C/22 MINUTES

In response to a query relating to C/10 of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2019, the Legal, Governance and Democracy Interim Lead Specialist explained that the June and July 2019 meetings of both the Joint Consultative Panel
and the Human Resources Committee had been cancelled due to a lack of detailed business and that an update on the Customer Connect Programme was scheduled to be presented to both the Joint Consultative Panel in August and the Human Resources Committee in September.

RESOLVED – That the Chairman be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2019.

C/23

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Grange Town Councillor Joanna Greenway addressed Members on behalf of Grange Town Council with regard to Agenda Item No.9, Community Governance Review – Stage 4. The Town Council was concerned with regard to the recommendation for a reduction in the wards of Grange-over-Sands from three to two and felt that the District Council should be mindful of community identity and the potential impact of the changes. She referred to the Neighbourhood Plan and to the fact that Kents Bank would grow in size in the future. The Town Council firmly believed that Kents Bank should be a ward in its own right. Councillor Greenway drew particular attention to the response to the Town Council’s submission and to the fact that it had been stated that a three ward solution would result in the need for a new polling station. She pointed out that the three current wards had used the same polling station for the past 20 years, also suggesting that there would be a minimal increase in election costs should a new station be required. Councillor Greenway urged the District Council to review the recommendations and to allow three wards in Grange-over-Sands.

Mrs Valerie Kennedy addressed Council with regard to the same item on behalf of a group of residents of Kents Bank in Grange-over-Sands. The group also believed that Kents Bank should not become a ward of Grange-over-Sands Council due to the fact that Kents Bank had a longer history of settlement than Grange-over-Sands, had increased significantly in size due to land allocations for Grange-over-Sands in South Lakeland District Council’s Local Plan and included almost half of the population of Grange-over-Sands. Mrs Kennedy stressed that three wards would create a fairer representation from communities within the Grange-over-Sands area, with town councillors representing Kents Bank having a better understanding of the infrastructure and community needs of Kents Bank, which were different from the needs of those living in the main town area of Grange-over-Sands. Mrs Kennedy closed, pointing out that Kents Bank was already fighting for survival as a distinct community due to the Local Plan having reduced the green gap between Allithwaite and Kents Bank. She enquired if, by allowing Kents Bank to be treated as a suburb of Grange-over-Sands, this would mean that Allithwaite would suffer the same fate after the next Local Plan was published. She asked the District Council to help ensure that Kents Bank was allowed to survive as a distinct community with its own representatives on Grange-over-Sands Town Council.

C/24

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Legal, Governance and Democracy Interim Lead Specialist advised that the interests of all Members’ who were Town or Parish Councillors and who had an interest by virtue of the fact that Agenda Item No.9 (Community Governance Review – Stage 4) related to a Town or Parish on which they were a councillor would be recorded. She reminded Members that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they were required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests which had not already been declared in the Council’s Register of Interests. Members could decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare any such
disclosable pecuniary interests already declared in the Register, as well as other
registrable or other interests. She thanked all Councillors who had been in contact
directly regarding interests.

The Legal, Governance and Democracy Interim Lead Specialist further reminded
Members that, if they were predetermined or biased, or apparently biased, with regard
to any of the items on the Agenda, then the onus was on them to declare as such, and
to not take part in the item under discussion. She explained that simply having
participated in meetings at town or parish level and having expressed a view would not
bar them from participating, provided that they could demonstrate that they had an
“open mind”.

RESOLVED – That it be noted that the following councillors declared an interest in
Minute No.C/27 below:

- Councillor Matt Severn;
- Councillor Ian Mitchell;
- Councillor Doug Rathbone;
- Councillor Helen Chaffey;
- Councillor Gill Gardner;
- Councillor Hazel Hodgson;
- Councillor Tracey Coward; and
- Councillor Jonathan Brook.

C/25 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUDED ITEMS

RESOLVED – That it be noted that there are no excluded items on the Agenda.

C/26 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A list of engagements which the Chairman or Vice-Chairman had attended since the
last meeting had been circulated at the commencement of the meeting. The Chairman
thanked the Vice-Chairman for having participated in a number of events on his behalf.

C/27 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - STAGE 4

Note – The following Councillors had declared non-pecuniary interests in this
item of business by virtue of the fact that they were also members of town or
parish councils regarding which recommendations had been made:-

- Councillor Giles Archibald (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Pat Bell (New Hutton Parish Council)
- Councillor Jonathan Brook (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Stephen Coleman (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Gill Gardner (Lower Holker Parish Council)
- Councillor Eamonn Hennessey (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Hazel Hodgson (New Hutton Parish Council)
- Councillor Helen Ladhams (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Susanne Long (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Ian Mitchell (Dent Parish Council)
- Councillor Jon Owen (Kendal Town Council)
- Councillor Matt Severn (Kendal Town Council)
Council

They remained in the Council Chamber during the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Helen Chaffey declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of Arnside Parish Council regarding which a recommendation had been made, however, by virtue of the fact that she felt that she was pre-determined on the matter, left the Council Chamber during the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Doug Rathbone declared a disclosable pecuniary interest by virtue of the fact that he was in receipt of an allowance as Deputy Mayor of Kendal Town Council regarding which a recommendation had been made and left the Council Chamber during the discussion and voting on the item.

The Performance, Innovation and Commissioning Specialist presented a report on the final recommendations for the amendment of parish governance arrangements in South Lakeland arising from the responses received during the second consultation phase of the Community Governance Review and having regard to the South Lakeland Community Governance Review Terms of Reference as agreed by Council on 24 July 2018 (Minute C/20 (2018/19) refers).

