

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Victory Hall, Dalston on Tuesday 30th March 2004 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Mrs Pauline Dalton (Chairman, Parish Council) in the Chair, Mrs Lucy Crookdake (Carlisle City Councillor), PC Paul Shorrocks (Community Police Officer), Brian Campbell (Brian Campbell Associates), Derek Woolerton (Woolerton Dodwell, Kendal), Jack Ellerby (Friends of the Lake District) and seventy Parishioners and Parish Councillors.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs J Collier (County Councillor), J Robinson and B Dodd (City Councillors), S Fraser (St Michael's School Head Teacher).

MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th March 2003 were agreed and signed.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman of the Parish Council reported on a busy year with a number of extraordinary meetings. All the notice boards, three with fronts and the carved pole on the Cumdivock war memorial had been replaced. This work, together with support for the kitchen refurbishment at Primrose Hall had been carried out with financial assistance through Carlisle Parish Councils Association. Clearance of gorse from the Green and other tidying up of areas of common land in the Parish had been undertaken, especially at High Buckabank, where trees were to be planted and wildflower seed sown. The speed restriction sign near the Victory Hall was appearing to have an impact and slowing down vehicles on approach to the village centre. The signpost restoration was highly acclaimed and special thanks were extended to Alan Jackson for overseeing the whole project. Over £5,000 had been given in grants to local organisations. Support had been given to Parishioners opposing the development at Greensyke. There was close communication with the community policeman, who had initiated contact with the youngsters in the village, some of whom attended a Parish Council meeting. It was hoped that more activities could be provided for young people and that there would be a reduction in vandalism. Two additional police constables and a sergeant were now appointed to the area. Looking forward, plans for a brighter future for the Square, the redevelopment of the garage site at Glave Hill and the extension of the footway at Buckabank were all under consideration. Talks had taken place with English Nature and the Environment Agency regarding the erosion of the riverbank at Bridge End and they were looking at a feasibility study to protect the bank and the unique nature of the invertebrates in the gravel bed. Discussion was ongoing with the Eden Rivers Trust about providing access to the Caldew in Dalston and a reed filtration bed to deal with pollution in the Roe and the Ive was being considered. Negotiations for a 30mph speed limit through Raughton Head and improvements to the Station approach were both being pursued. A big thank you was extended to all those people involved with the Parish Plan consultation and questionnaire. Thanks were also expressed to everyone who had contributed so much to the community during the year, with particular mention of the hard working Clerk (the fount of all knowledge!), City and County Councillors for speaking on our behalf when required to do so, David Couling, the voluntary Internal Auditor, the gardeners, Stationers and very specially our resident 'litter-picker'. Stephanie Diver was congratulated on her MBE and presented with a bouquet with thanks from the Parish. Further thanks were extended to all the people running the groups, especially those involved in clubs and activities for young people, churches, committees and others giving up time in numerous ways – all about community spirit. Mrs Dalton ended with personal thanks to the 'Team' – the Parish Councillors for their hard work and combined efforts.

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

Income exceeded expenditure by £5,102.52. Miscellaneous income was higher due to a contribution to the resurfacing of the access to the public conveniences. Expenditure on open spaces included tree planting,

purchase and renovation of litterbins, footpath resurfacing by St Michael's School and Raughton Head war memorial inscriptions. Grants given to local organisations totalled £3,500.

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

The precept was increased by £1,000 to £18,000. In comparison with other Parishes in the District the cost to a D band property was relatively low. The new audit rules, introduced two years ago allowed accrual of capital towards future projects under consideration. The apparent under spend of £10,000 included £6,500 outstanding expenditure on the Signpost Project and for the Parish Plan. Sources of grant funding could not always be anticipated, but the budget comparisons were mainly on target. Allocation of grants to local organisations increased to a total of £5,275. Less money was spent on the maintenance of Forge Green and on capital projects, but surplus funds could now be held over. The Signpost Project was funded by grant income from Cumbria County Council First Aid for Cumbria and Neighbourhood Forum, the Countryside Agency Heritage Initiative and the Friends of the Lake District. Mr Jack Ellerby was thanked for the generous grant of £5,000 from the Friends of the Lake District. The Square Regeneration Scheme preliminary consultation and plans were partially funded by a grant from the Rural Development Programme Small Projects Fund.. Grants from Cumbria County Council and the Countryside Agency Vital Villages Programme were obtained towards the cost of the Parish Plan.

ST MICHAEL'S AND RAUGHTON HEAD SCHOOL REPORTS

The Clerk read out reports from St Michael's and Raughton Head Schools. Changes in the Governing Bodies meant that Parish Council Representative Governors were no longer a requirement. St Michael's had 205 children on the school roll, with high standards, including a position in the top 5% in the country for value added SATs scores, due to the guidance of the dedicated and committed staff. Sporting success had been achieved in football, tennis and netball. A new library/teaching area and staff room were to be developed. Raughton Head had 44 pupils on the school roll and they were well supported by parents and the community, with the PTA organising many fund raising activities. Several school outings had been arranged, as well as a variety of visitors. The girls had won the local schools cross-country race at the Sheepmount.

Mrs L Cowen explained that a Community Governor was a resident of the community without children in the school at the time.

SIGNPOST PROJECT – MR JACK ELLERBY, FRIENDS OF THE LAKE DISTRICT POLICY OFFICER

A photographic exhibition was staged showing the 'before and after' restoration of the cast iron signposts in Dalston Parish. Mr Jack Ellerby spoke about the Friends of the Lake District involvement in the project and the importance of protecting and enhancing the landscape, together with retaining the distinctiveness of the Parish and its value to the community. £80,000 per annum was contributed to enhancement schemes. The Friends of the Lake District were not anti jobs and change, but they were encouraging service providers to put overhead wires underground where possible and to reduce the impact of signs on rural roads in particular. It was suggested that volunteers might like to look at the clutter of signs and carry out an inventory survey of where they were in the Parish. The cooperation of Cumbria Highways had been obtained to address the problem in Martindale. Cycle route signs were considered to be very unsightly and a suggestion was made for better maps to be produced.

PARISH PLAN

Ronnie Auld presented an analysis of the Parish Plan data to date and highlighted the emerging trends and important issues concerning the residents. Various graphs were on display highlighting this.

GUEST SPEAKERS: BRIAN CAMPBELL AND DEREK WOOLERTON

Messrs Brian Campbell and Derek Woolerton spoke about the Square regeneration preliminary proposals. They had assessed the area as to how it worked and its character and concluded that the Square was currently being used as a car park. A balance was required between the parking of vehicles and the needs of pedestrians, businesses, residents and general activity in pleasant surroundings. Some short-term parking was required, the speed of traffic passing through needed to be reduced and additional parking space provided on the Kingsway. The three main aims were to restore and enhance the heritage aspect of the

Square, create a functional safe environment and a lasting and robust area. The plan was designed to remove the clutter of vehicles to resurrect the distinctiveness of the Square, give clear guidance on the use of the area, whilst creating space to linger. It was suggested that pink/red bricks and modular paving should be used for pedestrian space, bitumen for vehicular areas and other materials for passive spaces. Street furniture (seats, bollards, lighting, tree guards) should be of simple styles, either traditional cast iron mouldings or modern stainless steel. Technical reasons prevented a visual presentation, but both speakers were thanked for attending the meeting and producing the initial plans. When questioned, Mr Campbell felt that a phased approach was the only possible route on which to progress with the scheme..

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.