

Kentmere Parish Meeting

Minutes of the Kentmere Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 18th November 2014 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Iain Johnston [Chairman], Jackie Green, Roger Dewhurst, Stan Collins [SLDC and CCC Councillor], Robert Courtier, Christine Hevey, Clara Black, Pete Bettess, Jackie Bettess, Peter Lansberry, Carol Lansberry, Robert Ridley, Rosamund Ridley, Maggie Biden, Max Bidden, Hazel Brownlow, Sandra Johnston, Clare Courtier, Jackie Strickland and Andrew Yeats.

1. Welcome

The chairman welcomed residents and Councillor Collins to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Tim Sturgess, Jean Sturgess, Andrew Williams, Anne Williams

3. Neighbourhood Policing Team

Officers from the Team were unable to attend and submitted a report to the Chairman for the meeting. In summary the report outlined the current facts concerning reported crimes (78 reported in the last 12 months, 20 fewer than in the previous year); advice to residents to lock property and cars, in particular not to leave keys in car ignitions; reports of suspicious activities (17 in the last 3 months); and, advice regarding a telephone scam, warning residents not to respond to requests for bank details etc. over the telephone.

4. People of Kentmere

4.1 Councillor Collins shared the current position of the County Council's budget for 2015/16 with residents. There would need

to be an £80m reduction by 2017 as a result of less central government grant, with most of the cuts coming from internal staffing realignments and efficiency savings. Councillor Collins believed that there should be a proper process for generating the cuts, with posts being clearly specified so that the impact on services is transparent. He pointed out that there would be 15% less in the budget for highways in SLDC, although the issues of flooding due to blocked drains and damage to roads continue to be problematic. As the capital budget is less affected by the cuts, Councillor Collins suggested that this needed to be used to minimize the need for ongoing maintenance costs. He believed that charging for residents' on street parking in the proposed areas would have generated a useful source of income, but it has been dropped by SLDC. Councillor Collins pointed out the growing burden of adult care on Cumbria CC's budget. One new initiative in Kendal is the Business Improvement District status, which has seen local businesses getting together, agreeing a higher business rate in return for more say in how this income is used in the town. [Councillor Collins had to leave the meeting to attend another Parish Council meeting]

4.2 The Chairman showed a photo of an 'unknown' Kentmere family in the 19th century, requesting any further information as to who they were. On changes to the local community, the Pennells have moved to Norfolk and the new owners of Beald Head are London residents; and the Gregorys have moved to Staveley. The Dawsons have now ceased farming at Kentmere Hall but will be resident until February 2015. Christine Cohen has suffered a bad fall resulting in a broken pelvis but is out of hospital. Clara Black told the meeting that Sue Capps's father had recently died.

5. Minutes of the parish meeting held on 23rd April 2014

Max Biden proposed that the minutes be approved and this was seconded by Clara Black and agreed by the meeting.

6. Matters arising from minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes. The Chairman apologized for the oversight in putting up the notices for this meeting around the parish.

7. Budget for 2015/16

Peter Lansberry presented the proposed budget for 2015/16 to the meeting. In the main, there are few changes to the current budget. There could be changes to the council contribution to the parish if the status of houses changes e.g. a home becoming a holiday rental and therefore attracting business rates. The snow-clearing bill for 2013/14 has not been received (budgeted at £610) and there has been no expenditure against 2014/15 yet. There has not been an audit fee on the accounts as expenditure is under the required limit for audit. The meeting was asked for suggestions as to what the accumulated funds could be spent on. Two ideas were put forward:

- (i) Jackie Bettess proposed that funds could be used to employ someone to maintain The Pound, which adjacent residents voluntarily manage at the moment; and
- (ii) Sandra Johnston proposed that the fencing around the church is made complete.

The Chairman agreed to take away these proposals for further consideration.

Peter Lansberry proposed that the financial report and budget for 2015/6 be accepted and was seconded by Robert Courtier. The meeting was in favour.

8. Reports:

8.1 UKLAP

The Chairman reported that Mary Chapman is now chair of the UKLAP. There was a focus on parish websites at its last meeting, where Jackie Bettess shared the Kentmere website to members and the County Council officer present. Much praise was received for the quality and content of our website.