At its meeting on 18 December 2019 (Minute C/59 (2018/19) refers), Council had approved a number of draft recommendations for the second consultation phase, details of which were provided within the report. The second round of consultation had been based on the draft recommendations, and views had been welcomed from all stakeholders, whether for or against the proposals. In line with the Terms of Reference, the Council had taken full account of views in regard to the draft recommendations, as well as potential changes or proposals other than those recommendations set out to Council on 18 December 2018. The second consultation (Stage 3 of the Review) had ended on 26 May 2019, and the report set out the proposed changes at paragraphs 3.12 to 3.22, as well as details, recommendations and comments which were shown at Appendices 3 and 4 to the report.

Once the final recommendations had been made, there were a number of steps that the Council had to take in order to implement the decisions. The decisions had to be published, together with reasons being provided for the making of the decisions. The Council also had to take steps to inform persons interested in the review of the decisions and reasons. Referral was required to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for some of the final recommendations, should the Council proceed with these. The Order would then be made and the Council was required to deposit copies thereof to give effect to the decisions. It was anticipated that the Order would be made during August 2019.

Full details of the consultation carried out were included within the report and details of all of the consultation submissions, findings and recommendations were publicly available on the Council’s Website.

Councillor Giles Archibald, Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder, thanked officers for their hard work and diligence in the production of the report. He explained that this was an officer report, with officers being responsible for providing their views and recommendations. Councillor Archibald, therefore, moved the recommendations as set out at paragraphs 2.1 (1), (2) and (3), 2.2 (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) and (10) and 2.3 of the report. He further moved two additional recommendations, replacing recommendations 2.2 (9) and (11) shown in the report:-
2.1 (4) that there be no change to the existing wards of Grange Town Council;

and

2.1 (5) that there be no change to the existing numbers of councillors on Windermere Town Council.

Councillor Archibald explained that the reason for moving an alternative recommendation for Grange Town Council was in response to the proposal from Grange Town Council that the Town Council be re-warded to three wards as described in paragraph 5.9 of the report. As this proposal had arisen in response to the most recent consultation stage, it had not been subject to consultation with the community of Grange. By leaving the current warding arrangements in place, there would be opportunity for Grange to petition South Lakeland District Council for the change and for the District Council to address the proposal outside of the current Community Governance Review. The reasoning for moving that there be no change to the number of councillors on Windermere Town Council reflected the comments made by Windermere Town Council and described in paragraph 5.7 of the report and due to the fact that co-options had recently been made.

Councillor Jonathan Brook, Deputy Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder seconded Councillor Archibald, saying that healthy democracy was key to a vibrant community. He added that the District Council would continue to visit and work with town and parish councils across the district.

In response to a query, the Performance, Innovation and Commissioning Specialist informed Members that Windermere Town Council's current membership was made up of 14 elected and 5 co-opted Members. District Ward Members for both Grange and Windermere expressed support for the recommendations as proposed by Councillor Archibald.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED – That

(1) it be noted that, as a result of the second consultation (Stage 3 of the Review),

the following draft proposals to parish governance arrangements, as set out to Full Council on 18 December 2018, are not recommended:-

(a) altering of the parish boundary of Kendal Town Council to include an area of proposed development land north of High Sparrowmire;

(b) altering of the parish boundary of Kendal Town Council to include properties on Natland Mill Beck Lane and The Beeches, and to include a small area of proposed development on land at Watercrook;

(c) changing the names of the wards in Kirkby Ireleth Parish Council;

(d) changes to the existing wards of Grange Town Council; and

(e) changes to the existing number of councillors on Windermere Town Council;

(2) it be recorded that, as a result of the second consultation (Stage 3 of the Review),

the following draft proposals to parish governance arrangements, as set out to Full Council on 18 December 2018, are not recommended:-

(a) altering of the parish boundary of Kendal Town Council to include an area of proposed development land north of High Sparrowmire;

(b) altering of the parish boundary of Kendal Town Council to include properties on Natland Mill Beck Lane and The Beeches, and to include a small area of proposed development on land at Watercrook;

(c) changing the names of the wards in Kirkby Ireleth Parish Council;

(d) changes to the existing wards of Grange Town Council; and

(e) changes to the existing number of councillors on Windermere Town Council;
the following be approved:

(a) a reduction in the number of councillors on Arnside Parish Council from 11 to eight;

(b) abolishing the current wards of Dent and Cowgill and having Dent Parish Council as an un-warded parish;

(c) the creation of a new Parish which amalgamates the parish of Fawcett Forest with the parish of Whitwell and Selside to create the Parish of Selside and Fawcett Forest;

(d) a reduction in the number of councillors on Lower Allithwaite Parish Council from 15 to 11;

(e) that Lower Allithwaite Parish Council consists of two wards - Allithwaite and Cartmel with Upper Holker comprising 6 and 5 parish councillors respectively;

(f) that the parish elections for Lower Allithwaite Parish Council be rescheduled to coincide with the District Council elections, with the next Lower Allithwaite Parish Council elections to be held in 2022;

(g) that the parish elections for Lower Holker Parish Council be rescheduled to coincide with the District Council elections, with the next Lower Holker Parish Council elections to be held in 2022;

(h) altering the election cycle of Skelwith Parish Council to ensure that the elections are held on the same day as South Lakeland district elections for the ward of Ambleside and Grasmere, with the elections in 2020 to have a reduced term and the following elections to take place in 2023; and

(i) aligning the Kendal Parish Boundary with the development plan boundary at Rochester Gardens and Burton Road, Oxenholme, causing a consequential alteration to the boundary of Kendal and Natland Parish and that the final recommendation be referred to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and

the next steps outlined in paragraph 3.23 of the report be delegated to the Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources.

REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2918/19

Councillor Andrew Jarvis, Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder, presented the Revenue and Capital Outturn 2018/19 report which set out the Council’s financial performance for 2018/19 and the impact on reserves.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 July 2019 and by Cabinet on 17 July 2019.

Councillor Jarvis informed Members that following the meeting of Cabinet, an amendment to the financial figures had come to light. Since the preparation of the accounts the Government had been denied leave to appeal two court cases on the treatment of public sector pensions. Although the original court cases related to
judges’ pensions and fire fighter pensions, there was a similar, but much smaller, impact on local government pensions. Along with all other Councils, South Lakeland had had to request revised pension figures and had had to amend the accounts to increase the pension charge to the General Fund by £608,000 for past pension service dating back to 2012. There was an equal and opposite adjustment in the General Fund, as councils did not have to balance their pension costs in a single year. The balance sheet now showed an increased pension liability of £608,000.

Although the absolute outturn figures would change, there would be no net impact on the general fund balance, usable reserves or variances for 2018/19 or 2019/20.

There was, however, a potential increase in pension contributions from April 2020. There was a pension revaluation currently being undertaken which would change the Council’s contribution rates from April 2020. On the current assumptions, this could be in the region of £123,000. This was a very rough figure, as there was a lot of work to be carried out now at the nation level to ensure the local government pension scheme was fully compliant with equalities legislation.

In moving the recommendations contained within the report, Councillor Jarvis thanked the Finance Team for their work and, in particular, for highlighting the challenges in the budgets for the remainder of the year, thereby enabling the Management Team to take the necessary corrective actions and deliver without deficit. Councillor Peter Thornton seconded the proposals, commending the Council’s financial contributions to, for example, car parks, caravan sites, Mintworks and investment in arts bringing income to the area. He raised that this was due to a series of decisions made over the last ten to 15 years. He further referred to a number of non-statutory services carried out by the Council, welcoming this powerful report.

During discussion, Members commended the report, highlighting the Council’s contribution to the community through sound management of finances, such as the enabling of play areas and affordable homes and the support offered through locality budgets.

The Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder took the opportunity to inform Members about “Inside Out”, a new community centre in Kendal for young children which would not have happened without the Council’s moral, administrative and financial support. He emphasised that this, as well as the Council’s financial contribution to many other projects, was due to the fact that the Council was a financially sound organisation.

Councillor Jarvis and the Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer) responded to queries raised. Councillor Jarvis undertook to provide a full written response with regard to the overspend on Development Control salaries and receipt of lower income in 2018/19. With regard to the change in pension contributions, he acknowledged that there would certainly be a cost to the Council in relation to this long-term obligation and suggested that this important topic would merit a fuller briefing to Council. The Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer), in relation to a question on outstanding debts, explained that all debt due to the Council was reviewed and that, where it was thought that debt may not be collected, provision was made for the potential write-off of relevant debt. Account was taken of the type of debt, the age of the debt and whether any contribution had been made or if regular instalments were being made. She undertook to provide a written response regarding how outstanding debts in relation to encroachments on Lake Windermere were viewed.
RESOLVED – That the following be approved:-

(1) the contributions to and from reserves detailed in Appendix 1a to the report; and

(2) the Capital Programme and funding set out in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

C/29 2018 - 2019 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Treasury Management Annual Report 2018/19 was presented by Councillor Andrew Jarvis, Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder. The report reviewed the treasury activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for the 2018/19 financial year, meeting the requirement of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

The level of external debt had not changed during the year, with borrowing remaining well below the Capital Financing Requirement. Current debt stood at £12.8m. Although at year end, the Council had cash and investments of £20.3m, further repayment of debt was not recommended given that current repayment premium would be circa 93%. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the fact that the Council's strong cash position was used to keep borrowing down and that it was currently £5.6m under-borrowed. He drew attention to the significant fluctuations in the Council's cash flow which emphasised the need for dynamic management of the portfolio, ensuring that cash that was temporarily surplus to requirements was invested for the benefit of South Lakeland. He also informed Members that the Council's cash investments had outperformed benchmark rates, generating £223,000 of income to support the core services of the Council.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 July 2019 and by Cabinet on 17 July 2019.

Councillor Jarvis moved the recommendation in the report, thanking officers for their work, and was seconded by Councillor Matt Severn who commended the Council’s safe lending pattern.

In response to a query, Councillor Jarvis agreed for the need to maintain liquidity.

RESOLVED – That the 2018/19 Treasury Management Report be approved.

C/30 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 TO 2024/25

The draft Medium Term Financial Plan, incorporating the Financial Strategy and the Budget Strategy (referred to collectively as the MTFP) was presented by the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Andrew Jarvis. The Plan would ensure that the Council had a sound basis for allocating resources and effective financial management over the medium term.

Councillor Jarvis informed Members that the numbers within the MTFP were identical to those approved by Council in February 2019. The key reason behind this was due to the very high level of uncertainty over the Council’s funding, with the timing of Government decisions around Spending Review 2019 and the proposed new local government funding system. Given this uncertainty, the Council continued to assume that the Local Government Financial Settlement based on “fairer funding” would be
implemented. As part of this, the pooling arrangement for non-domestic rates would be expected to end, along with the New Homes Bonus. The continuation of the Business Rate Pool was, however, a possibility if changes to local government funding were delayed. Any previous applications had required a rapid response from all authorities about whether to join or remain in a pool. The decision to join a pool had been delegated in both 2017 and 2018 and it was, therefore, requested that the same delegations continue for the current year.

