

BURTON- IN -KENDAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 15 March 2007 at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs. P.Rogers(Chairman), J.Alderson J.Brown, R.Boddy, J.Hopwood, F.Mason-Hornby, G.Isherwood, R.Lawson, A.Wren, R.Bingham (District Cllr.) C.Dale (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: Three members of the public

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None
2. **PRESENTATION** by Debbie Binch who gave a talk on the role and activities of the Kent Estuary Neighbourhood Forum and explained how they raised the profile of parish councils by conducting their quarterly meetings in the different parishes throughout the area, raising issues and providing funding where possible and appropriate.
3. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held on 16 March 2006 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

During the last twelve months Councillors Bill Willink and Ken Ray resigned. Bill had been a councillor for many years and Ken had been on the council since 2004. However, we welcomed two new councillors, Janet Alderson and John Brown, although Janet was our former clerk and had also been a councillor. Our District and County Councillor is still Roger Bingham. Roger attends the many of our meetings, which we welcome, and we thank him for his input and support. Things may change as the Boundary Committee for England has recommended that Burton, Holme, Hutton Roof, Lupton and Preston Patrick should form one electoral ward for South Lakeland District Council, represented by two councillors. However, if local government reorganization does result in a unitary authority for Cumbria these changes will not happen. Our designated police officer, P.C Suart occasionally attends meetings and forwards a report of incidents in the parish. Fortunately, the Government's proposal to merge the Cumbria Constabulary with the Lancashire Constabulary has been cancelled.

Regarding Quality Parish Status – we did it! There are only eight quality councils in Cumbria and Burton -in- Kendal is one of the three in South Lakeland. Quality Parish Status will enable the council to have more input into the planning and delivery of services. It is recognition by the Government that the council is operating to the highest standards of corporate governance.

As usual we have been inundated by a plethora of consultation documents.

They include –

Cumbria Open Spaces –Green Places Questionnaire

Cumbria Wind Energy Scoping Report

The Environment Agency Consultation

The Draft Cumbria Housing Strategy

The North-West Regional Assembly Draft Regional Spatial Strategy

Acute Medical Services Review Consultation

Cumbria Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Cumbria Public Transport Survey

Cumbria Neighbourhood Forum Survey

As we are adjacent to Lancashire we also receive consultation documents for Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council.

Planning applications have suddenly increased – the parish council considered 39 compared to 13 the previous year. At this rate every house in Burton will soon have an extension or a conservatory.

BURTON- IN -KENDAL PARISH COUNCIL

The planning application for affordable housing at the top of Boon Town has caused much discussion and has led to heated exchanges in the community and in council meetings. SLDC Development Control (Planning) Committee approved it in principle, subject to design modifications. Finding an available and affordable site that meets planning criteria and the approval of the parish as a whole is well nigh impossible. The parish council persuaded Impact Housing Association to move the planned housing to a part of the site that caused the least loss of important amenity open space. However, Impact would not agree to replace all the existing play equipment with new equipment and had not produced a draft Section 106 agreement as requested. Therefore, the parish council objected to the proposed development in entirety when the last planning application was submitted to the Development Control Committee in January. As you are aware the Development Control Committee approved the application against the wishes of the parish council.

This has been a year of achievement in which several long-standing issues have been resolved and many refurbishment works have been completed.

The pavements in the middle of the village have been resurfaced after five years of lobbying. Station Lane, Moss Lane and a section of the road to Kirkby Lonsdale have been resurfaced. The two historic fingerposts on Station Lane have been refurbished. A replica of a cast-iron Westmorland fingerpost has been erected at Nineteen Trees.

The county council has conducted a comprehensive survey of all footpaths in the parish and has already provided several, new, wooden signs in Clawthorpe.

All direction signs along the A6070 in the parish have been replaced. The signage along Needy Hill, Drovers' Way and Station Lane has been replaced to be more helpful to non-residents. Clawthorpe Lane has had 'SLOW' road marking and a community sign. Various other measures have been introduced to promote road safety.

After extensive correspondence the Highways Agency have finally admitted to owning the plantation beside the M6. Hopefully the council will be able to persuade the agency to clear the silted-up drainage ditches. Without the determination of Richard Boddy and Charles Dale this ownership issue would not have been resolved.

The parish council now has the services of a lengthsman for one day each week. He is David Holmes and we hope this project will improve the appearance of our parish.

The historic Westmorland County Council fingerpost that was damaged has been repaired and re-erected on the triangle at Station Lane.

Other changes in the village – The King's Arms Hotel has been granted planning permission for radical changes to the internal layout, a car park and holiday apartments to the rear. Work has commenced on the car park and holiday apartments. The Recreation Trust has renewed the lease of the recreation area. A tearoom has opened adjacent to the garden centre at Deerslet Farm. The Clawthorpe Hall Business Centre has opened and nearly all the units are occupied. The restoration of Dalton Hall Home Farm for use as a business centre proceeds apace. Unfortunately, there is no progress on the refurbishment and re-opening of the Royal Hotel.

Unfortunately, in January our historic milepost was stolen for the second time. An example of the type of crime that rural communities suffer from.

BURTON- IN -KENDAL PARISH COUNCIL

THE FUTURE. The major change on the horizon is the proposal by Cumbria County Council to become a unitary authority. If this happens the district and borough councils will be abolished and the county council will provide their functions. The county council would be reorganised. A small strategic headquarters would remain at Carlisle. Beneath this would be four area committees made up of the county councillors representing the electoral divisions for those areas. The area committees would be Carlisle City, Barrow -in- Furness, West Cumbria and East Cumbria (currently South Lakeland and Eden Districts). Some powers and budgets would be devolved more locally to approximately 25 community boards covering groups of parishes. This has exciting implications for our parish council, we shall have to wait and see what happens.

There was again no increase in the parish precept, which has remained the same for the past five years. However, there will be a modest rise in April.

I would like to thank all the parish councillors for their commitment during the last year. Individual councillors represent our interests on:-

The Memorial Hall Committee
Burton Recreation Trust
Burton Morewood School Governors
Holme Park Quarry Liaison Committee
Cumbria Association of Local Councils

Parish councillors give freely of their leisure time to serve the interests of the parish. The council's efforts to serve the people of the parish are often frustrated, as the delivery of services is not within its remit, but it can and does make a difference.

Finally, 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 query was raised about the progress of the Gateway Project (which was the subject of last year's meeting). District Cllr. Bingham explained this would be on the SLDC agenda in the near future.