

**Silloth-on-Solway Town Council**  
**Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 6 July 2020 at 7.00pm via video conference**

**Present:**— Cllr. M. Orchard (MO).

**Councillors**

J. Cook (JC), C. Doran (CD), A. Emmerson (AE), S. Graham (SG), M. Irving (MI),  
W. Jefferson (WJ), A.J. Markley (AJM), J. McCormick (JM), J. Snaith (JS) & G. Wilkinson (GW).

Also present: Wendy Jameson (Town Clerk), Lindsay Tomlinson (Allerdale) & various members of the public.

	<i><b>In accordance with The Local Authorities &amp; Police &amp; Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority &amp; Police &amp; Crime Panel Meetings) (England &amp; Wales) Regulations 2020 this meeting was held by video conference call.</b></i>	
596.	<b>Apologies:</b> Cllr. C. Bell (at another meeting).	
597.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> As recorded.	
598.	<b>Exclusion of Press &amp; Public</b> It was agreed that the public be excluded for item 27 on the Agenda.	
599.	<b>Chairman's Announcements</b> The Chairman attended the Parks Committee meeting regarding the siting of the new picnic tables and also met with Stewart Henderson regarding the bins. Overhanging trees around the town, including outside Spar have been reported to Cumbria Highways. Stanwix corner flooded again which was also reported and Cllr. Markley confirmed that the County Council are aware of it. On 'Super Saturday', the town had a visit from Mark Jenkinson MP which was a welcome visit, although the Chairman felt the Town Council should have been informed of the visit by our Allerdale councillors, although he wanted it noted that he wished to apologise to Cllr. Markley, who was unaware of the visit. Cllr. Cook had been invited by Mark Jenkinson's office, Mark Jenkinson himself and by Allerdale to attend in his capacity at portfolio holder for Tourism, to visit businesses which were reopening following the lockdown. However, local businesses which have stayed open throughout the lockdown should be acknowledged for what they have done for the community during the pandemic and are going to need everyone's continued support.	
600.	<b>Minutes</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.	
601.	<b>Adjournment of meeting</b> Vicky Hope requested to speak at the meeting and read out the email she had sent urging the Council to re-open the public toilets as soon as possible. Limited help and guidance have been forthcoming from Allerdale and the Clerk has put together all the covid-19 risk assessments. Cllr. Graham has also spent a lot of time on it. Silloth is the only town along the Solway Coast that pays for its own toilets. The Town Council is responsible for four sets of toilets and there are three operated by Allerdale. Cllr. Graham quoted the Covid19 Returns to Workplace guidance document which states all public toilet facilities should remain closed to stop the spread of coronavirus but if you're able to open them and have the finance to do it, they would need to be cleaned every half hour, SIA doorman on the door and take track and trace information from everyone using the facilities, with the information retained on a database for 21 days. This would mean a cleaning operative would be required for each toilet, an SIA doorman and cleaning support which would come to approx. £7k per week and would be added to Silloth's council tax bill. Silloth gets no support from Allerdale towards the cost of the toilets, unlike Workington and Maryport. Toilets are	