Councillor Jarvis stressed the fact that, despite the high level of uncertainty, the Council was in a strong position compared to most local authorities, with adequate General Fund balances and reserves, robust financial management practices and an excellent track record in achieving efficiency savings. He believed that the Council’s decision to pursue the Customer Connect Programme would make a substantial contribution to reducing the deficit over the next five years, however, that there was, in addition, still considerable work to be done, and key risks remained.

Councillor Jarvis added that, over the next four months, he would be working with Cabinet and the senior leadership team of the Council to focus on identifying options for closing the deficit in the short term and to develop a programme of options for the different scenarios faced by the Council, at the same time the priority remaining both on delivering high quality services whilst ensuring that the Council also acted to protect its long-term financial health for the benefit of residents. The overall position would be constantly reviewed and reported over the rest of 2019 and early 2020 as part of the budget process and update reports.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 July 2019 and by Cabinet on 17 July 2019.

Councillor Jarvis moved the recommendation contained within the report and was seconded by Councillor Jonathan Brook, Deputy Leader and Housing and Innovation Portfolio Holder who commended the positive and proactive approach of this ambitious report, the Council at the same time taking into consideration the vulnerable as well as the protection of the environment of South Lakeland.

Whilst concern was expressed at the uncertainty with regard to Government funding, attention was drawn to the fact that the Council’s MTFP included support for numerous ambitious projects, as well as assuming no changes to the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the vulnerable.

RESOLVED – That the draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Note – Council adjourned for a break at 8.20 p.m. and reconvened at 8.30 p.m.

C/31 SOUTH CUMBRIA COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2019 - 20

The Health, Wellbeing and Financial Resilience Portfolio Holder, Councillor Suzie Pye, presented the new South Cumbria Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2019/20 which recognised and sought to continue the effective collaboration in place between South Lakeland District Council, Barrow Borough Council, Cumbria Police and partner agencies, including Safer Cumbria. The Plan had been approved at a meeting of South Cumbria CSP on 9 April 2019 and formed part of South Lakeland District Council’s Budget and Policy Framework. It aimed to reduce crime and enable local communities to remain safe and reassured, without fear, or threat, of crime. The CSP
had agreed five priorities – protecting vulnerable people; domestic abuse; substance abuse and drug supply; violent crime and anti-social behaviour, key deliverables for which had been agreed for completion throughout the year.

Members were informed that a report on the CSP was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee twice annually, the last occasion having been on 26 April 2019 (O&S/77 (2018/19) refers). The Plan had been recommended for adoption by Council by the Cabinet at its meeting on 5 June 2019 (CEX/11 (2019/20) refers).

In presenting the report, Councillor Pye stressed the fact that the key message was that prevention played a vital role in tackling these issues, for example by improving education alcohol misuse and working with licensees to reduce the likelihood of alcohol-related crimes.

Councillor Pye referred to crime statistics in South Lakeland and reported that, comparing April to June in the previous year with this year, all crime was up by 3%, violence against the person (mainly without injury) was up by 16% and sexual offences down by 7%. The Police had stated that there were two significant contributory factors to rising reported crime. Firstly, the continued increase in confidence from members of the public in reporting crime and, secondly, statistics had been impacted by greater compliance by officers with crime recording practices, something which had been recognised nationally by the Office of National Statistics.

Councillor Pye commended a recent project which had already made an impact on young people in South Lakeland. This was a Theatre in Education project tailored specifically to South Cumbria which had been taken to nine secondary schools across South Lakeland and Barrow, focussing on the day to day pressures faced by secondary-aged children and how they might build up a resilience to that pressure. The performances had been supported by workshops which the schools had been able to further develop later in the classroom. This year, the same group had been commissioned to write and perform another piece, this time tackling County Lines Drug Activity. The performances and workshops had taken place in June and had been very well received. Students had been engaged and enjoyed the performances, learning valuable lessons in a dynamic way. Councillor Pye extended an invitation to Members to meet with her for further information.

Councillor Pye moved the recommendation contained within the report and was seconded by Councillor Dyan Jones, Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder, who commended, in particular, the work which had been carried out in schools.

Members expressed support for the Plan and were keen to see a reduction in crime figures. Reference was made to the excellent presentation which had been made at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April and thanks expressed to those involved for their work. Whilst Cumbria was a wonderful place in which to live, the importance of acknowledging that crime existed within the area was stressed. The need to protect those most vulnerable within the community, and in particular in relation to domestic abuse in small villages, was raised.

Councillor Pye thanked Members for their support which was a testament to the work carried out. In response to a query raised in relation to an increase in road incidents, she advised that she did not have updated statistics, however, undertook to make enquiries at the next meeting of the Partnership.
It was subsequently unanimously

RESOLVED – That the South Cumbria Community Safety Partnership Plan (2019/20) be adopted as part of the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework.

C/32

LEADER’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CABINET QUESTION TIME, INCLUDING THE COMPOSITE REPORT OF THE CABINET (1 HOUR MAXIMUM)

Copies of an Addendum to Appendix 1 to the Deputy Leader and Housing and Innovation Portfolio Holder’s Executive Report had been circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Councillor Giles Archibald, Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder, introduced the Cabinet Members’ respective Look Forward 2019/20 Executive Reports.

In presenting the reports, Councillor Archibald reminded Members of the need for them to work together for the benefits of South Lakeland’s Communities, also reiterating the fact that his door was always open.

