

**Silloth-on-Solway Town Council**  
**Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 9 July 2020 at 7.30pm via video conference**

**Present:**– Cllr. M. Orchard (MO).

**Councillors**

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

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

	<i>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.</i>	
629.	<b>Apologies</b> Cllrs. J. Cook, J. Snaith & J. McCormick.	
630.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> As recorded.	
631.	<b>Exclusion of Press &amp; Public</b> None.	
632.	<p><b>Reopening of the Public Toilets</b></p> <p>Further consideration has been given to the guidance received from the Government and other information that continues to come to light and the proposal is to re-open the disabled toilet on Criffel Street and also the ladies and gents toilets near the Lifeboat Station, as soon as possible. There has been a lot on social media over the last few days. Monday's meeting was to decide whether to open the toilets or not. Cllr. S. Graham provided all the information he had and based on that, the Council decided to keep the toilets closed, as no-one had any information to the contrary. More work has been done to find out what can be done to reopen them but it has to be safe. Proposal is to open the disabled toilet on Criffel Street which is accessed using a radar key and also the two toilets at the lifeboat station, all of which are one out and one in. This would provide facilities for the public and help our staff. If there comes a point where it is not safe for our staff or not safe for the public due to an outbreak in the town then we would need to look at closing them immediately. This would initially be on a trial basis but the Council need to be 100% behind it. Opening times need to be agreed which would probably need to be reduced. Any Councillor who is not at the meeting must go on public record that they support the decision to reopen the toilets. Also an announcement made today that outdoor pools can reopen on 11 July and indoor pools on 25 July but guidance has not yet come through yet. In light of the announcement on the reopening of pools the Council will be considering the guidance and making a decision in due course. Cllr. Graham wanted it put on record that Silloth is the first town to open male and female toilets as there is only one in the West of Cumbria, being a disabled toilet in Workington. Cockermouth have also recently opened their toilets which you have to pay to access. It was suggested that Silloth should wait until swimming pools and leisure pools throughout Cumbria open, rather than expose children to the risk, as they are one of the high-risk groups along with the elderly and people with underlying issues. It would be very difficult to ensure young children kept socially distant. Cllr. Martin posted on social media yesterday stating he was disappointed with the Council's decision to keep the toilets closed. It was his guidance which assisted the council in the decision to close the toilets in May but has not provided any assistance in making this current decision. He stated that the Council would be saving £8k in water but failed to mention the income the Council has lost due to covid-19. As soon as the splash pad is switched on it will cost the ratepayers of Silloth in their precept. The Council continues to do its best for the town and its people.</p>	

All 8 Cllrs. present were in favour of the disabled toilet at Criffel Street and the ladies/gents toilets near the Lifeboat Station being reopened at the earliest opportunity. The three remaining Cllrs. to put it on record that they support the decision or they don't with their reasons why. It was questioned what would happen if the Council came under pressure to open more of the toilets. With three open the Council are providing more than other places. Due to there not being a meeting in August, the Chairman requested that the Council agree to delegate the decision to close the toilets to the Chairman and Deputy for whatever reason it is deemed necessary. All the necessary signage will be in place to advise people on how to safely use the facilities – at the toilets and posted on social media and the website.

It was suggested another meeting be held to consider the reopening of the splash pad and possibly additional toilets if social distancing restrictions are lifted. Information needs to be passed down to us by our Allerdale Cllrs. rather than us having to look for the information. Cllr. Markley always passes any relevant information on to the Clerk. The decision can always be made to close the toilets again if necessary. Opening times need to be decided upon and it was suggested 10am to 6pm. The decision to open any facilities must be made by the full council so that any come back falls on the council as a whole. It was agreed that a meeting be held on Monday 20 July at 7.30pm to consider opening the splash park.

It was questioned whether there are any pots of money available to assist with the opening up of the town. It is doubtful that there would be any funding available for running costs whereas a capital item would be a different matter. It was suggested that Cllr. Cook be asked, with him being the portfolio holder for tourism. The public need to be aware that they are paying for these facilities.

Signed.....

Date.....