	<p>not open at this current time as it is not safe to do so and we need to follow Government guidance. An explanation needs to be provided to the public on why the toilets are not open, how the council tax would go up and possibly consider charging for the use of the toilets. The facilities are used by visitors to the town and yet it is Silloth residents who are paying for the facilities through their council tax. Cllr. Emmerson questioned when the information came through and quoted from guidance dated 6 July. Cllr. Graham said it would be guidance on public toilets in public buildings but there is a different document for toilets in open spaces.</p> <p>Hayley de Moraes owns a mobile Prosecco van and would like a regular pitch either on the Green or near the Lifeboat station to sell at weekends and Bank holidays and offer something a little different. The Council were keen to support a local business and open to considering the options on whether a daily rate could be charged or by tender. The question was raised on what licences would be required and whether a street trading licence could be obtained from Allerdale. Hayley has a personal licence and therefore she would be able to obtain a TENS licence. She could get up to 50 TENS licences in one year which are operable for 96 hrs but would need a break of 2 days. Lindsay Tomlinson will mention it to a colleague at Allerdale for more information. Hayley to come back to the Council for a further conversation. Speak to the Chairman and Clerk if something can be sorted for the remainder of this season. Hayley to come back to the Clerk once all paperwork in place and information is obtained on licences required.</p>	
602.	<p><b>Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that the schedule of correspondence, notices and publications be noted.  Email from local business urging the Council to re-open the toilets. Clerk to post information on social media and website that toilets are to remain closed until we are 100% confident that we can protect the people and staff using them.</p>	WEJ
603.	<p><b>Planning Applications</b>  <b>Allerdale Borough Council has approved the following:-</b>  <b>REF NO:</b> HOU/2020/0070 <b>Applicant:</b> Mr &amp; Mrs Peter &amp; Susan Brough <b>Proposal:</b> The formation of a 2-storey side extension and single storey rear extension and detached garage <b>Location:</b> 13 Skiddaw Street, Silloth</p>	
604.	<p><b>Committees</b>  <b>a) Committee Reports</b>  Parks Committee – Minutes of the meetings held on 15 June &amp; 2 July were circulated to members of the Council. Recommendations from the Parks Committee regarding the siting of the new picnic tables and bins is to be discussed later in the meeting.  <b>b) Additional Committee members</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that Cllr. Doran be appointed as an additional member of the Parks Committee and also the Staffing Committee. Play Equipment to remain unchanged. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are ex officio members of all committees.</p>	
605.	<p><b>Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that verbal reports received from Representatives on Outside bodies be noted.  <b>Joint Advisory Committee</b> – No meeting. <b>STAG</b> – No report. <b>Sea Dyke Charity</b> – No meeting. <b>Longcake Education Trust</b> – No meeting. <b>Solway Community School</b> – The school is continuing to fight on during these difficult times. Everyone is doing a good job. <b>Sports hall</b> – been closed due to the lockdown. <b>Friends of the Green</b> – meeting held on the Green on the benches by the splash park. Jim &amp; Judith Scott have done an incredible amount of work and built a pagoda and seating at the FOG allotment which will be a real asset. Two bird feeding stations have now been installed on the Green. Thanks to Jaybees who have donated a lot of bird feed which is really appreciated. The fairy doors are away being repainted and will be put back up. There are a lot of plans for the future. Thanks to Carol for encouraging new community members to get involved and help on the Green, who are keen to get started when lockdown restrictions are lifted. We have a good committee who are moving forward. Also, thanks to Wendy for all that she does. A lot of things will be happening</p>	

