

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2025 ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
SEASCALE PARISH COUNCIL
Held in Seascale Methodist Hall on 8th January 2025 at 7 pm**

Attended:	Lizzie Mawson	LM	(Chair)
	David Moore	DM	(Vice-Chair)
	Mitch Franks	MF	
	Bran Harvey-Chadwick	BHC	
	Catherine Harvey-Chadwick	CHC	
	Ken Mawson	KM	
	Mark Porter	MP	
	Michael Warmoth		(Clerk/RFO)

1. Apologies for absence: No apologies.

2. Announcements from the Chair: There was no announcement from the Chair.

3. Declarations of interest by councillors in respect to agenda items: There were no declarations of interest.

4. Ratify Minutes of the previous meeting

Proposed by DM and seconded by CHC that the minutes were true and accurate, with all in favour; signed by the Chair.

5. Reports from Councillors and Working Groups

5.1 DM reported that the next GDF meeting had been postponed because the NWS are planning to announce sites of interest for the headworks shortly. Once these sites are announced the Parish Council will have to decide how to respond; there will be further discussion in the next Parish Council meeting.

5.2 DM reported that the LLWR meeting was cancelled and re-scheduled for 24th January; he will report back at the next meeting.

6. Matters arising

DM, CHC and BHC met with Emma Currie from Inpost Parcel Lockers on 18th December 2024 to discuss the installation of lockers. The site selected is the Sports Hall where one of the larger lockers can be installed. The Parish Council has provided Inpost with evidence of ownership of the Sports Hall which is one of the conditions of installation. Inpost will be responsible for all the electrical work and installation which could take place within six weeks of an agreement being signed. Inpost will be responsible for the security and maintenance of the lockers. It has been estimated that there will be a guaranteed income of £1,000 per annum, with electricity costs being approximately £200 per annum. DM recommended that this income be given to the Sports Hall and all agreed. (The Sports Hall is in the process of changing bank accounts, so the Parish Council's account would be used during the transition period).

KM asked if a date had been set for the new street lighting on Gosforth Road. DM reported that Cumberland Council have no date yet, but he believed it would be done before the end of the current financial year.

7. Planning^[1]4/24/2404/HPAE – Perello, Hallsenna Road, Seascale – erection of a sunroom – no objection

8. Finance^[SEP]

8.1 RFO Report^[SEP]

December 2024: Cashbook reconciled £129,638.10

December 2024 Payments

Quality Cleaning & Contracting	144.00	24.00	Litter bin emptying
Michael Warmoth	680.97		New laptop/printer
David Moore	46.26	7.71	Fuel for lawnmower
Girobank Core Business	52.81		Car Park Honesty Box
PATA	31.05		Payroll services
Cumberland Council	585.00		Waste collection
Moore	2388.00		External auditor fees
HMRC	8033.23		VAT receipts
Octopus Energy	41.25		Toilet block electric - November
EE Limited	24.28		DAV monthly SIM maintenance
Unity Trust Bank	16.05		Service and Credit charges

January 2025: Payments to date

Quality Cleaning & Contracting	144.00	24.00	Litter bin emptying
			Waste collection foreshore Oct-Dec 2024
Cumberland Council	585.00		
Cumberland Council	156.00	26.00	Play area inspection

A Working Group will meet on Monday 13th January 2025 at 2 pm to prepare a financial report to present at the next Parish Council meeting in relation to the Precept for 2025/26.

9. Parish Assets^[SEP]

9.1 Car Park

MF presented his survey of car park usage by Sellafield workers (see appendix). The survey was conducted over the period September 2024 to November 2004 and found that the use of the permit holder bays does not prevent parishioners from finding a parking space after 9 am. MF recommendations include: better signage was required in the car park explaining the use of the blue bays and their free use after 9 am; the car park should continue to be free of charge; permit holders are encouraged to show their permits when parked; the donation from Sellafield should continue to be used for the benefit of Seascale residents and the Parish Council should report annually on how this money is used; any money not spent annually should be considered for donations to community groups; that the Parish Council should convene a traffic management committee to review all aspects of traffic in the village and not just the foreshore car park; and that minimal time should be spent on the matter of the car park during Parish Council meetings, as the majority of residents do not consider this issue as being of such great importance.

