

Silloth-on-Solway Town Council
Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 26 April 2022 at 7.00pm at Silloth Community Hall

Present: Cllr. G. Wilkinson

Councillors

G. Betsworth (GB), J. Cook (JC), C. Doran (CD), A. Emmerson (AE), V. Hope (VH),
A.J. Markley (AJM) & L. Winter (LW).

Also present: Wendy Jameson – Town Clerk (WEJ), Toni Magean (Allerdale Borough Council)
& Lorraine Smyth (ACTion for Communities in Cumbria) – via zoom.

247.	Apologies Apologies received from Cllrs. W. Jefferson (other commitment), M. Orchard (other commitment), J. Snaith (unwell) & M. Irving (working) were accepted by the Town Council.	
248.	Declarations of Interest None.	
249.	Exclusion of Press & Public There were no press or public present and no reason to exclude them.	
250.	Public Participation There had been no requests from members of the public to speak at the meeting.	
251.	Town Plan Lorraine Smyth from ACTion with Communities in Cumbria and Toni Magean from Allerdale attended the meeting, to discuss the formulation of the Town Plan. A range of issues were identified last winter during a workshop, but we are hopefully now in a better position to go out and talk to people. Councillors are the people who the community relate to and will speak to, and councillors need to want to put in the work involved. It is down to the Council what we do with the town plan. A lot of work has already been done already by Allerdale in putting together the 'Allerdale Strategic Context' with the following vision for the town. "A vision to enhance Silloth's historical character through education, activity and job opportunity. Creating a vibrant exciting seaside town destination to encourage families to visit, explore or live." The Town Council agree with Allerdale's vision. A lot of the plans contained in the document will need a considerable amount of money and we can't go out to the public with these ideas unless we know how they will be funded. Don't want to raise expectations. Things are changing with the creation of the new Cumberland Council, and it will be good to have a plan going forward, showing the main priorities for the community and the Council. CALC is encouraging all councils to have their own plans going forward. Also need to plan how to involve other authorities. The Town Council needs its own ideas for its own plan and if it ties in with Allerdale then it will have more strength. The Allerdale Strategic Context forms part of the Allerdale Local Plan and is in the public domain. Having a town plan means having projects available that can make use of any funding opportunities that come along. Our plan needs to concentrate on what the Town Council priorities are and the services we provide. We also need to link into other plans and work in partnership to achieve our objectives. For example, the AONB will have its own plan in place. It was questioned whether the 'Spring into Silloth' event would be a good opportunity to show the community what the Town Council wants to do. We need to show the public that we are moving forward and looking to put together a town plan. The event is for a different purpose and there wouldn't be enough time to put anything together. It was questioned how long it would take to put a plan together. There is a process to go through. The Council needs to think about its priorities – improving the Green; outdoor gym; making the Green somewhere to stay longer and make income from; speeding; potholes; dog fouling; car parks; space for campervans etc. Ideas will be put out to the public and get their feedback and then find	

out what support is needed. The Council needs to talk about priorities and then put questions together to go out to the public with. There will be different questions over a series of months. After talking, we need to know what we are going to do consequently. Some projects may take years to do. If it doesn't fit with the Allerdale strategy, then we can lobby the new council to include it in their plan. Need to identify the key priorities first. In the Autumn we could have a draft plan in place, with a view to adopting it. Need to not be unambitious or too ambitious – get the balance right.

Some possible projects were discussed.

- Swimming pool – no. It would be a very expensive undertaking and there are plenty of other facilities locally.
- Outdoor gym – yes.
- Discovery Centre –no. the Town Council do not want to burden the ratepayers of Silloth at this moment in time.
- The biggest asset is the Green, with accessibility being high on the list.
- Formulate revenue streams to reduce the Precept by charging for the toilets for example.
- Better parking for the disabled. Need to speak to local traders to make sure businesses are accessible but it could be difficult due to the design of the buildings.
- We need to welcome people of all abilities, look at different types of signage and accommodation.
- Look at how we can be a carbon neutral town – encourage businesses to use paper bags instead of plastic, more recycling etc.
- Cycling and walking also needs to be encouraged. Become a cycle friendly town, with electric charging points. Using a theme can draw in more money.
- Better access to the beach for everyone – West beach doesn't feature in Allerdale's plan. ABP owns most of the land, but talks have taken place with them in the past. Accessibility for local people all the time and accessibility for visitors. This is not just for people with disabilities but also for people with pushchairs etc. There needs to be a balance to attract people of 'all' abilities and provide the best facilities for local people.
- The local MP is pushing for the railway line to Silloth to be reinstated. Need to push for better transport and infrastructure for the town which would be more acceptable. A boat link to Scotland was suggested. Need to be ambitious and if questions are asked about transport and infrastructure there will be a lot of responses. Cumbria County Council have done a lot of work on that already.
- The cycle path between Maryport and Silloth is a good initiative. Silloth is on route 72 and we need to encourage people to come to Silloth and stay. Also provide charging hubs and maintenance for bikes.
- Encourage bird watching on the seafront, with information boards.

When talking to people, need to think how long people will speak to you. Everyone needs to ask the same questions. How many questions will you be able to ask? What do you need to speak to local shops about? – widening doors, providing doorbells etc. May need separate questionnaires for locals, visitors, and traders.

Lorraine will put some questions together and councillors need to let her know if they are comfortable asking the public these questions. Silloth has a population of approx. 3000 and we therefore need at least 600 responses. We can also have an online questionnaire, as well as face to face. It can be put in the Solway Buzz and in the Post Office and Library. Questions are part of the process of putting the plan together.

There are two seasons in Silloth – summer and winter. There needs to be something for the kids to do in the winter months. A lot of the camp sites are staying open longer and over the winter months. A lot of businesses close over the winter months. The Council want to make Silloth a year-round place to visit.

The key priorities identified are as follows:

- Accessibility
- Carbon neutral
- Transport & Infrastructure
- Year-round initiatives

The Council needs a timeline so that we know what we are working towards. The plan is to cover one every other month.

There is an Arts Council bid going in for an 'audio adventure' which could fund performances on the front next Easter – to find out what people are willing to pay for.

The Council would like something down on paper by November, to be ready for when the new authority is in place next year. Notes from the meeting are to be sent to Lorraine. The Town Clerk will speak to Lorraine to find out when the next meetings are going to be.

The Council needs to involve the community - businesses and residents. There needs to be outcomes and targets. It was suggested that we work with six businesses to encourage cyclists to visit. The plan needs to be a working document, with evidence that we are working with others. Something is to be put together for the town meeting at the end of May. A timeline is to be put together and put something on every Agenda about the town plan.

Signed.....

Date.....