	<p>once restrictions are lifted. Mark thanked FOG on behalf of the Council for what they have done. <b>Sports Association</b> – No representative. <b>Coastal Community Team</b> – No meeting but the cycle track is moving forward. Tenders are out which will be considered by the Executive and a decision made. Hoping to start construction later in the year and for the work to be completed before the next financial year end.</p>	
606.	<p><b>Appointment of Representatives on outside bodies</b></p> <p>a) <b>Longcake Education Foundation</b> – <b>RESOLVED</b> that Cllr. G. Wilkinson continue as the Town Council’s representative on the Longcake Education Foundation.</p> <p>b) <b>Sports Association</b> – <b>RESOLVED</b> that Cllr. M. Orchard is appointed as the Town Council’s representative on the Sports Association.</p>	
607.	<p><b>Borough &amp; County Council Reports</b></p> <p><b>Allerdale Borough Council (ABC)</b> – Cllr. Cook provided an explanation from Allerdale on the recent social media post which appeared to be encouraging people to visit Silloth. Allerdale are supporting Cumbria Tourism’s ‘Perfect Place’ campaign aimed at helping the industry recover now that covid-19 restrictions are being eased. The graphics used are to encourage people to the area and point people to the Cumbria Tourism website, with information on where people can go and what they can do in Cumbria and Allerdale. The reference in the post relates to toilets owned by Allerdale and not the toilets in Silloth. The Council needs to be confident in its decision to reopen the toilets and be willing to stand up to criticism when people’s council tax is raised as a result. Keswick toilets are open but are not owned by Allerdale or the Town Council but run by a long-arm company. The Council are not obliged to have public toilets open and have a duty of care to our staff.</p> <p>Cllr. Markley provided an update on refuse collections which have now been resumed. They are trialing the installation of plastic partitions in the cabs of the refuse wagons. Cllr. Markley received a request for the Solway Firth to be restocked with fish due to EU having overfished the Solway Firth but that was going to be difficult as it is part of the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. We have been allocated £60k for Silloth to look at replacing the groynes along the Promenade which is to write a report to the apply for funding of £600k which will repair and replace the broken groynes next year.</p> <p><b>Cumbria County Council (CCC)</b> – Cllr. Markley has been part of the Community Resilience group during lockdown which was set up to distribute food and parcels throughout Allerdale. Thanks to Sarah Keaveney, the local chip shops, local businesses and Rotary club which have all helped the local community. Setts are being repaired on Criffel Street which is ongoing. Work was done to Stanwix corner on the flooding but there is more work to do. Secured funding of up to £600k for the Crosscanonby, Castle corner and Dubmill, with the major work done to Crosscanonby road ends, Castle corner and then the remainder for Dubmill. The Chairman asked if local fisherman are contacted, as one of the major problems is getting the mussel beds open which was confirmed by Cllr. Markley. There are only two main fishing families left in the town. The County Council is aware of the problem with the trees and work will be done to anything that is dangerous but they will need to apply for a budget, if major works are required.</p> <p>Reports are regularly provided by Cllr. Cook and Cllr. Markley on what is happening at Allerdale and the County Council, however since Cllr. Martin resigned from the Town Council, there has been nothing from him. It was suggested that Cllr. Martin be asked to provide a regular report to the Town Council, as he is a paid member and represents the town. It would be good to know what he is doing on our behalf. Clerk to email Cllr. Martin.</p>	WEJ
608.	<p><b>Park Manager’s Report</b></p> <p>The Park Manager provided a report on work done over the last month which was noted.</p>	
609.	<p><b>Town Clerk’s Report</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk provided a report on work done since the last meeting which was noted. Request received from Fletchers Fairground to set up on the seafront for the remainder of the season and</p>	

	<p>it was suggested that they be charged on a pro rata basis, similar to what has been proposed for the ice cream concession, as long as all the necessary guidelines are being followed and social distancing carried out. Everyone was happy with the proposal. It was questioned whether the Town Clerk would be having a holiday in August but a lot will depend on the Council refraining from calling any meetings or committee meetings.</p>	
<b>610.</b>	<p><b>Payment of Accounts</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that the payments listed in the register report to 6 July 2020 be approved for payment.</p>	
<b>611.</b>	<p><b>Applications for financial assistance</b>  An application was received from Friends of the Green for £500 to support the volunteers on the Green and provide lunches after their weekly volunteering sessions. What the volunteers do on the Green is fantastic and the Council has a budget for the Green. The plan is to do 2 days a week when volunteers can get back on the Green and the funding will pay for a light lunch after the sessions. Nine businesses had agreed to provide lunches free before the lockdown but many have been closed for the last few months. The funding will help pay for the lunches and help support the local businesses until they get back on their feet. The plan is to work as a team and the grounds maintenance lads are welcome to join them for lunch. £500 is value for money considering the amount of hours involved.</p>	
<b>612.</b>	<p><b>Events to be held on Town Council property</b>  None.</p> <p>Request also received from Mr Blake about operating the Land Train on the Green and it was agreed that as long as he follows the necessary guidelines and safety requirements that he would be allowed to operate and charged on a pro-rata basis.</p>	
<b>613.</b>	<p><b>Siting of benches and bins</b>  The Parks Committee met to consider suitable locations for the new picnic benches and bins on Silloth Green. The Council had received a request from a local business about putting tables on the Green for use by them and providing a table service etc. It was agreed that the Council obtain a supply of picnic benches and bins which would be available for any members of the public to use but would also support the businesses who have struggled over the lockdown period. Allerdale have agreed to fund the benches. The proposed locations are five between the Community garden and toilets, two next to the water fountain and two next to the Hudson bomber. Final locations to be agreed with the grounds maintenance lads, as need to enable access for machinery. They will be in place until the end of the season and only there temporarily.</p>	
<b>614.</b>	<p><b>Public Toilets</b>  Cllr. Graham wanted to know from our Allerdale councillors which Allerdale toilets were open although information which has been provided has been misleading. As restrictions are relaxed it will be reviewed but at the moment the time is not right for the toilets in Silloth to be open. It was questioned why Silloth are responsible for running the toilets in Silloth, when Allerdale pay for the toilets in Allonby, Maryport and Workington. Any funding seems to stop at Maryport. Silloth took over the toilets as part of the lease of the Green but it is an issue that the residents of Silloth have to pay for toilet facilities which are there for the community and visitors to use. Information to be included on the Council website and facebook page. May need to look at whether we can charge for people to use the facilities. An Allerdale councillor encouraged the Council to close the toilets in May and is now creating ill feeling amongst people on his Facebook page by blaming the Council for keeping the toilets closed. An Agenda item can be included on a future agenda. The Town Council website and Facebook page contains up to date information. <b>RESOLVED</b> that the public toilets are to remain closed until Government guidance allows us to do otherwise.</p>	
<b>615.</b>	<p><b>Town Council Facilities</b></p>	

