

## **Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Kentmere Parish Meeting held in The Kentmere Institute on Monday 9th May 2016 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Peter Lansberry in the chair, Richard Allen, Peter Bettess, Jackie Bettess, Max Biden, Maggie Biden, Clara Black, Hazel Brownlow, Robert Courtier, Clare Courtier, Margaret Harrison, Christine Hevey, Iain Johnston, Sandra Johnston, Carol Lansberry, Ian McIvor, Steph McIvor, Robert Ridley, Rosamund Ridley, Andrew Yeates and Stan Collins (South Lakeland District Councillor).

1. **Peter welcomed everybody** to the meeting but before the business of the meeting began he asked all present to observe one minute's silence as a mark of respect for Jacqueline Strickland of Grandy Barn, Kentmere, a popular and valued member of the community, who had died on 10th April at the age of 51.
2. **Apologies for absence** had been received from Roger Dewhurst and Jackie Green, Tim and Jean Sturgis, Andrew and Anne Williams, Hilary and Kathie Fry.
3. **Election of Parish Chairman, Clerk, members of the 'Parish Team' and Internal Auditor.** There had been no nominations other than for those already in post. The standing orders for Kentmere Parish Meeting allow the posts of chairman and clerk to be held for up to three years.
  - 3.1 **Chairman** - Peter Lansberry - proposed by Hazel Brownlow, seconded by Robert Courtier and carried unanimously.
  - 3.2 **Clerk** - Jackie Green - proposed by Peter Lansberry, seconded by Max Biden and carried unanimously.
  - 3.3 **Parish Team** (this is a non-decision making informal group of parishioners who meet on a regular basis for discussion and advice). It was agreed *nem con.* that Jackie Bettess, Robert Courtier, Christine Hevey and Iain Johnston should continue to serve in this capacity.
  - 3.4 **Internal Auditor** - Max Biden had stepped into the breach following the untimely death of Jackie Strickland. He was warmly thanked. Peter proposed that he be appointed to serve as auditor. This was seconded by Iain Johnston and carried unanimously.
  - 3.5 **Responsible Financial Officer** - this is not an officially required appointment but it was agreed that Iain Johnston was authorized to act in this capacity for the purpose of the Annual Statement.
4. **Police Community Support:** There had been no response to our invitation for an officer to attend nor had the Police sent a written report.
5. **Minutes of meeting of 9th November 2015.** These had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman asked if there were any inaccuracies. As no issues were raised, Robert Courtier proposed acceptance. This was seconded by Maggie Biden and carried unanimously.
6. **There were no matters arising** other than those covered in the agenda.
7. **People of Kentmere:**
  - 7.1 It was reported out that Mrs Margaret Walker, who had lived for some time at High Bridge with her daughter, Rosemary Walker, had died recently.
  - 7.2 The meeting was shown a picture, possibly taken in the 1940s, of a group of ladies outside a house. It was thought it may have been a meeting of the WI. Parishioners were asked if any of the ladies could be identified. Several names were put forward.

Those identified included Mrs Jane Walker, Mrs Driscoll (formerly of The Grove), Mrs Bland (formerly of Rawe Cottage), Mrs Leyland (formerly of The Nook) and Mrs Williams (formerly of Low Holme).

## 8. Finance Report:

- 8.1 The Chairman explained the balance sheet which showed some £3800 in reserve. He reported that some additional expenditure was planned in the provision of new notice boards (possibly with some assistance from LDNPA) and repair to the railings opposite the church after the restoration work had been completed.
- 8.2 **Annual Governance Statement** : The Chairman asked the meeting to approve this document. This was proposed by Jackie Bettess, seconded by Robert Courtier and carried by all present.
- 8.3 **Balance Sheet** : The Chairman asked the meeting to approve the figures for the accounts - total receipts and total expenditure. This was proposed by Max Biden, seconded by Richard Allen and carried by all present.
- 8.4 The Chairman pointed out that there were approximately two year's reserves in hand and he asked if the parishioners thought this to be appropriate. Max Biden pointed out that it was good to have strong reserves and commented that we had had two mild winters when little snow clearance/gritting had been required. The reserves could well be used up if we had severe weather next winter. This was agreed. The Chairman said that the situation would be looked again when setting the budget for 2017.
- 8.5 The Chairman reported that there were four cheques waiting to be paid - to CALC (annual subscription), The Kentmere Institute (for use of the facilities), St Cuthbert's Church (our responsibility towards the upkeep of the graveyard) and Kentmere First Responders (an annual contribution). He asked if these cheques could be signed. This was agreed.
- 8.6 Auditor: It was agreed to remain with the Auditor appointed by HMG.

## 9. Planning:

- 9.1 No current notices.
- 9.2 The Chairman reported that LDNPA were in the process of reviewing and making changes to the planning process. He recommended that someone from our parish should attend the consultations. Consideration is likely to be given to concerns relating to conversion of barns, provision of 'affordable housing', broadband provision, light pollution, the balance between commercial and domestic development and local demand for 'sheltered housing'.

10. **Telephone Service in Kentmere**: It was clear that the telephone service in the valley is 'creaking' badly. Engineers report poor cables with too many joints and repairs which 'leak'. The whole system appears to be unfit for purpose. It was proposed by Iain Johnston that a formal letter of complaint should be sent to BT from this Meeting. This was seconded by Jackie Bettess and agreed by all present.

