

# Bassenthwaite Parish Council

## Minutes of Bassenthwaite Annual Parish Meeting

held in the Parish Room on Thursday 14th May 2015 at 7.00pm.

Bass min 101AP **Draft minutes to be ratified at the May 2016 Annual Parish Meeting.**

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**Cllrs Present:** Robert James, Keith McMillan, Peter Richardson, Helen Reb, Sarah Langcake & Ken Armstrong

**Also Present:** Cllr Alan Bowness (Cumbria County Council) Cllr Malcolm Grainger (Allerdale Borough Council), Elizabeth Clark (Clerk) & numerous parishioners.

*Cllr Richardson chaired the meeting due to Cllr Stephens being on holiday.*

Cllr Richardson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Malcolm Grainger the new Allerdale Borough Councillor and welcomed Sarah Langcake the new parish councillor.

Cllr Grainger stated that he could be contacted on 71909.

1) **Apologies** - Cllrs Stephens & Mattinson.

2) **Minutes** Resolved - that the Chairman sign as a correct record minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 1st May 2014.

### 3) **Chairman's Report**

The Parish Council met 10 times during the year, there being no meeting in August or January.

The sad loss of Harvey Moore in May 2014 was keenly felt. He had contributed greatly to the Parish Council over many years, but more importantly to the Bassenthwaite community. A minutes silence in memory of Harvey was held at the June meeting.

The Parish Council wrote to our MP, Sir Tony Cunningham, expressing concern that owners of holiday cottages paying business rates made no contribution to the Parish Council precept, leaving a greater burden on permanent residents. A reply was received explaining the details of the council tax and business rates system and that it was under constant review. It also pointed out that to claim business rates falsely was a serious offence, this being because often business rates are less than the council tax on a property.

We also wrote concerning the loss of a bus service through the village. Sir Tony replied expressing his understanding of our concerns and that he had written to the Chief Executive of CCC. No subsidy would be forthcoming from CCC and Stagecoach will operate the route on a commercial basis which essentially means a reduced summer only service.

An on-site meeting was held with CCC Highways at Chapel crossroads to discuss the safety concerns at this junction - mainly parking and visibility. No actions have yet been taken but items discussed were changing the "Give Way" to a "Stop" sign, trying to make the mirror more obvious and whether double yellow lines 32 feet from the junction were required to prevent obstructive parking on both a short term (school run) and long term (residents and

visitors) basis. A speed limit will not be considered as a survey showed that the vast majority of traffic already travels at less than 40mph.

Throughout the year the Parish Council reported to CCC Highways or Allerdale BC as appropriate, pot holes, dangerous road surfaces, broken road signs and non working street lights. The Council thanks Councillor James for this work in particular and also for assisting Highways to mark all parish gulleys on their map. Our report on dangerous surfaces ensured that the very slippery when wet “Armathwaite Bend” was resurfaced.

At some future date street and footway lighting will become a cost issue for the parish as Allerdale BC are considering putting maintenance and running costs out to the parishes. Details not yet agreed.

County Councillor Alan Bowness decided to offer £3,200 from his bursary to the parish towards new play equipment and the Parish Council gratefully accepted this offer towards the cost and installed new swings and a toddler springer last December.

The Parish Council was approached about repairing the old stone walled Pinfold, which shares a boundary with the property called “South View”, with a view to making it accessible to all as one of the very few Pinfolds remaining in the National Park. The Council decided not to proceed but agreed to clear undergrowth and young trees to prevent further deterioration.

The Council considered whether a publicly available defibrillator should be installed in the village at a minimum cost of £850, but decided against it, mainly due to the fact that one is held nearby at Bassenfell Manor where there are also trained operators.

A dark skies initiative has established that Allerdale BC are willing to tape existing footway lighting to reduce the side and upward glare produced. The parish council will continue to pursue Allerdale BC on this matter to tape the light outside the parish room as an example in order for us to assess whether any other lights should be taped.

The work with the Lake District National Park Authority Rights of Way Committee on the Holly Bank footpath has been in abeyance for some time but it is likely to be resumed later this year. It is noted that the landowner opposes any path to link the Holly Bank to quarry path with the path along the Brow.

