

KENTMERE PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Kentmere Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2011 in Kentmere Institute at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Nick Pighills (Chairman), Sandra Johnston (Vice Chairman), Maureen Baldwin, Jackie and Pete Bettess, David and Judith Bridge, Hazel Brownlow, Helyn Connerr, Robert and Clare Courtier, Christopher and Shirley Gregory, Margaret Harrison, Christine Hevey, Richard and Jan Hinchliffe, Iain Johnston, Carol Lansberry, Robert and Rosamund Ridley, Jim Stilling, Jackie Strickland, Andrew and Anne Williams, Cllr Stan Collins (SLDC and CCC) and two Police Community Support Officers Howarth and Potter who are local officers for this area.

- 1. Apologies for absence** had been received from Max and Maggie Biden, Simon and Ruth Corfield, Steve and Chris Haywood, Peter Lansberry, Jim Sharp and Tim Sturgis.
- 2. People of Kentmere.** The Chairman welcomed the Hinchliffes who have now permanently moved into Green Quarter House and the Lansberrys into Middle Holme. He also mentioned the recent death of Margaret Driscoll who had lived with her husband Dennis at The Grove for many years until 2002.
- 3. Community Policing.** The PCSO Tom Howarth introduced himself and PCSO Potter as the local officers for Upper Kent Area. He said that generally Kentmere had no crime but there had been nine calls during the past year to deal with various matters. PCSOs aim to be a more visible presence in the area than Police Officers as they are usually in liveried Police cars. Chairman asked what could be done when the road was obstructed by parked cars and farm vehicles couldn't get through. The meeting was told that we should use the 0845 number for help. 'Single track line' rules apply which means that HGV width (e.g. a Fire Appliance) should be able to get through. Offenders would either get a £30 parking ticket or a note explaining the misdemeanour in strong terms. Police cannot move vehicles - they do not have the powers - but a fire and rescue crew might. As far as parking in passing places is concerned, there is no legislation which applies to them.

The Chairman thanked them and said that he hoped they would be regular attenders at our meetings. He invited them to stay through the meeting if they wished and talk with parishioners afterwards and they did.

Nick then announced that he and the Vice Chair (Sandra Johnston) would be standing down after this meeting which would allow him to manage the election later in the agenda.

- 4. Minutes of the half-yearly meeting held on 15th November 2010** were read. Hazel Brownlow proposed their acceptance, seconded by Iain Johnston and carried. The minute book was signed.

5. Matters Arising

Winter Road Maintenance. Nick explained that he had got no further with John Robinson. Cllr Collins said that it was no wonder because he had left. Nick said that he felt that it was unfair that Longsleddale could get money for snow clearance and we couldn't and we have had to increase our precept to pay for it. Nick would like help and Cllr Collins gave him a name to contact. The chairman had spoken to Stephen Raven who had suggested that the 2010/11 bill would be less than £500 but the Parish still owes something from the previous bill.

Cllr Collins explained that CCC had received an allocation of over £1m to make good the damage caused by the weather this last winter so we should aim to get in our reports about winter damage as soon as possible. The website 'fixmystreet'; might give a better chance of the claim being met. Iain Johnston commented that the most damage seems to occur around previous repairs and it was explained that the practice of sealing with

wet tar had been stopped following a serious road traffic accident which had occurred. Hilary Fry (the parish's 'highwayman') said that 5 weeks of snow and ice had done much damage. However resurfacing work had been done on Hellwell Lane and up Gravengate but even this was breaking up though the worst damage seemed to be outside Kentmere parish boundary. Cllr Collins explained that the damage at Raven Garth, Staveley had been found to be a collapsed land drain at the foot of a twelve foot hole. It has now been repaired by United Utilities who had eventually accepted responsibility.