## 11. Parish Reports:

11.1 **Upper Kent Local Area Partnership (UKLAP)**: Robert Courtier reported that much of

the last meeting had been taken up with discussion about the impact of the floods as a result of Storm Desmond in December. 13 of the parishes had been affected by flooding and damage to bridges - a long list of difficult problems. Robert reported that by gauging river levels in Kentmere and using instantaneous records from the gauges at Hallow Bank, Staveley could be given up to 1.5 hours warning of an approaching flood. Currently the nearest river gauge used by the Environment Agency is at

Bowston, several miles downstream of Staveley There had been discussion about broadband provision and about roadside verges where a new policy was being considered which because of the identification of some rare/vulnerable plants many years ago, could mean that our verges might not be attended to until October. It was agreed that the parish should institute an ecological survey at our own expense to identify the vulnerable species which need this protection and and decide which verges could be cut at a more appropriate time - particularly to improve road safety and to avoid the risk to cyclists and walkers of overhanging brambles and nettles. The cost of such a survey would be in the region of £650. This was proposed by Iain Johnston, seconded by Clare Courtier and carried unanimously. Responsibility for cutting verges could be passed to the parish.

**Stan Collins** (District and County Councillor) said that the situation regarding damaged bridges and the ongoing lack of repair was a 'disaster'. No preparatory work has been done. The latest initiative is to get a new bridge at 'Gowan Bridge' near the Eagle and Child and there is to be a consultation with structural engineers to design a single span replacement. At Scroggs Bridge there is still work to be done with the project managers in relation to rebuilding the parapet wall. It may be September before Sprint Bridge is reopened. Apparently the structure is still twisting and moving. Max Biden asked if there was any money available from the European Solidarity Fund to top up the funding required. Stan Collins replied that application from this fund could only be made by HM Government - not the County or District Councils. Peter Bettess asked what money had been made available. Some £117m has been allocated from central government. (The cost is estimated at £135m) and there is additional money available for the repair and maintenance of minor roads which have been damaged by increased traffic. There were questions from parishioners regarding the danger of joining the Staveley by-pass at the northern end of the village. It is difficult now but could become extremely dangerous when the tourist season really gets under way and the volume of traffic increases. Stan Collins was asked if anything could be done about traffic management.

- 11.2 **Broadband:** Jackie reported that there was no good news. An installation for Kentmere is not commercially viable for private companies and would be too expensive. It was pointed out that our case has not been helped by recent newspaper reports that some rural communities have said they don't want broadband.
- 11.3 **Community Led Plan:** No progress had been made. It was agreed to accept Tim Sturgis' offer of help.
- 11.4 **Highways:** Robert Courtier said there was little to report other than the condition of the road to Hartrigg, but the drains will have to be sorted before any permanent repairs can be effected there. He said that there was an initiative by the UKLAP to set up a working party to assist the Highways Dept and help them to make their internal systems more accessible to the public. Stan Collins said that they were experimenting with an new machine for repairing potholes.

## 12 Other Village Reports:

- 12.1 **St Cuthbert's Church** - a report had been circulated before the meeting. Robert Courtier said there was not much more to report. The work is going well and timbers are now being replaced. The old timbers, some more than 350 years old, are as good as new. He said there was an offer for small groups to visit the site and those wishing to do so should contact him.
- 12.2 **First Responders:** Pete Bettess said there was little to report. There had been a recent call-out. Batteries in the defibrillators are replaced regularly and the electrical supply to the box on the end of the Institute needs to be made more permanent. The

biggest problem is the reducing number of volunteers - now down to six. It was agreed that we should advertise for volunteers.

- 12.3 **Television for Kentmere (TfK)**: Max Biden said that there no changes to the report circulated before the meeting. There is continuing support for the scheme and subscriptions are now due. He said that the mast was no longer insured as the cost had become prohibitive. The money saved was 'banked' and costs for damage etc. would be met from reserves.

### 13. Any Other Business:

- 13.1 **Sandra Johnston** asked if anything was going to be arranged to celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday. The Parish Team will consider this.

- 13.2 **Christine Hevey** asked how people would feel about publishing personal news/ information of the parish's email system. She cited as an example to recent death of Jackie Strickland. It was suggested that this information might be passed to the Chairman who would consult with the family involved.

- 13.3 **Christine Hevey** asked if there was any point in setting up a 'lost and found' section on the website where the many items which are handed in by walkers, etc. could be listed. This was thought to be a good idea and Jackie Bettess would be happy to set it up.

- 13.4 **Margaret Harrison** understood that a meeting had been held about flooding and asked what was the purpose and if there was any outcome. Apparently Rory Stewart MP for Penrith and the Borders has been charged with looking at the problems with flooding in Cumbria. Celia McNally is looking at the valleys of the Gowan, Kent, Mint and Sprint as well as other areas of South Lakeland with a view to writing a report about the issues to assist the Environment Agency in getting an overall picture of the rivers and finding possible solutions. It was suggested that the Chairman should write to find out what was going on.

- 13.5 **A question** was asked about a van equipped with cameras that had been seen in the valley. It was assumed that it was Google Streetview being updated .

As there was no further business the meeting was closed at 9.25 p.m.