Councillor Archibald raised the issue of Climate Change and informed Members that Councillor Dyan Jones, Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder, would be responding affirmatively to the support being requested by Kendal Town Council for a Citizens’ Jury. The business case indicated a total cost of £20,000 and the District Council’s contribution would be £5,000. Councillor Archibald encouraged other key service areas and local service areas to monitor the pilot to establish if it had relevance for their communities; the Council would continue to support local initiatives, such as it had done significantly in Ambleside.

Councillor Archibald, due to the importance of security to economic prosperity, announced that he would be proposing to make available a fund from the pool reserves dedicated for economic purposes to part fund new CCTV cameras in conjunction with parish and town councils, and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The fund would initially be £12,000, but could be increased, depending on demand; more detail would be provided in due course. Councillor Archibald believed that the PCC had written to parishes on the subject, however, asked councillors who were aware of a parish that may be interested to let him know; he was already aware of several such parishes.

Members raised queries in relation to the Executive reports.

Councillor David Webster referred to Councillor Archibald’s introduction and to his mention of financial contributions to both Kendal and Ambleside. Councillor Webster informed Members that Ulverston Town Council had set up and had made £10,000 available for such a committee to address environmental issues and drew attention to an event scheduled to be held at the Coronation Hall in September. He suggested that a contribution of £5,000 from the District Council towards the Ulverston fund would be greatly appreciated. Councillor Webster also advised that discussions between Ulverston and the PCC were ongoing in relation to CCTV in the Town and further suggested that if the District Council was providing funding in this regard, then Ulverston would make an application.

Councillor Archibald welcomed the submission of a business case from Ulverston, also encouraging others to come forward. The District Council was keen to partner with both Ulverston and other local service areas to tackle such issues.
Councillor Janette Jenkinson, who was a member of the Committee referred to by Councillor Webster, referred to a time when the County Council had attached stickers to refuse bins in order to promote the message, twenty’s plenty. She suggested that practical messages regarding environmental issues could be dealt with in a similar manner, thus enabling residents to become involved. She drew attention to the excellent environmental work being carried out in Ulverston as a result of the Town Council’s contribution. Councillor Jenkinson wondered if the District Council would be willing to take up the idea of posting environmental messages on wheelie bins and, if not, advised that the Town Council would do this.

Councillor Dyan Jones recalled having attended a meeting in Ulverston and advised Councillor Jenkinson that it was her intention to form an appropriate plan.

In accordance with paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the Council’s Rules of Procedure, the following written questions had been submitted to the meeting:

- From Councillor Tom Harvey to Councillor Dyan Jones, Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder – “As I am sure the portfolio holder is aware, new legislation affecting properties with a septic tank comes into force on the 1st January 2020. Some people are fully briefed, and others have no idea what it means so can the PF give a brief synopsis on their understanding of the legislation and outline what steps this Council will be taking to both inform and help residents and our businesses who may be affected by this?”

Councillor Jones responded, referring her response to a similar question raised by Councillor Kevin Lancaster in the previous year and undertook to forward a synopsis from officers. Councillor Jones explained that this was not a local authority matter, the Environment Agency being the regulator. She suggested that if Councillor Harvey felt that it would be of benefit, then a link to the relevant guidance could be provided on the Council’s Website.

- From Councillor Eamonn Hennessey to Councillor Dyan Jones, Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder – “Climate change meetings are being held around the district. Could you comment as to how well these have been attended and your initial impressions of the suggestions and feedback emanating from the attendees?”

Councillor Jones reported that the meetings had been well attended and well received. Response had been positive and comments about the work being carried out by the Green Team at South Lakeland District Council had been good. There had been many suggestions ranging from challenging supermarkets about the amount of plastic they generated to how public transport in Cumbria needed to be improved. Many ideas were focussed around planning regulations and building requirements and the frustration that more could currently not be done because of Government legislation. The important message from attendees was around the sense of a lack of urgency from Government. Although politics was not discussed, it had been clear at every meeting that people were frustrated with Government and wanted them to move forward, certainly changing laws so that local authorities could do more. Councillor Jones pointed out that South Lakeland was fortunate, with beautiful surroundings, access to green space and low unemployment. This did not, however, make South Lakeland immune to the challenge of climate change and loss of biodiversity. She was pleased to see local action community groups formed out of the meetings and encouraged Members to join a group within their own wards.
From Councillor Kevin Holmes to Councillor Jonathan Brook, Deputy Leader and Housing and Innovation Portfolio Holder – “As portfolio holder you may be aware that Levens Parish Council are in the latter stages of putting a plan together to build a new village hall along with 7 low cost houses to rent. All stakeholders have signed up on the section 106 apart from SLDC. What steps will you take to move this scheme forward?”

Councillor Brook responded, advising that he was well aware of this much-needed development in Levens, as well as a number of other Community Lead Housing Schemes across the District. Each community scheme came with its own challenges, as the Council’s experience with the scheme in nearby Helsington typified. In respect of the Levens scheme, Councillor Brook provided some background, explaining that the Council had signed a Section 106 Agreement with Levens Parish Council and the other parties in July 2016. This, amongst other matters, had provided funding towards a new village hall and seven low cost houses. The Council has agreed to support these proposals with a grant of some £350,000. More recently, the Council had received a further Section 106 Agreement from the Lake District National Park’s Legal Team. This reflected the changes in boundaries of the Lake District National Park and also, he believed, changes to interested parties in the Agreement. The Council’s Legal Team had received an Agreement signed by all parties on 4 July 2019 and was carrying out due diligence on the Agreement to ensure that the original agreements and commitments were not unnecessarily placed at risk by the current proposals. Councillor Brook undertook to ask officers to keep both Members and himself updated on progress and, as a result of the question, the Legal, Governance and Democracy Lead Specialist would ensure that the matter was prioritised. Councillor Brook took the opportunity to mention progress on another community housing scheme by Homes for Ulverston who were working towards converting the former Hartley’s/Robinson’s Brewery site for local occupancy and low cost housing for rent, creating 37 new homes.

