MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EGREMONT TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 16TH JANUARY 2020 AT 5.30PM IN THE SUPPER ROOM OF EGREMONT MARKET HALL

Present:
Mr Neil Ferguson (NF) Chairperson
Mr Sam Pollen (SP) Vice-Chairperson

Also:
Mrs Jean Lewthwaite (JL) Mr Stephen Bell (SB)
Mrs Geraldine Pritchard (GP) Town Clerk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>157.19</td>
<td>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</td>
<td>RESOLVED to accept apologies (with reasons noted) from Mr Michael McVeigh</td>
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<td>158.19</td>
<td>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</td>
<td>RESOLVED to be noted that no declarations were declared.</td>
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<td>159.19</td>
<td>TO DISCUSS &amp; RESOLVE THE REQUIRED PRECEPT AMOUNT FOR 2020/21</td>
<td>GP gave all Councillors a copy of the figures showing the projected figure to carry forward at the end of the 2019/20 &amp; as these had been discussed fully &amp; recommended by the finance committee (of which Councillors present were all members), it was RESOLVED that the precept is increased by 5% increase equating to an amount of £7,319.29 which was the same increase as last year.</td>
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| 160.19 | TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE | The following recommendations were approved and RESOLVED:  
   a. Baiting works to be carried out at Sandholes allotment site at a cost of £585.  
   b. Following remedial works on the Market Hall roof, the quote of £430 is accepted to carry out the necessary works in the supper room to prevent future birds nesting.  
   c. Calderwood House is allowed free rent for their allotment plot on the East Road site.  
   d. Grasscutting in Egremont cemetery at a cost of £12,600 + vat.  
   e. Grasscutting in the Toll Bar field at a cost of £300 + vat.  
   f. Trimming the Egremont living sign in the bed opposite the cemetery at a cost of £179.50 + vat.  
   g. 5% increase in the precept request for 2020/21. |
| 161.19 | TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST FROM COPeland BOROUGH COUNCIL REGARDING FOOTWAY LIGHTING IN EGREMONT PARISH | Councillors were all given a copy of the letter and information from Copeland about these lights. GP stated that the 71 lights in Egremont parish at an estimate annual cost of £146 per light (excluding major repairs and replacements) would cost over |
Councillors were also given a copy of the email from the Copeland Association of Local Councils (CALC) which stated that there would be no change to the current arrangements regarding footway lighting so there is no reason to change the precept for 2020/21 but they would recommend that councils do not enter into any discussions with the borough council at this time.

Councillors agreed with CALC’s recommendation and that the Town Council could not take on the responsibility of the lights. Egremont Town Council already has large responsibilities and could not afford to take on any more.

It was therefore RESOLVED that a letter is sent to Elected Mayor Mike Starkie stating the Town Council’s disappointment that Copeland want to rid itself of its responsibilities onto local tier authorities which they cannot afford and also taking on board the advice from CALC, Egremont Town Council will not be taking on the lights but they do want some clarification with regards the lights going forward. Currently, Copeland repairs lights up until they become beyond repair, will this still be the case or do Copeland intend to start reducing the number of footway lights regardless if they can be repaired or not. If this is the case, the letter to the Elected Mayor should also state that Councillors are very concerned and believe that even though Copeland do not have a statutory duty to maintain the lights, they do have a duty to look after the wellbeing of its constituents and by removing footway lighting, it will cause a major health and safety issue leaving some areas in total darkness and therefore this will put the public at risk.

TO DISCUSS LIGHTING AND IMPROVEMENTS IN EGREMONT CASTLE AS RAISED BY A RESIDENT – SP
SP reported that a resident had approached him regarding the castle and mentioned a number of things including the lighting in the castle and overgrown areas.
SP went on to say that the front of the Castle looks okay but the back was a mess with overgrown brambles and health and safety forms a large part of why the back end is not being cut back as the banks are very steep and the soil very loose.

GP said that Lady Egremont appeared to be very keen on improving the caste when she attended to plant the three russet apple trees and it would be a good idea to keep her involved in any plans that arise.

It was thought the first step would be to meet with Copeland’s Tourism Officer Katie Read for advice with possible funding for the Castle to make the necessary improvements, NF & SP agreed to arrange a meeting.

The meeting was then brought to a close at 6.10pm.