LM agreed to provide better signage and said that the Parish Council already reports on the annual spend of the Sellafield money. She reported that the Parish Council does not have a policy on donations and this would be a difficult policy to draw up. MF suggested that a traffic management committee should look at more pressing issues in the village such as the car parking at the Co-op and Pharmacy, the school and on the Banks. DM suggested that yellow lines may need to be put in place on the Banks.

The discussion moved on to the bus service provided by Stagecoach for the Sellafield

workers. Starting on 17th January 2025 there will be a reduction in the bus service of 28%. MF suggested bus numbers could be reduced by nearly 50% especially for the buses between 9 am and 2 pm where the number of passengers was very small. It was finally agreed that the car park should be removed from the agenda of the next two Parish Council meetings.

9.2 Library^[11]_{SEP}

DM and MF are meeting with Jen Metcalf of Day Cummins on 10th January 2025 to discuss the next stage of the Library refurbishment. MF has met with the Library Committee who wish to proceed with the next stage. Day Cummins will charge £2,000 for the planning application and related works which will be paid by the Parish Council. MF is in discussions with Octopus Energy regarding the Library's electricity bills. The next step is to turn the power off to the Library for fifteen minutes and record the electric meter. The Parish Council decided it was not worth pursuing the quote for interim repairs in the Library toilet if the refurbishment is going ahead, unless it gets any worse.

9.3 Play areas^[11]_{SEP}

LM reported that more site visits are planned for the Foreshore play area and that Cumberland Council had removed some areas for redevelopment. There had also been some issues sourcing play gravel. MP reported that Playdale Playgrounds will be coming to survey the play area at the end of January 2025 and Eibe Play in February in order to quote for any work they can do. There had been a minor incident with a hole that appeared in the play area, it was a historic post hole that had reopened. It was filled in and the individual concerned was happy with how the Parish Council had responded and actioned this repair..

9.4 Toilet block^[11]_{SEP}

It was agreed by the Parish Council to purchase a new Radar lock and handles for the disabled toilet after the key broke off in the lock. CHC and BHC will speak to the Renovation Man who will make a site visit to see what work is required on the toilet block. It was suggested that they involve the cleaner as well in any discussions.

9.5 CCTV^[11]_{SEP}

BHC reported there had been a slight glitch in the system over the Christmas period. The clothes bins have still not been removed and there has been some fly-tipping as they are full up. The bin is in a blind spot so it is difficult to determine who has been fly tipping. DM said he would speak to Cumbria Council again about having the bin removed.

9.6 Sports Hall

Andy Lee from the new Sports Hall Committee spoke about their plans to form a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. As part of this the relationship between the Parish Council as the landlord and the Committee as tenant needs to be formalised. A draft Memorandum of Understanding has been proposed. MF proposed adopting the MoU, MP seconded, and all agreed.

10. Highways and Transport

KM reported that Cumberland Council had finally cut the trees back on the Gosforth Road at Bleawath.

11. AOB^[11]_{SEP}

11.1 Insurance

It was agreed to continue paying the insurance for the SRA which is due the first week in March

11.2 Summer Camps

It was agreed that the Parish Council would again act as the approved body for the GDF grant. The application was being made for about £18,000 to cover the summer camps starting from the March school holidays. This should be the last time the Parish Council is required to act as the approved body; the organisers will have a trading account in place next year for the required length of time.

11.3 Old website

BHC reported that the Parish Council may receive a bill for the maintenance of the old Council website.

11.4 Railway Station noise

There have been some complaints about the classical music being played on the new tannoy at the station. This is an issue for Northern Rail and the clerk will email them about it. The Parish Council has also received a bill from Network Rail for the rent of the land next to the station car park. DM requested the clerk to contact Network Rail for details of the parcel of land that is rented.

12. Correspondence

12.1 Wishing Well wood supports deterioration

A resident has reported his concerns about the deterioration of the roof supports on the Wishing Well. LM will speak to John Miller and ask him to have a look at it. She will also ask him about the dry verge and tiles on the roof of the pavilion that need to be repaired as a matter of urgency.

13. Members of the public questions submitted to the Parish Council

A resident was concerned by the over full bin by Boat Club and suggested that there should be a proper system for emptying the bins. The Parish Council replied that this was due to interruptions caused by the Christmas break and normal service would resume from now on.

14. Date of forthcoming^[SEP] Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: Wednesday 5th February 2025 at 7 pm.

APPENDIX

Seascale Foreshore Car Park report January 2025
Mitch Franks

INTRODUCTION

This report is intended for the Councillors of Seascale Parish Council as an information report following an agreed survey of the use of the car park by Sellafield Permit Holders between the months of Sep - Nov 2024.