	<p>From 4 July, children’s play areas and community halls are permitted to re-open. The Clerk had produced some detailed risk assessments, an action plan and signage in relation to the reopening of the play areas which were circulated to members of the Council. If opening the children’s play areas, it would be advisable to have somewhere for them to wash their hands and go to the toilet which is something the government is encouraging. Allerdale’s play areas have just re-opened. If the Government is advising facilities can be re-opened, then the Council should try to facilitate that otherwise there will be criticism. Play areas need to be opened as soon as possible, although there are genuine concerns over the potential risks. The splash pad cannot be opened yet, as the restrictions have not been lifted relating to swimming pools. It was suggested that the decision be delegated to the Clerk, Chair and Deputy regarding the reopening of the splash pad. <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Children’s play areas be reopened as soon as possible when the relevant signage and safety measures are put in place. A decision will be made on the opening of the Splash Pad when the guidance changes.</p>	
616.	<p><b>STAG</b></p> <p>It was agreed in January that a meeting be arranged between the Town Council and STAG, to obtain answers to questions and STAG also be asked to bring the last few audits. The matter has been on the Town Council agenda too many times and there has been an accusation of STAG misappropriating Council and public money. It is now written into the Council’s grants policy that any group receiving funds from the Town Council must report back on what the funding has been spent on. If STAG is able to show that funding has been spent on what they had applied for, then that would clear up any issues. Cllr. Cook apologised for the delay in getting the accounts audited which have been done by a completely independent accountant. STAG had to be careful as there is only £600 in the bank account and there has been delays due to covid-19. The accounts should be received within a couple of weeks and then a full disclosure can take place. It was questioned why STAG were given the funding in the first place if there were unanswered questions and if the relevant paperwork was filled out. Cllr. Cook to report back to the Clerk, pass the Accounts to the Clerk and then a meeting to be held which will be open to the public. Cllr Cook would prefer to have the questions prior to the meeting, so that answers can be provided. The questions have been raised regarding the accounts since funding was last given to STAG.</p>	
617.	<p><b>Government Guidelines</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that any Councillor stating Government guidelines must produce such item for all councillors to read prior to any meeting. Councillors need to be sure of what they are quoting especially when it comes to covid-19 and need to state which guidance they are quoting and how they are applying it.</p>	
618.	<p><b>Wages</b></p> <p>Cllr. McCormick asked why the wages are £10k every month even though the wages are not actually that amount. The Council has two current accounts – one for wages and one for everything else. Each month a transfer is made to top up the wages account which is not the actual wages paid but simply tops up the account. Wages have reduced from approx. £9,500 for 6 employees down to approx. £7,200 per month due to losing a member of staff. Need signatures to transfer money and due to the covid-19 lockdown, the transfers ensured money was in the account to pay the wages. In June, there was no transfer needed as the account balance had built up over the last few months. Cllr. McCormick was happy with the explanation.</p>	
619.	<p><b>Declaration of Interests</b></p> <p>At the last meeting there was a co-option and one of the candidates is a relative of one of our town councillors. The Chairman was asked by various individuals after the meeting on what is the purpose of declarations of interests. The Chairman spoke to Cllr. Irving before the meeting and explained that there was an interest there and told her to get in touch with CALC which she did. The Clerk had also contacted CALC. The Chairman asked if Lindsay Tomlinson could provide some clarification on declarations of interests, after giving examples where Cllrs. had previously declared</p>	