From Councillor Dave Khan to Councillor Robin Ashcroft, Economy, Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder – “I understand that we have been awarded cultural compact status. Can you tell us more about this DESIGNATION?”

Councillor Ashcroft was pleased to inform Members that this was the case and provided an update. Arts Council England had advised the Council, as lead authority on the Cultural Compact Proposal, that the submission for the Morecambe Bay – Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region (LSCER) to become a Cultural Compact made to the Government Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Council England had been successful and that all of the Compact’s proposals had been approved by the DCMS. Moving forward, the Council, as part of the collective LSCER partnership with Barrow and Lancaster authorities would now be part of the national pilot of Cultural Compacts and part of a cohort of places around the UK that would develop this new model. The LSCER was in a privileged position to be part of the national pilot and it was a tremendous opportunity for the LSCER to co-create and co-deliver a holistic vision for culture – that Morecambe Bay would be the best rural cultural and creative capital of the UK. Councillor Ashcroft reported that the formal acceptance process was now being followed which would produce an offer letter from Arts Council England. He explained that the recommendation to establish Cultural Compacts had come from the UK Cultural Cities Enquiry which had reported on how cities could create new development opportunities through investing in arts and culture to create economic and social value for people from every background. At the heart of these recommendations was the idea of a Cultural Compact – an effective place based partnership structure that enabled a place to take full advantage of its cultural resources and embed them within wider local and national networks to fully realise their potential to contribute to inclusive growth. Arts Council England had said
that there were pleased with the quality of the proposals, and with how these places had taken this Cultural Cities Enquiry recommendation and had really thought about what this approach could contribute to their strategic plans. Councillor Ashcroft informed Members that a Cultural Compact was a strategic cross sector partnership driven by a common ambition for culture and place within the broader strategic development of a locality. What defined a Compact was ambition. Government believed that, by adopting a Compact, places could harness culture’s contribution to growth and assist with the development of Local Industrial Strategies. These partnerships sought to bring together local authorities, business, education, cultural and community leaders to co-design and deliver a vision for culture in a city. DCMS were interested to see if the Cultural Compact idea could work with a rural model and the LCSER had been chosen to be the pilot for such. Compacts were groups that provided the leadership and strategic capacity that enabled key stakeholders to work together to realise their vision for a place and allow more people to feel the social and economic impact of cultures in their lives. DCMS wanted to collaborate with places in the pilot programme to learn how this approach benefitted localities, what challenges it presented and what learnings could be developed together to take into the future policy perspectives about the role of culture in place making. Councillor Ashcroft informed Members that the work on Morecambe Bay “Becoming a Cultural Compact” was due to commence in September 2019, and would be completed by March 2020. This was a very significant opportunity for South Lakeland, as well as Lancaster and Barrow, and Councillor Ashcroft paid tribute to the Council’s officers, both over the longer term in establishing South Lakeland’s excellent reputation with the Arts Council, and in securing the Cultural Compact.

From Councillor Helen Ladhams to Councillor Suzie Pye, Health, Wellbeing and Financial Resilience Portfolio Holder – “Poverty continues to be concern. What benchmarks and figures are you paying most attention to?”

Councillor Pye responded, having researched a few different sources to try and to provide an overview of poverty levels both nationally and in South Lakeland. The Social Metrics Commission (SMC) had published a detailed report last autumn in which they had identified that an estimated 14.2 million people in the UK were living in poverty. Of those, 8.4 million were working age adults, indicating that employment was not necessarily a guaranteed path out of poverty; 4.5 million were children; and 1.4 million were of pension age. Councillor Pye felt there was some good news, with less pensioners than in recent history living in poverty. 6.9 million people in poverty (nearly half) were living in a household with a disabled person, which, she felt, was worryingly disproportionate. Councillor Pye informed Members that the SMC’s definition of poverty was for a family to have an income of 55%, or less, of that of the median family. Unlike previous measures of poverty, this took into account a wider range of unavoidable costs associated with personal circumstances, such as disability, as well as access to savings. It also included those living on the streets and those in overcrowded housing that were not identified in other measures of poverty. The SMC broke up the national figures into regions – South Lakeland was in the North West region, which was only partly useful for examination of this area. Councillor Pye advised Members that she had asked the SMC for data relating to South Lakeland but that they were unable to provide these details due to the methods they used to gather data. However they had said that they had the potential to provide data down to local authority levels in the future. For now, the SMC remained a useful new tool for looking at the state of poverty nationwide and in wider regions. Regarding local levels of poverty, Councillor Pye reported that the End Child Poverty Website provided very recent statistics for the number of children currently living in poverty in South Lakeland, which, as of May this year, stood at 23% after housing costs – an increase of 1.1% on the previous year. These figures could be broken down into ward level so that it was
possible to see that, after housing costs, the former Kendal Underley and Kendal Kirkland wards had the highest levels of child poverty in South Lakeland, at 34.6%. Councillor Pye explained that child poverty had long-lasting effects. By GCSE age, there was a 28% gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers in terms of the number achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades. The Council was also keeping in touch with the local food banks in order to monitor the trends they were witnessing in terms of numbers of people relying on them to feed themselves and their families. The King’s Food Bank in Kendal had recorded an 18% increase in usage year on year for the last two years. They were in no doubt that the roll out of Universal Credit and the associated five week wait was a major contributing factor to their increased usage. Ulverston Food Bank, which was part of the Barrow Food Bank, had provided Councillor Pye with their latest statistics which showed that, in Ulverston alone, there had been a 38% increase in usage over the past few months, compared with the same period in the previous year. Councillor Pye stressed that it was worth remembering also that, with the school holidays now in full flow, there would be more families struggling to feed their children than usual, which presented an added strain to the already busy food banks. The SMC had stated that, as well as the 14.2 million people living in poverty in the UK, a further 2.5 million people lived less than 10% above the poverty line. This meant that a relatively small change – a rise in the cost of living, a change in income, or a cut in benefits - might be all it took to push these people into poverty. Councillor Pye pointed out that many people were just one piece of bad luck, one unfortunate decision, or one unforeseen crisis away from potential poverty.