- 6. Financial Report.** This was given by Iain Johnston. The report had been circulated to parishioners with the agenda. The balance showed that at the end of the financial year there had only been £80 in the kitty. Since then the precept of £1670 had been received and £1000 had been transferred to St Cuthbert's Church. The First Responders had not received their donation in 2010/11 but they would receive a sum covering two years in the near future and Stephen Raven's bill would be settled. The report was accepted and the relevant documents signed.
- 7. Highways Report** This had been circulated with the agenda. There were no comments.
- 8. Broadband Development.** A report had been circulated with the agenda. Jackie Bettess spoke to the report explaining that Cumbria County Council had gone out to tender for a preferred supplier to work with them to provide all of CCC's communications services including broadband for rural communities. The outcome was still awaited. The new scheme means that all of the finance had been lumped together and would have to support many aspects of IT and broadband. She said that as Cumbria has so many rural areas seeking help with broadband she was concerned that it may take a long time, though the Upper Kent Area was fighting hard for its share. It appears that it depends upon Cumbria County Council's preferred supplier as to how they go about it. Jan Hincliffe said that Kentmere Parish ought to obtain a copy of the tender document. Jackie Bettess agreed to do this.
- 9. Local Area Partnership – some thoughts for the future of the Parish Meeting.**

A paper on this topic had also been circulated with the agenda. Robert Courtier who had written the paper explained the major incentive by Government to devolve more responsibilities to local people. We are in the Upper Kent Local Area Partnership which involves 14 parishes. The system allows parishes to access money directly. Typical examples of requests had been provision of speed indicators. However as one parish had changed its mind there was a small surplus. Kentmere submitted a bid for the provision of more salt bins. Kentmere has been missing out. It is important that we make the most of the opportunity that is there. This means that we must have representatives who are able to go and discuss these matters with hope of the subsequent funding. Robert reminded parishioners that the Localism Bill which gives more responsibility to electors is likely to be on the statute books by the end of the year. Nick reported that at a recent meeting he and the vice-chairman had appointed (pro tem) Robert Courtier and Jackie Bettess to be Kentmere's representatives on the UK LAP and they had done a great job in picking up this matter. He suggested that they carry on and asked that all in favour should raise their hands. This was carried.

The chairman then talked about the proposals which had been put to the meeting at the end of that paper. He explained that he felt it premature to change the format of the Parish Meeting there and then. He is aware of the need to change and of the changes which have taken place and which are to come. He said that the structural changes have to be discussed broadly and with great thought and should involve more of the parishioners than those at the meeting. He said that if it were proposed to change the format and proceedings of a democratic body which has operated in much the same way for the past 104 years, it should be done in a democratic way. Robert said that what the Chairman was suggesting had already been done by the papers which had been sent to every household. The Chairman replied that the notice had been short and that wider views should be canvassed. Jackie Strickland felt that if they had been interested, they

could have asked for more time to consider it. She felt that they had become complacent and hadn't even sent apologies. Christine Hevey commented that despite circulation of notice there had been no posters around the valley as a reminder of the meeting. The Chairman said he intended to put a hold on the voting as only 30% of the electors were present. He added that to be seen to be democratic we should have consultation by all. Despite sharp exchanges from the floor, the Chairman declined to take a vote. Pete Bettess said that there are procedures which should be followed and there were comments from the floor that the Chairman's decision was not lawful. Despite that the Chairman refused to discuss the matter further and announced that the agenda item was closed.

10. Elections Nick Pighills read out a proposal from Robert Courtier nominating Iain Johnston for Chairman. This was seconded by Andrew Williams and all electors present were in favour. Nick Pighills then read out a proposal from Hilary Fry nominating Peter Lansberry for Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Maureen Baldwin and carried by a majority.

Iain thanked everyone for their vote of confidence for himself and for Peter even though he had been unable to attend. He then gave a resounding vote of thanks to the retiring chairman Nicholas Pighills and the retiring Vice Chairman Sandra Johnston.

Nicholas Pighills remained in the chair.

11. Any Other Business Hilary Fry – the retiring 'highwayman' – spoke of the scheme that had come into being in July 1999 which became the Highway Stewardship Scheme in 2008 when Craig Mallinson became responsible for maintenance of the valley road. The scheme developed so that anyone could contact the HQ at Penrith with their observations. That has now been superseded by "Better Highways Scheme" where the demands to the 'Highway Hotline' will now be sent to the 'find and fix' pair of highway stewards. Hilary announced that he wished to stand down after nine years but agreed to carry on until the June LAP meeting after the Chairman Elect asked him to. A vote of thanks was given to Hilary for all of the work he had done for the valley.

The meeting was closed at 8.50 p.m. and most parishioners stayed for a social chat with cups of tea, coffee and biscuits.