	<p>an interest. There are also members of the Council who are members of various clubs i.e. Rotary, STAG, First Responders. Lindsay provided an explanation of declarations of interests. All Cllrs. have signed up to the same Code of Conduct. All Cllrs. must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests where you have a financial interest in something which is generally employment and property. If anything is discussed which affects your employment or property then you are not allowed to take part in that vote. Other registrable interests also need to be declared but do not include family members. The interests of your partner or your spouse are also your interests as a Cllr. There is no requirement in the code for you to declare a more distant relative but it is up to the Cllr. to decide whether, in taking part in that decision they are able to make a fair and open and unbiased decision and whether that relationship would affect their ability to take that decision in an unbiased way. No one can tell a Cllr. to declare an interest and they can only advise. Ultimately it is the responsibility of members to decide whether they should take part in a decision or whether they have an interest which would bias you in some way. It's a grey area and not black and white. Code of conduct doesn't require you to declare those relationships but it would come under bias and predetermination. It would be up to the Cllr. to take that decision as to whether they feel capable of taking an unbiased decision by taking part in the vote. Legislation changed a number of years ago whereby it was down to the Cllr. to make their own decision on whether to vote and stay in a meeting but they could be held liable. If a Cllr. has taken part in a decision that someone feels they shouldn't have done, the recourse is through a standards complaint on the Code of Conduct which would be dealt with by Allerdale, with an Independent person and the standards committee. CALC had advised that the Cllr. should declare an interest when it came to the co-option but told Cllr. Irving that it was entirely her choice on whether to declare an interest. Declarations of interest do not have to be made at each meeting as long as a Cllr. has completed a Declaration of Interests form. No-one can force someone to declare an interest but if they don't declare an interest, a Cllr. may open themselves up to redress. A Cllr. can also declare an interest and take part in a discussion and vote if they choose to do so. If you hold office for any charitable organisations or other organisations then it should be declared under other registrable interests. The Code of conduct is based on the seven general principles - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. It may not be legally incorrect but may not be morally correct. Each decision would be looked at on its own merits and how close the relationship was. If it is a distant relationship then it becomes more questionable but ultimately it is down to the individual Cllr. and only they can say whether that relationship would influence them. If a code of conduct complaint was received it would be taken through the process. There may be an opportunity for some code of conduct training organised by Allerdale. There is a consultation out at the moment about changing the code of conduct which has been circulated to all members of the Council.</p>	
<p><b>620.</b></p>	<p><b>Councillors' reports and items for future agenda</b></p> <p>a) Residents at the back of Waver Street and Caldew Street have asked if there is any chance of getting some sort of light, as it is total darkness and there are a lot of people coming down the lane trying vans and garages. Cumbria Highways are unlikely to do it as it is an unadopted back lane but local residents could put their own motion sensitive lights up on their own properties. If the Town Council wanted to do it, they would have to do so at its own expense. More information to be obtained and an item included on September's Agenda. (Cllr. M. Irving)</p> <p>b) Future Town Plan – A meeting was organised before the lockdown with a guy on neighbourhood planning but he didn't turn up. Workington has got funding of £25m and Maryport £15m. Silloth Town Council needs a plan to be able to get extra funding from central Government. Silloth didn't meet the criteria for the town fund regarding closed shops and deprivation. Item to be included on the next Agenda with a view to getting a plan in place for 2021. (Cllr. J. Cook)</p>	
<p><b>621.</b></p>	<p><b>Amounts owing to the Town Council</b></p> <p>There were no amounts owing to the Town Council.</p>	

<b>622.</b>	Cllr. Graham mentioned one last point in relation to play parks. There is a link on the Allerdale Borough Council website which takes you to the UK covid-19 website about opening parks and green spaces. The easing of social and economic lockdown measures following the covid-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS test and trace. You should assist this by keeping a temporary record of all your visitors. It would be impossible however for the Town Council to keep a record of everyone visiting the play parks.	
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Signed.....

Date.....