitoring, with 28 people having offered to help with a Speedwatch scheme. A meeting could be organised with volunteers and the local PCSO to set up a Speedwatch scheme which can be a project the Council doesn't have to actually do. Car sharing could be set up in the outlying areas. Cumberland Council also have a voluntary car scheme. The library may know if there is a local co-ordinator. NHS are also running an NHS & Care Voluntary Responder scheme which offers befriending, help with shopping and collecting medication etc. Meeting with volunteers will probably have a better result than simply putting something in the Solway Buzz. There needs to be a list of key priorities that the Council will be taking forward and a launch of the plan once it has been agreed. The Town Plan will be a 10-year plan but will be a live document, with a review after 5 years, to highlight what has been achieved and any new projects coming up. Lorraine will work on the Sustainability and Transportation sections and forward them to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the Town Plan before the next meeting.	
092.	Date of next meeting Another meeting is needed to take a detailed look at the plan before taking it back to the Full Council. Next meeting to be held on Thursday 14 March 2024 in the Community Hall at 7.00pm.	
093.	Amounts owing by the Town Council An update was provided on work at the Football Changing Rooms, and it was agreed that a payment of £4,580 + VAT be made towards the final bill. Town Clerk to contact the insurance loss adjuster.	

Signed.....

Date.....