Nothing in this report holds legal value and all of the opinion is from the author.

INFORMATION

I was tasked with conducting a review of the Seascale Foreshore car park to determine the use of the car park by permit holders who are employed at Sellafield.

There are a total of 108 parking bays in the car park:-

3 are marked for disabled use.

59 are marked in white.

46 are marked in blue.

The blue bays are for use by permit holders only before 0900, after this time anyone is entitled to park in any of the bays.

The car park is free to use offering no charging facility. The car park does have an honesty box for civic minded persons to donate acknowledging the car park as being free.

Sellafield is the primary employer in the area and the vast majority of Seascale residents both permanent and transient have connections to this employer. Sellafield currently enjoys the use of 46 bays in the car park following the signing of an agreement between Sellafield and Seascale Parish Council. This agreement has been found to be lawful and reviewed to the best of my knowledge by the legal team of Copeland Council which was the previous District Authority for the area. This agreement provides a donation of £15k rising to £20k for the residents of Seascale and this is managed through the SPC accounts. There is a very vocal minority in the village who regard this agreement as unlawful and continue to campaign against the use of the car park under its current terms.

SURVEY

My survey was conducted over a three month period in the Autumn and covered predominantly Mon - Thurs at the times of 0700 and 0930

I visited the car park on 46 occasions at these times and recorded the amount of cars in the blue bays.

Taking the average numbers of cars recorded I identified the following:-

At 0700 there are 32 bays unoccupied with 14 permit holders parked.

At 0930 there are 22 bays unoccupied with 24 permit holders parked.

The lowest number of spaces available at 0930 on one given day was 18, and the highest was 38.

The survey shows that specific regards to the blue bays after 0900 there is just under 50% available for use by all.

I did not conduct survey of the white bays as these are free to use at all times and are not covered by any agreement between SPC and Sellafield.

It is my opinion that the white bays of the car park are filled because it is free to use.

SURVEY CONCLUSION

As a result of the survey I can conclude that the use of the permit holders employed by bays between Mon-Thurs do not prevent persons from finding a parking space after 0900.

OPINION

I form the opinion that retaining the car park as free to use for all is the best way forward. The SPC have no means of managing the car park as anything other than free to use. Seeking to impose car parking charges would require a third party organisation to manage the car park on behalf of the SPC. These companies do not operate on a not for profit basis. The costs to the SPC and residents would likely be punitive and difficult to justify.

The charging for parking would also lead to anti-social car parking throughout the village, as can be proven from the issues faced across the country in areas where there is a large single employer.

The status quo is not perfect as we would all like to see Sellafield offer parking facilities for its employees. Having a donation from Sellafield does help considerably and helps the SPC to maintain the Car Park and other aspects of the foreshore as well as supporting SPC activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would recommend the following:-

1. SPC invest in better signage in the car park explaining the use of the blue bays and their free use after 0900.
2. Permit Holders be encouraged to show their permits when parked in the bays.
3. That the car park continue to be free to use for all.
4. That the donations obtained from Sellafield for the use of the car park continue to be used for the residents of Seascale and that annually a report is published on the SPC website explaining to residents what the money has been spent on.
5. Any monies not spent on an annual basis be considered for donations to community groups in the village.
6. That the SPC convene a traffic management committee made up of 3 councillors to review all aspects of traffic matters in the village and set quarterly meetings. These meetings should cover the whole of the village and concentrate on areas where there are significant parking issues, such as in the retail area of the village, i.e outside the COOP and pharmacy, at the primary school and general unlawful use of the roads.
7. That minimal further time be spent on the matter of the car park during SPC meetings purely at the behest of a vocal minority, when the vast majority of residents do not see the issues of the car park as being fundamentally the most important aspect of their lives.

ADDENDUM

Buses:

Sellafield Offer bus S9 operated by Stagecoach to offer free to use transport from the village to Sellafield for residents of Seascale. The buses stop at various locations throughout the village including the car park. Recent agreement has reduced the number of journeys by the buses in and out of the village.

I have no data to offer with regards to the amount of passengers using this service but I have personally seen a number of the buses without passengers coming into the village.

The buses do provide a service for residents employed at Sellafield and do reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles in the village.

If I was employed at Sellafield I am certain I would take up this offer as I see it as positive traffic reduction.