From Councillor Matt Severn to Councillor Robin Ashcroft, Economy, Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder – “Is there any progress to report on the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region?”

Councillor Ashcroft responded in the affirmative. He first highlighted the objectives of the Strategy and the potential benefits to Lancaster, Barrow and, in particular, South Lakeland. He emphasised how together, growth could be driven and skills in energy, advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, health innovation, life sciences, higher education and the visitor economy built on to grow a nationally and internationally significant economy. Councillor Ashcroft reported on progress to date:-

- 30 May 2019 – South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) Cabinet Members and officers had met with Lancaster University to discuss ways in which each other's knowledge and support could be used to progress the initiative and also how other issues such as Climate Change, Biodiversity and skills enhancement and retention could be collaborated on.

- 31 May 2019 – SLDC had met with the new Leader and Chief Executive Officer of Lancaster City Council to agree their support for the proposed launch event and also for the forthcoming cultural compact bid.

- 4 June 2019 – SLDC officers had met with the jointly-appointed consultants, Mickledore, to outline the potential offers and asks of Government based around individual and collective strengths; this work was ongoing.

- 5 June 2019 – The Leader and Chief Executive had met with Barrow’s new Leader/Executive and Chief Executive Officer and it had been agreed to take forward the initiative to take forward the launch event.
6 June 2019 – A collective bid had been made to the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport for a cultural compact, supported by the Arts Council.

14 June 2019 - Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region (LSCER) Launch Event at Lancaster University. More than 100 delegates had heard about the opportunity and potential of the area. This had included many local businesses from South Lakeland, and feedback had been very positive. The plan was now to engage further with local businesses for them to help shape a future deals or investment plan for SLDC and Barrow/Lancaster.

19 June 2019 – SLDC Leader/officers had met with Henri Murison, Director of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. He had been encouraging of the initiative and had offered his help in preparing for any future work with Government.

3 July 2019 – An informal meeting of three Leaders had been held at the Local Government Association Conference in Bournemouth to discuss progress and future plans.

8 July 2019 – SLDC/Barrow Chief Executive Officers had met with Cumbria County Council Chief Executive Officer/Director to discuss potential support for the initiative.

17 July 2019 – SLDC Deputy Leader and Chief Executive Officer, along with Barrow Deputy Leader and Chief Executive Officer, had met with three of the Morecambe Bay Members of Parliament in Westminster to outline potential future plans and how they could support the initiative.

18 July 2019 – Henri Murison, Director of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, had met with Leaders and officers of the three Councils in Lancaster to discuss the potential way forward and progression to Government.

19 July 2019 – SLDC’s Operational Lead Specialist Services and the Deputy Leader of Barrow had made a presentation to Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership to gather support for any future initiative.

Councillor Ashcroft closed, saying that, notwithstanding the fact that both Lancaster and Barrow Councils, post the May elections, had seen new Members and officers settle into new roles, he was sure that Members would recognise the considerable progress that had been made to date. The initiative had gained considerable support already, with much enthusiasm for moving it forward.

From Councillor Tom Harvey to Councillor Dyan Jones, Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder – “Recent media coverage has highlighted how the collection and disposal of general waste and recyclable waste particularly plastic, is at the forefront of many people’s concerns. This coverage has demonstrated how in some cases, plastics which are collected and disposed of in apparently the correct way, actually end up without the knowledge of local authorities in landfill, often thousands of miles away. I appreciate SLDC has a clear general summary on the website of how and where our recyclable material goes, but my question is will the PF provide Councillors with a clear audit trail, such as the companies that deal with the waste and the final destination of our recycled plastic, showing the route of this waste so that we, as Councillors, can tell our residents that the sterling work they do on recycling their waste is indeed a worthwhile exercise?”
Councillor Jones advised that she was unable to provide Councillors with a clear audit trail as the information was of a sensitive nature. She advised, however, that there was a clear audit path and a strict reporting structure that the Council complied with; this had been in place since 2003. Councillor Jones explained that South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) was responsible for collection of waste; Cumbria County Council (CCC) was responsible for the disposal of residuals. SLDC managed its recyclable waste and had a full audit trial of where this recyclable waste ended up. SLDC received income and recycling credits for this product as it was re-used. Nothing managed by SLDC left the UK. Councillor Jones reported that waste was audited quarterly. A significant audit had been recently completed by CCC, and SLDC had a duty to report every month to the County and the Environment Agency. Called waste data flow, its purpose was to record every kilo of waste collected and where it had gone. This was a nationwide database. Councillor Jones suggested that there was a subtle inference in Councillor Harvey’s question that the communications message was inaccurate and that access to an audit trail would allay any concerns from the public. However, she reiterated that the information requested was of a confidential and sensitive nature. Councillor Jones reported that, in the last three months, an officer from SLDC had audited Kendal Fell/Sinkfall, Ulverston/Cumbria Waste, Carlisle. The process carried out by the three sites in the Midlands that SLDC used were audited by the Environment Agency. CCC also followed an audit trail. Councillor Jones said that, pending publication by the Government of the results of the Waste Strategy, there were questions to consider. Would the current state of inertia continue or would it be pushed back or delayed? Would Westminster recognise the different challenges faced by rural and urban authorities? Would they recognise some of the impact that the new Strategy would have on the budgets and revenue and, ultimately, the risks and costs associated in providing a food waste collection service? Councillor Jones took the opportunity to thank residents for the good work they did sorting at source, in other words, at kerbside. This was why SLDC had a great record of recycling at consistently over 40%, because of household participation. In South Lakeland, recyclable material was of such high quality that it was keenly sought after. This translated into value for residents and the figures spoke for themselves; SLDC alone had recycled 40m items in the previous. Councillor Jones felt that Members would wish to join her in recognising the great job done by South Lakeland’s community in sorting their recyclable waste.

