

CUMBRIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of 175th Meeting on Thursday 8th March 2018

Part 1

Update on South Cumbria Rivers Trust (SCRT) by Jayne Wilkinson, Catchment Planning and Monitoring Officer

Jayne explained that the charity (with 8 employees and based in Haverthwaite) was set up in 2006 and covers 5 main catchments in South Cumbria (each with their own community partnership). General work includes: monitoring, education, habitat improvement and control of invasive species. Volunteers are key to both monitoring and practical work. Also there are specific projects, for example the 3 year Heritage Lottery funded Conserving Coniston and Crake to undertake both practical work and community engagement. The Trust co-ordinates the local catchment partnership (of environmental organisations, business and communities) for South Cumbria called Becks to Bay (www.btob.scrt.co.uk) which covers water quality, diverse habitats, flood resilience and more. The Trust is also involved in the South Cumbria Catchment Management Group (which guides Environment Agency's Catchment Director). This is an enabling group with a flood remit that then feeds into Cumbria Strategic Flood Partnership (of local authorities, Network Rail, Highways Agency, community reps - that was established after Storm Desmond). The Trust is looking at natural flood management, that is enhancing the habitat (eg. natural depressions to hold flood water, leaky dams, tree planting) to slow the flow. Jayne's email address is: jayne@scrt.co.uk

In questions, Jayne said that, though SCRT works closely with Environment Agency (EA), the Rivers Trust is more about community-based projects on the ground (eg. citizen science monitoring), whereas EA is the regulatory authority to respond to floods, ensure enforcement over pollution and undertake strategic monitoring. She explained that deculverting is about opening up and/or blocking culverts to slow run off and create wetland habitats. Some councillors felt fencing (to prevent erosion from livestock) detracted from the beauty of river banks and were damaged in floods. There is work to make them look better. Councillors mentioned using/creating tarns and reservoirs upstream to store water in times of flood and SCRT is looking at this in the upper Kent. Parish councils feel that their local knowledge of blocked drains etc. is not being used and they are confused over which organisation to contact. SCRT is hoping to get its community projects started soon but has been waiting for money. Blawith and Subberthwaite parish council find SCRT hard working and supportive. **ACTION:** Amanda McCleery to obtain digital copy of presentation for clerks.

Part 2 Association Business

1/18 Present

David Peters (Chairman and Natland); Amanda McCleery (CALC); Peter Winter (Preston Patrick); John Saunders (Windermere); Richard Sutton (Kendal); Roger Atfield (Levens); Enid Hastings (Casterton); Leith Hallatsch (Windermere); John Chapman (Skelsmergh & Scalthwaite); Freyja Burrill (Skelsmergh & Scalthwaite); Richard Metcalfe (Crook & Winster); Diana Rutherford (Blawith & Subberthwaite); Brian Meakin (Beetham); Lyn Prescott (Lower Holker).

2/18 Apologies for absence

David Rogerson (Levens); Sedbergh parish council; Urswick parish council; Peter Smillie (Arnside); Ken Dean (Colton); Cameron Yazdi (SLDC); Margaret Knowles (Beetham); Angela Scrogam (Pennington); Lorraine Thompson (Pennington); Andy Blackman (Kendal); Ken Humphris (Casterton).

3/18 Minutes

Minutes of 174th meeting, held on 30th November 2017, were approved as a true record of the meeting.

4/18 Matters arising from the minutes

- (i) *Libraries' presentation* – from last District Association meeting. Digital copy emailed to parish clerks on 15th January 2018.
- (ii) *Request for other gullies to be cleaned whilst contractor in area doing one gully* – Amanda McCleery read to meeting email from CCC Highways, Peter Hosking: “CCC Highways currently undertaking piece of work that prioritises all of gulleys on the network, so that gulleys serving areas most at risk are cleansed most regularly. Inevitably, leads to a position where not all gulleys on a road are cleansed at the same time but will ensure time available spent cleansing most important gulleys on network more frequently and other gulleys less frequently.” Parishes disagreed as to whether this response was acceptable, as blocked gulleys can be next door (eg. Windermere, Levens) and it makes sense to clear together. Some parishes are experiencing problems with the Highways Information Management System (eg. Casterton, Skelsmergh & Scalthwaiterigg who had more success emailing: Betterhighways.southlakeland@cumbria.gov.uk). Parishes have sent Highways photos and annotated maps (as requested) but not heard anything. Highways has even agreed with Blawith & Subberthwaite parish council that their footpaths are poor but it has no money to improve them. **ACTION:** Amanda McCleery to write, on behalf of District Association, to Peter Hosking about better co-ordination of gully cleansing.
- (iii) *CCC Highways capital programme* – CCC Highways, Peter Hosking, sent web link to Amanda McCleery and she forwarded it to clerks by email on 4th December 2017.
- (iv) *Request for action on muddy verges and litter to do with car sharing (eg. Junction 36, Brettargh Holt)* – Amanda McCleery read to meeting email from CCC Highways, Peter Hosking: “Litter picking (on all roads, except M6) is the responsibility of SLDC and repeated incidents of litter at these (or any other) locations should be reported to SLDC for action. 2018/19 large reduction in available budget and not have funding to undertake any restoration works to verges – as funding needs to be directed towards carriageways, footway and drainage issues.”
- (v) *CCC Highways create model agreement & share with parishes* – this issue of agreements with third parties (including parish councils) to work on the highway was raised by Councillor Nick Cotton at CCC Cabinet meeting in December. Cabinet agreed that Highways should present a paper setting out conclusions of the review (into third party agreements) and proposed next steps to a Cabinet meeting on 22nd March 2018.
- (vi) *Good Councillor Guide to Transparency & Audit* – this publication (along with 2017 Good Councillor Guide and Good Councillor Guide to Neighbourhood Planning) is now on the CALC website (members' section).