8.2 Transport/highways

Robert Courtier reported on actions from the last meeting and gave an account of current issues. Preliminary proposals for a new sign at Green Quarter, replacing all existing signs have been submitted to the NP authority and Green Quarter residents will be consulted on the final outcome. The new access for logging at the edge of Philipson's Wood just inside Staveley Parish, has not complied with the planning permission, being larger than originally proposed and surfaced with limestone chippings. The Compliance Team has been contacted and is to progress matters. Robert Courtier will meet with the new area steward, Glyn Wharton, on 19th November, following further reorganisations within the highways service, as

part of our regular dialogue. Areas to discuss will include the settlement features at Scroggs Bridge, a sign of more significant damage to the road surface; and the priority works schedule. Residents were asked to raise any further topics with Robert Courtier prior to the meeting. The Pool Scar flooding has been resolved as far as the road is concerned but underlying problems remain regarding the inadequacy of field drains and where the resultant water drains from the pastures. The efforts of local farmers to maintain hedges were recognized and much appreciated, in the absence of poor verge maintenance by the council. A small notice will be erected at the The Pound to discourage parking.

8.3 IT/broadband

Jackie Bettess gave a verbal update on broadband access in the valley. There are no further developments with the CCC Connecting Cumbria Project. Nothing will happen in Kentmere until after the upgrade to the Staveley exchange (currently due in April 2015). In spite of holding a meeting with the Connecting Cumbria project, it has been impossible to find out how BT intends to deliver 2mbps to every property. Investigations are ongoing regarding a community scheme in Dufton near Appleby. The problem for such a scheme for Kentmere is the difficulty in getting a line-of-sight between Kentmere and a telephone exchange.

There will be no change to the present position until the Staveley exchange is upgraded, scheduled for April 2015, and the commitment by CCC is still only 2 MB. It is still unclear how 2mb will be delivered by BT who has the contract. No progress has been made regarding mobile phone signals in the valley; the infill project in the corridor between Keswick and Kendal will bypass Kentmere and it would require 4mb capacity which the valley does not have anyway. There was further discussion about other projects in Cumbria that might offer some insight into a solution for Kentmere, which Jackie Bettess agreed to follow up.

8.4 Kentmere Institute

Christine Hevey reported that the Committee is to meet on Friday 21 November 2014.

8.5 TV for Kentmere

Max Biden gave a brief report on current status of the scheme. A full annual report will be circulated in January 2015, with requests for contributions. The scheme works on the basis of

all households who can use the transmitters in Kentmere make a contribution for their upkeep. Half of the properties fall within this and mostly rely on the scheme for a TV signal.

Contributions are in the main forthcoming, along with additional donations from other non-users, and residents are asked to continue to support this very important community asset. The question of getting additional channels was raised.

The TV channels are broadcast in 6 groups (multiplexes) of which 3 are Public Service and 3 are commercial. TfK gets its feed from Kendal, which is a 'Freeview Light' transmitter and only transmits the Public Service multiplexes. There is no obligation on the commercial companies to provide services, so there is no chance of receiving any further channels via TfK.

8.6 Planning Applications

The chairman had received two agricultural applications for which no comment had been felt necessary. A further application for Low Yeat was made available to the meeting.

9. Community Led Plan

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the background to CLPs and the initial residents' meeting that had resulted in a list of 'traffic lighted' problems and opportunities. The benefits of having a CLP for Kentmere were explained, such as the ability to influence external agencies and clarify opinions. The plans for Claife and Grange were shared with the meeting. The Chairman suggested that the parish would benefit from progressing work towards a plan asap. The next step would be to get views and suggestions from residents. These could eventually be worked up into priorities for an action plan. The Chairman offered the following headings to shape a possible 'questionnaire':

- Land and building development
- Parking and provision for visitors
- Extreme event emergency planning and contacts
- Future in-community communication
- Transport for the less mobile
- Making good/improving SLDC and CCC service shortfalls

Parishes can apply for grant funding to support the process of making the plan.

10. Any other business

10.1 Westmoreland Red Squirrel Society

The WRSS is looking for volunteers to trap grey squirrels next

Spring. 1441 greys have been trapped this year, with 133 red squirrel sightings in Kentmere. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the WRSS directly.

10.2 Parish Coffee Morning

The next Kentmere parish coffee morning will be held on 29th November in Staveley Village Hall from 10 – 12 am. Contributions welcomed.

10.3 High Bridge Footbridge

The chairman reported on the replacement of the High Bridge footbridge, completed this week. A new, higher wooden bridge has replaced the 20 year old former wooden bridge (made from recycled timbers), itself a replacement of the original stone bridge. Robert Courier had got the bridge level raised by a small amount, sufficient to lessen the risk of losing it in extreme floods.

10.4 Chairman's resignation

The chairman gave notice of his retirement from the office in April 2015, in accordance with the Standing Orders 2011.

10.5 Microphone for the Institute

Sandra Johnston suggested that some of the Parish funds could be used to provide a permanent microphone at the Institute.

10.6 Traffic Speed and livestock

Jackie Strickland raised concerns over the speed of traffic approaching Green Quarter and the danger to livestock on the road (hens had been killed). The meeting considered the possibility of a sign, raising awareness of children and animals in the area.