Councillor Harvey, referring to the briefing for Members held prior to the meeting on Freedom of Information and Data Protection, put a supplementary question to Councillor Jones, asking her to revisit and confirm whether there was an obligation to provide the information requested.

The Chairman of the Council advised that Councillor Jones would provide a written response.

*Note – In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Part 4, Rule 8 (Rules of Procedure), a motion to continue the meeting past 9.30 p.m., was carried.*

C/33 MINUTES OF MEETINGS

No comments or questions had been received in respect of the minutes of committee meetings between 22 April and 31 May 2019.

C/34 QUESTIONS TO CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OR CHAIRMAN OF ANY COMMITTEE OR SUB-COMMITTEE

No questions had been received.
C/35 URGENT DECISIONS

No urgent Executive Decisions had been taken since the last meeting of Council on 21 May 2019.

C/36 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Paragraph 11.1 of the Council’s Rules of Procedure, the following notice of motion had been put to Council by Councillor Giles Archibald, Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder:-

“This council notes in the recent report from the UN intergovernmental panel on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The report outlines the deterioration in biodiversity globally and the serious consequences of a further decline in biodiversity.

This council further notes the UK government’s failure to achieve agreed targets on biodiversity (the Aichi targets).

Council therefore

1. Calls on the government to urgently take action to achieve the Aichi targets;

2. Commits to a review of how this council’s activities can ensure biodiversity protection while at the same time delivering services, housing and climate change protection to the residents of the district; and

3. Calls on our local authorities in the county to jointly address the highly serious issue of the future deterioration in biodiversity.”

In moving the motion, Councillor Archibald stressed the importance and seriousness of the issue. He referred to the recent report produced by a global panel of scientists, the conclusions of which were not encouraging. Councillor Archibald explained that biodiversity covered many dimensions. It was not purely about ecosystems but also covered the number of species that existed, the population and size of that species and, critically, the genetic variation within the species. Genetic variety within a species was critical to ensure the resilience of that species. Human resistance to certain diseases relied, in part, on genetic diversity.

Councillor Archibald informed Members that the biodiversity of the world mattered because it provided a lot of services which tended to be taken for granted. For example, most of the clean water in the world was provided through the ecosystem service and most of the fresh air resulted from natural carbon sinks. Much of the climate was regulated through the ecosystem. The ecosystem provided a huge amount of medicines, for example, 70% of medicines for cancer depended on nature. The ecosystem provided the livelihoods for billions and it furnished the pollination system, which as a vital natural process that was critically important to the food supply.

Councillor Archibald explained that more ecosystem services were used up than were generated. He referred to the “Earth overshoot day” which last year had been 1 August. This was the day the earth used ecosystem services that could be regenerated in a twelve month period. For Britain, it had been 17 May. Human existence was threatened if this continued.
Councillor Archibald informed Members that the report to which he had earlier referred indicated that about 1m species were currently at risk. There was genetic narrowing that was of concern and a reduction in genetic diversity could threaten human existence.

There were considered to be several causes of biodiversity loss, of which climate change was one. Others were land use change, pollution and invasive species, for example Himalayan Balsam.

Councillor Archibald talked about what could be done, advising that the Government had made some commitments - the Aichi targets. Sadly, some of these targets were not being reached, however, Councillor Archibald suggested that the Government could be pushed to re-examine its commitments. He felt that this motion to Council would hopefully remind Government and the public of the importance of the issue.

Councillor Archibald explained how help could be offered locally, by planting trees, by creating habitats (for example Sandy Bottoms in Kendal was to be converted into a much richer, more bio-diverse habitat). The Council could offer support for individual projects like pollinators, hedgerows and making sure the verges grew more wildflowers. The Council would continue diverse tree planting and increase the biodiversity in its parks. It would continue to seek ideas from others and would ensure that developers respected existing Council policy which required biodiversity gain from developments. The Council did not, however, not have all the answers and Councillor Archibald closed in calling on all Members and all of the community to join in tackling this crisis.

Councillor Tom Harvey, seconding the motion, supported all that said by Councillor Archibald. He believed that all Members would be in agreement.

Members welcomed this worthwhile motion which they felt should be addressed alongside Climate Change. It was agreed that a great deal could be done at local level and suggested that Members should look to find areas within their wards which had the potential for re-wilding, taking into account the potential to link up small green spaces, as well as working in partnership with other authorities, schools and communities in order to make positive changes.

It was subsequently unanimously

RESOLVED – That the motion be carried as submitted.

The meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.