

BURTON- IN -KENDAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 16 March 2006 at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs. J.Hopwood (Chairman), G.Isherwood, R.Lawson, K.Ray, P.Rogers B.Willink, A.Wren, R.Bingham (District Cllr.) C.Dale (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: Seven members of the public

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs. R. Boddy, F.Mason-Hornby
2. **PRESENTATION** by Rodger Read who gave a presentation and answered questions about the proposed South Lakeland Gateway Project at Crooklands
3. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held on 16 June 2005 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

'Welcome to our annual village meeting.

During the course of the last year Janet Alderson retired, Janet was Clerk for a number of years prior to becoming a Councillor and her presence is missed. However, we welcomed 2 new councillors, Alan Wren and Richard Lawson. Also, as a result of the general election, we have a new MP, Tim Farron. Our District and County Councillor is one and the same man – Roger Bingham and Roger attends the majority of our meetings, which we welcome, and we thank him for his input and support.

Another welcome 'regular' at our meetings is PC Casson. Thankfully and long may it continue, PC Casson's reports do not include serious crime but we do continue to be very concerned with speeding traffic and we have been lucky indeed that this has not resulted in any serious accidents.

It has been announced recently that Cumbria Constabulary is to merge with Lancashire.

Regarding Quality Parish Status – we are very nearly there! Our Clerk has completed the Certificate in Local Council Administration and we now produce a quarterly Parish Newsletter delivered to all households to keep Parishioners abreast not only of Parish matters but District and County matters which affect us. We hope to achieve Quality Parish Status this summer. Being a Quality Parish will enable us to access more funding and provide and/or administer more services.

This year would seem to have been the year for Public Consultation and we have responded to requests for input on a raft of public consultation documents too numerous and with such long titles to include here but they include District and County structure plans, the new Local Development Framework, energy generation, electoral boundaries, sustainability scoping and minerals and waste development frameworks – not only within Cumbria but neighbouring Lancashire which of course affects us being so close to the Lancashire border.

Planning applications were down yet again this year – the Parish Council commented on only 15 compared to 25 last year, 35 the year before and 45 the year before that. If this trend continues, we can expect only 5 next year! We received a planning application for affordable housing at the top of Boon Town which received a mixed reception. SLDC planning Committee approved it in principle subject to design modifications. Burton, in common with many rural communities lacks affordable housing. The right to buy council houses and the upward trend in the 'buy to let' market has dramatically reduced the available stock of housing at affordable purchase prices and rents. Finding an available and

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affordable site, which meets planning criteria and the approval of the parish as a whole is well nigh impossible.

We have real concern over the state of our pavements, surface water drains and roads and continue to press for repairs and resurfacing. Our Clerk has a substantial file of correspondence with Cumbria County Council and we have verbal assurances that we will be getting some pavement resurfacing this next financial year. We can only live in hope and continue to press these matters.

We received grants again this year from the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund – a fund we can tap into by being close to Holme Park Quarry. Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust administer part of this fund on behalf of Cumbria County Council and they have contributed £2756 to our signpost restoration project together with the Friends of the Lake District who have offered £1200. CWMET have also granted £13,000 to a 'Wildlife Walk' in the schools grounds, this has been match funded by the Neighbourhood Forum, the national lotteries 'Awards for All' and the PTA's own fund raising.

The Countryside Agency (now merged with English Nature and known as 'Natural England') has pledged £140,000 for a variety of conservation, footpath, access and awareness schemes in the parishes of Burton & Holme. One of the projects is the production of 'Jubilee Walks' Leaflets. You may remember that the PC commissioned a series of walks within the parish to commemorate the Queens Golden Jubilee and Kath Hayhurst, then a Parish Councillor, devised 4 walks, which we enjoyed on pleasant summer evenings in 2002. Kath is reproducing these walks in leaflet form with contributions from the Burton Art groups and Burton Fellwalkers and will be published and distributed to all parishioners during April.

Kath continues to be custodian of our footpaths, boundary markers and signs and we thank her for this valuable service.

Other changes in the village – The Panorama on Slape Lane was completed and an extract from the panorama adorns the headings of our website and quarterly newsletter. We lost the telephone box at Clawthorpe. Dalton Crag is now officially open to the public. A new housing development is nearing completion on the site of the old Burton garage at Church Bank.

The Royal Hotel changed hands yet again and, for the moment is in the ownership of Punch Taverns. It remains closed but has planning permission for a complete refurbishment.

As for future plans. We continue to update our Parish Plan and welcome any suggestions from parishioners, which will enhance village life. We are still doggedly pursuing funding opportunities that will enable the employment of a Parish Lengthsman. CALC have recently bid for funding for a pilot scheme in the County and we have recently attended meetings with Cumbria County Council to discuss the practicalities of such. The scheme is very successful in Lancashire and CALC are confident that running a pilot scheme in Cumbria will prove its value and lead to more funding being deployed down to parishes to enable them to employ their own Lengthsman and not to rely on the County Council to carry out the minor but no less important routine maintenance jobs.

There was again no increase in the Parish precept which has remained the same for the past 5 years but a 'Hot Topic' survey on the website revealed that the majority of those who voted were in favour of an increase in the precept to part fund a Lengthsman.

Rather disappointingly, our super website is not being used as much as we would like. The results from the 'Hot Topic' and feedback we do get are very useful to us but we would like to see more.

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I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their commitment during the last year. Individual councillors represent our interests on, variously:

The Memorial Hall Committee

Burton Recreation Trust

Burton School Governors

Holme Park Quarry Liaison Committee

CALC

Parish Councillors freely give up a considerable amount of time in the interests of the parish. They are the level of government closest to the people they serve. Our efforts to best serve the people of the parish are often frustrated as delivery of services are not within our remit but we can and do make a difference. As can be seen by the number of consultation documents filled in and returned and related meeting attended this year, Parish Councils are better recognised now and our input does affect District and County decision-making.

Last but by no means least, I would like to thank Charles Dale, the Parish Clerk for his hard work, commitment and dedication to the Council and to the Parish and to the invaluable assistance and support given to me as Chairman’.

5. OPEN FORUM

A parishioner highlighted the continuing poor state of the pavements around the village