During the year the invasive plants Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed were found in the parish. The HB, which is the lesser problem, was found in the Pinfold and the Parish Council are controlling it by pulling up, crushing the roots and composting. The JK, which is a notifiable plant and for which a landowner faces hefty fines for letting it spread, was found on unregistered land next to Parkergate on the A591. The LDNPA have agreed to spray later this year in an effort to eradicate it.

The Council had a presentation from the Environment Agency on the potential flood risk to the parish from the Halls and Chapel Becks. A map was presented showing “Hundred Year” and “Thousand Year” flood extents. Subsequently an emergency kit was given to us for use in home evacuation emergencies. This is kept securely in the parish room which would be the general place of shelter.

Stage 1 of the three stage lottery grant application process for the Parish Room refurbishment was passed and Stage 2 has been submitted. This is applying for £500,000 for the complete demolition and new build of the Parish Room. The Parish Council thanks in particular Alistair Brewis, Gillian Forsyth, Nicole Towler and Linda McMillan for the hard work put in to the project.

The Parish Council sees this chance of a grant as a golden opportunity to provide a modern, efficient, multi-purpose building which will be of great benefit to the entire community.

The Parish Council increased the precept for 2015/16 by £1,000 specifically to pay for the grass cutting of the St John's church grounds. The precept covers all of the regular PC commitments including insurance, Parish Room rates and village green grass cutting. The Parish Council hold money from previous parish land sales and this is kept for non-precepted expenses such as building, tree and play equipment maintenance.

Dog fouling throughout the parish has become an increasing problem and is particularly unacceptable in the children's play areas and on the village green. The parish council through Allerdale BC have raised awareness of this problem by leafleting every household and remind everyone that failure to clear up is an offence for which an immediate fine can be levied.

The Parish Council own a website – [www.bassenthwaite.org.uk](http://www.bassenthwaite.org.uk) which will come into full use throughout the coming year.

Parish Council elections took place on May 7<sup>th</sup> but no voting was required as only 8 people submitted nominations to be a councillor. Consequently there is a vacancy for one councillor. The next election will be in 2019.

The Parish Council considered 18 planning applications over the year with their support for the major Castle Inn extension being considered by the LDNPA at their meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Finally the Parish Council appointed a new Parish Clerk last October after our previous clerk of 10 years retired.

The Parish Council look forward to another busy year ahead and welcome attendance by any interested parishioners at their meetings.

#### **4) Consultation of Electors**

It was questioned when superfast broadband was expected in the parish and it was explained that information was unfortunately not very forthcoming but it should be in the parish within the next 6 months or so as all the cabinets were in place. BT would do it in their own time.

It was noted that on the narrows in the village, the road hardly exists; it is full of potholes which fill with muddy water, which gets sprayed onto the residents' windows by passing vehicles. This has previously been reported to highways but nothing, as yet, has been resolved.

Parishioners were advised that the more people the better to ring the highways hotline and complain. Ring in and you receive a log number for future reference, there is also an email facility on the highways website.

It was questioned why funding, that had been applied for too the parish council, had been refused on a couple of occasions. A request for funding a defibrillator in the parish was rejected due to a defibrillator being situated at Bassenfell Manor & the Parish Rooms asked for funding with regards to their Lottery Application for the refurbishment and again were turned down. It was asked why the Parish Council were not forthcoming with funds? Why the Parish Council were holding the £10,000, even though the auditors had advised against holding these funds and that it must be used specifically for projects such as the New Parish Room and not used for the purpose of maintenance. Why is the precept being increased & when are these funds going to be used?

Councillors stated that the parish council continually support the parish room and every year pay the rates, insurance, water etc and at every parish room refurbishment meeting it was stated that there would be no cost to the parish council or any match funding. It was discussed that a lot of people in the parish would be upset when the parish room building is demolished.

A Cllr advised that currently planning applications were being submitted for the change of use of telephone boxes to be used for housing defibrillators.

A parishioner kindly volunteered to run First Aid training sessions free of charge to any interested residents.

The chair advised that all the items brought up would be on the agenda for the June meeting, where they would be fully discussed.

The chair thanked all members of the public for their comments and for attending the meeting.

Members of the public left the meeting & the meeting was closed at 8.15pm.