- (vii) *External contract for a Data Protection Officer* – there was not enough interest from Cumbrian parishes to invite companies up to explain what they could offer re. data protection but there has been CALC training on the General Data Protection Regulation.
- (viii) *Items of interest from CALC* – from last District Association meeting. These were summarised into one document and emailed to parish clerks on 15th January 2018.

5/18 Effectiveness of District Association meetings

This came up at CALC AGM about whether they are effective around the county. In South Lakeland, attendance is low (partly due to the LAPs) and one would need to ask councillors why they do not attend. However, current attendees do value the opportunity to talk to colleagues and share concerns. The benefits are: ability to find out, discuss and debate problems in common; disseminate information; useful presentations; smaller parishes feeling supported and more clout if parishes respond collectively to a problem. It was suggested that there could be better two-way feedback at the meeting hosted each year by county or district, so it is less adversarial. Uniquely in South Lakeland, there are two parish reps (non-voting but allowed to speak) at CCC South Lakeland Local Committee and parishes can ask the reps (Allan Muirhead or John Saunders) to raise issues on their behalf. Some parishes have CALC as a standing item on their agenda and either appoint a councillor to attend District Association or ask for volunteers each time. **ACTION:** Amanda McCleery to write to clerks that each council (at its next annual parish council meeting in May) could nominate a councillor to attend District Association.

6/18 Items of interest from parishes, SLDC and CALC

Windermere – again the Christmas market was well attended. Parish councillors undertook a parking survey in 2017 and (helped by Department of Transport and SLDC statistics) estimated that there are about 15,000 cars a day in summer but only about half manage to park, so the town is losing income. From this April, there will be early bird parking in SLDC car parks and £1 all day in outlying car parks.

Skelsmergh & Scalthwaiterigg – no information updates on CCC on outstanding work (eg. bridge reinstatement) following Storm Desmond, so the diversion in the parish continues and this puts extra pressure on the rest of the roads. Need CCC to recognise that it has responsibilities for repairing all the bridges, not just the ones in towns.

Preston Patrick – Broadband For Rural North (B4RN) has arrived in the parish and with fibre right to the home Peter Winter is enjoying hyperfast broadband speeds (of 1 gig or 1,000 mbps).

Pennington – there will be a community-led plan event in March, with a questionnaire going out to the community in April.

Kendal – a special parish meeting has been called about the parking on New Road.

Blawith & Subberthwaite – two open meetings on developing a community-led plan have been well attended. Posting leaflets at all properties has made it clear just how many are second or holiday homes.

LAPs – there was a presentation given by Highways England to South Westmorland LAP about planned improvements to the west of the M6, with information on how bids for funding could be improved by looking at the business case for the area.

SLDC - Amanda McCleery read an email from Simon Blyth, who wants to know if parish councils have mechanisms in place to ensure community funds and resources are not used to support extremism (the Prevent agenda of central government). A draft copy of the 2018/19 Parish Charter has been emailed to all parishes, with any comments to SLC by 16th April.

There was insufficient time to cover the following items from CALC:

- Grange-over-Sands neighbourhood plan
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Cumbria winter ready campaign
- South Cumbria species restoration programme
- Community police inspector for South Lakeland
- Grants for new or improved community facilities
- Natural flood management
- Broadband for South Westmorland
- Tax on second homes in Yorkshire Dales National Park
- CCC 2018/19 budget
- Elections in May 2018
- Household emergency planning leaflet

ACTION: Amanda McCleery to summarise above in one document and send to clerks with the minutes. She offered paper copies of articles in LCR Winter 2017/18 to those present on: community transport, allotments, interest-free loans for energy efficiency and the insurance and legal implications of defibrillators.

7/18 Reports from Representatives to Other Bodies

CALC Executive Committee – David Peters

Housing Advisory Group – David Peters

CCC South Lakeland Local Committee – Allan Muirhead and John Saunders

Rusland Horizons – Amanda McCleery

See attached paper on all the reports above.

8/18 Dates, Venues and Times for Future Meetings

Thursday 14th June *SLDC Council Chamber, Kendal Town Hall* *From 7pm*

SLDC hosted. Ideas for presentations:

1. Update on community-led housing
2. Questions and answers (eg. parking enforcement, Locally Important Projects) – where parishes ask questions in advance and SLDC answer at the meeting.

ACTION: Amanda McCleery to contact SLDC.

Thursday 20th September *Gilpin Bridge Inn, near Levens* *From 7pm*
AGM

Thursday 29th November *Gilpin Bridge Inn, near Levens* *From 7pm*
CCC hosted.