

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Victory Hall, Dalston on Tuesday 28th March 2006 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Mr Bryan Craig (Chairman, Parish Council) in the Chair, Mrs Lucy Crookdake (Carlisle City Councillor), Ms Zoe Sutton (Carlisle City Council Rural Community Support Officer), PC Colin Hird (Cumbria Constabulary), Ms Rebecca Helm (Eden Rivers Trust) and forty four Parishioners including Parish Council members.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Collier (Cumbria County Council), Trevor Allison (Carlisle City Council), David Hand, Gary Harrison, Alan Jackson, Tony Sinclair (Parish Council), Bryan Greenwood and Joseph Glaister.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th March 2005 were agreed and signed.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Bryan Craig, Chairman of the Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and began his report by firstly thanking all the members of the Parish Council for their support and enthusiasm during his term of office over the past 22 months, especially Liz Auld who was an excellent Clerk and an invaluable source of help and inspiration to him. Secondly he thanked Cathy Oakley who was retiring from the Parish Council in May. Having been a member for twenty years, serving as Chairman for eight years, she had been an invaluable member of the Council and would be greatly missed. Since the last Annual Parish Meeting the Kingswood Activity Centre at Cumdivock remained a very contentious issue amongst some residents but hopefully all the concerns regarding planning matters were to be resolved soon. The Parish Council was consulted on 101 planning applications during the year, taking up a considerable time at meetings and restricting the time spent on other important issues. The Parish Plan and Design Statement had been completed and should be of benefit to all the residents, businesses and young people concerned with the future of Dalston. Carlisle City Council was considering the Design Statement for adoption as a supplementary document to the Local Plan. Thanks were expressed to a member of the Dalston Scout Group, Christopher Holliday, who was instrumental in the design of the signpost project leaflet to be distributed to all Parishioners. The rebuilding of the Cemetery access lane wall was currently being addressed and the railings at Gaitsgill beside Penn Beck were to be renovated and repainted. Some tree maintenance and planting was being carried out. Vandalism in the Churchyard and Cemetery continued to be a problem and ongoing repairs were required. Care of memorials and headstones were the responsibility of the family concerned and everyone was urged to regularly check these for safety. Work to tidy up the entrance to the Station was being commenced and continued attempts were being made to find a more central location for a Parish office, meeting room and additional community facilities, such as provision for a library, conference room, information centre and some units of affordable housing. On the assumption that a suitable site would eventually be found needing financial input, Forge Green had been put on the market. The Dalston website was a well used valuable tool for all types of information and consultation and thanks were expressed to Ronnie Auld for all his hard work in building and maintaining it. Continued efforts were being made to address the traffic and parking problems outside the schools and the inconsiderate parking on the surrounding roads on the estate and double yellow lines were due to be installed outside the Doctors Surgery. Provision of additional parking outside the Square, with a commensurate Square Regeneration scheme, were to be undertaken as a phased project over a number of years. The Square re-development required a great deal of planning and consultation, some of which had already been undertaken, as an important project for the future well being and unique character of Dalston village. Problems relating to parking in the Square, the safety of pedestrians, the increased traffic flows through the village and out to the M6 and the increasing development of the Barras Lane Industrial Estate all needed to be addressed. The first phase of the work was being planned to provide additional parking outside the Square, with two alternative sites being considered, one at the top of the Show Field and the other on the Kingsway. The Square

regeneration project could cost in the region of £350,000. Some grant income was anticipated, but part funding would be raised through the Parish precept. The Parish Council had raised the precept by £10,000, an increase considered to be good value for the improvements to facilities being made in the Parish. The total cost of the precept for a Band C property was less than 50p per week. Parish Council elections were due to be held in May and Parishioners were encouraged to stand.

PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31/03/05

Copies of the accounts for 2004/05 were made available at the meeting. Expenditure exceeded income so the deficit was £3,784.51 for the year. The total balance carried forward was £32,204.36

OBSERVATIONS ON PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES 01/04/05-31/03/06

Grants had been received through the Carlisle Parish Councils Association from both the County and City Councils for the Buckabank Footpath and Primrose Hall amounting to £3250. Further grant income from the same sources was due for the Cemetery access lane wall, the Station entrance improvements and more improvements at the Primrose Hall. This financial support of the Parish was much appreciated. Grants were awarded to local organisations in the year amounting to £5,287 in total.

FORMATION OF YOUTH COUNCIL

A proposal was put forward to consider the formation of a Youth Council, or alternative means of engaging with the young people. The youth would have to set a Council up with members being voted on, apply for grants and run it themselves with the help of youth leaders and the involvement of youth groups. PC Hird suggested that a Youth Forum might be helpful if a Youth Council was difficult to achieve.

EMERGENCY PLANNING AT PARISH LEVEL

The Clerk reported that Stanwix Rural Parish had equipped three village halls with emergency boxes containing essentials such as torches, batteries, blankets, gas stoves etc. and non mains power facilities were being installed. The cost was over £6,000. Consultation had led to a plan, risk assessments were carried out and coordinating groups set up. Cumbria County Council was pursuing aspects of insurance and finance. This was a community level response to work with the County Emergency Plans. Mesdames L-J Cowen, P Dalton and WRVS Emergency Services Team members in Dalston might be able to organise some contingency plans for Dalston.

DALSTON FESTIVAL 5TH – 12TH AUGUST - LATEST ON EVENTS

Alan Dinning reported that funding for the Festival had been received from the Parish Council (£100), Neighbourhood Forum (£600), Lottery (£2,280) and money raising events (£700). The Festival Committee and all those involved in the organisation were to be thanked for doing a wonderful job.

GUEST SPEAKER: REBECCA HELM, EDEN RIVERS TRUST

Rebecca Helm from the Eden Rivers Trust gave an interesting illustrated talk on the work and various projects that the organisation was involved in. The organisation aimed to conserve, preserve and protect rivers and their banks. There were eight trustees, five full time and two part time staff. There were two education officers working with primary school children and community groups. The Restoring Eden project was a whole catchments approach to land issues, tourism, recreation and the rural community. The Rapid Assessment of River Environments (RARE) scheme involved quick mapping using aerial photography. It made prioritisation of hot spots easier, enabled combined mapping with electro fishing surveys, highlighted effects of erosion, over and under shading of rivers and helped the work with landowners. Other projects being undertaken were water crowfoot planting, a 'Spot the Plop' water vole scheme and Go Wild in Eden, which targeted areas for habitat restoration for fishermen and helped tourism. The Chairman expressed the thanks of the meeting for the presentation.

OPEN QUESTIONS

1 Mrs Greenwood was concerned about the state of repair of the stile and footpath at Barras Brow.

- 2 Mr Rowcroft felt that there should be more consultation regarding the Square regeneration. Mr
Turnbull suggested that parking in the Square should be restricted at the same time as additional
provision elsewhere.
- 3 Mr Hickson expressed concern about the increase in vandalism in the village and felt that the Police
should support the use of CCTV. PC Hird reported that there were 149 incidents of vandalism in
Dalston compared with 850 in Denton Holme where CCTV had been installed.
- 4 PC Hird reported that a business plan had been submitted for a Police Post in Caldew School and a
decision would be made shortly regarding this. The facility would be used by patrol and community
officers. Its presence would assist with work in the schools as well as in the village.
- 5 Ms Zoe Sutton was introduced as the Carlisle City Council Rural Community Support Officer.
- 6 Mrs Lucy Crookdake reported that details of children's activities taking place between 3rd and 17th
April were available.
- 7 Mr Peter Walsh spoke about the Environment Agency proposals for a storage basin upstream from
Buckabank weir. Public consultation was taking place in the Victory Hall, Dalston on 10th April
between 12 noon and 8pm and at other Carlisle venues during the previous week.

A display of the Redspearlands Footpath Group activities and copies of the Dalston Design Statement were
available for people to look at. Dalston WI members were thanked by the Chair for providing the
refreshments.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.