

## **REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

### **South Cumbria Community Safety Partnership – Leith Hallatsch**

The group has not met since the last District Association meeting.

### **CALC Executive Committee – David Peters**

At the well-attended 21 October 2017 meeting Cllr Keith Little (CCC Cabinet member for Highways and Transport) introduced Stephen Hall (Acting Assistant Director, Highways, Transport and Fleet) who spoke about recent improvements to the online Highways Information Management System (HIMS). These included the 2017/18 Highways Capital Programme and information about roadworks, all on a map format. It is hoped in the next six months to be providing parishes with highways reports in the sort of detail now available to county councillors. But for economy it all has to be automated or at least online – phone records are expensive to keep and liable to error. I suspect the Highways Hotline's days are numbered. Advice if parishes want face-to-face site meetings with officers in future is to ask your county councillor to facilitate it. It seems that the Highways Stewards system of contact has fallen by the wayside and reported highways defects are moderated from behind a desk. If it doesn't "meet our intervention standards" it won't get done.

Chief Officer Samantha Bagshaw presented a summary report of the 2017 CALC Members Survey. The low enthusiasm for district association meetings prompted a discussion in which I suggested they were the right forum for parishes to raise issues of common concern and seek collective support from fellow councils in making representations to service providers and other bodies, rather than bypassing them and going straight to CALC's Executive. The role of the Executive Committee is to "manage the affairs of the Association, under the general guidance of the General Meeting".

Under 'budget projections' it was suggested that maintaining high reserves is prudent because of CALC's vulnerability to sudden changes in funding from outside organisations, particularly the Principal Authorities. The need for CALC representatives on so many outside bodies will be reviewed by the Committee in the hope of finding savings. The Chair reported from the Cumbria Leaders' Board about the project to mine potentially 1.3Gt of undersea coal off West Cumbria – and no-one said "in their dreams!".

Arrangements for the 18 November 2017 AGM were finalised, including amending the Constitution to create a Barrow District Association. My concern that the Executive's recommendation – that CALC's fee structure remains unchanged for 2018/19 – had not been considered by the Committee was met by an assurance that the premise on which the need for a review had been based – that CALC had been passing to NALC on behalf of some larger councils more than those councils had been paying in their total subscriptions – had been erroneous. I'm still doubtful so I'm glad it was minuted that the issue will come back before the Committee after the AGM.

### **Health and Wellbeing Forum – Peter Smillie**

No report was received.

### **SLDC Housing Advisory Group – David Peters**

At the 6 October 2017 meeting SLDC officers outnumbered the other attendees. Two gave an update on empty homes: according to data from council tax returns the numbers are going down; all parish councils have received a new pack detailing the options available to empty home owners and how to report an empty home; the Empty Homes Strategy will be reviewed in 2018. Another spoke about a working group developing a Self-build Policy; Dan Hudson mentioned the difficulty of finding plots for self-build – developers are reluctant to accommodate self-build plots within their larger developments.

Alastair McNeill spoke about the periodic (every 7/8 years) update of the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment – used to identify new housing target figures for the whole of South Lakeland district including the NPs). Publication was expected by the end of 2017. He mentioned the Government was trying to introduce a simplified standard national methodology for producing SHMAs which was likely to result in targets being increased in the South of England and reduced in the North. A view was expressed that that would aggravate the problem in this area which was caused by massive undersupply and the inability to attract younger residents. The LDNPA officer commented that her population was “in freefall”.

Officers’ proposals for the annual review of Affordable House Prices (increased by 2.6% according to the report but actually 3.83% if you checked the arithmetic) and their minimum floor areas (mostly increased significantly but it’s not compulsory) were supported by the Group for approval by Cabinet. After the meeting a single A4 side of “Action Points of Meeting” was produced instead of the usual several pages of “Minutes of Meeting”, so bang goes my crib sheet.

### **CCC South Lakeland Local Committee – Allan Muirhead & John Saunders**

At the Local Committee meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> September, a presentation was given on CCC’s waste prevention programme. Cumbria has to dispose of almost 250,000 tonnes of household waste every year. Of this about 100,000 tonnes is now recycled with over 100,000 tonnes being processed by mechanical biological treatment (MBT). Over the last ten years the amount going into landfill has been reduced dramatically. An emphasis is now being placed on waste prevention to reduce costs. This includes encouraging composting at home with low cost bins available from CCC for households. There is considerable food waste going into the MBT treatment plant with estimates of £50 per household per month reported. To combat this the waste prevention program now offers free tools such as rice measuring scoops, spaghetti measures, bag clips etc. to help reduce food waste in the home. Where households have general goods that are no longer needed, these can be freely exchanged at series of “Freegle” events that are being held in local parishes at libraries and schools. Full details can be found on the website at [www.recycleforcumbria.org](http://www.recycleforcumbria.org). The waste prevention area manager (Eden) will retain the lead for the South Lakes and should be contacted by parishes for further information in cooperative schemes.

A report from South Lakes Highways stated that several new staff had been successfully recruited and would be used in place of external consultants. This was believed to be a more cost effective solution for the future. There is now a new web site available that shows the state of the Highways Capital Program for 2017-2018. This can be accessed by Councillors and the public to find out what work is scheduled on which roads. The full address is <https://cumbria.gov.uk/roads-transport/highways-pavements/highways/highwayscapitalprogramme.asp>. Any area can be expanded on the map down to the local parish level, to show work in progress or scheduled or recently completed. It shows work on bridges and structures, carriageways, drainage and slopes.

At Staveley (Ings) a traffic speed assessment had been carried out in February and August on the A591 in response to a petition to impose a speed restriction in the area. The study had shown there was very little speeding above 60 mph and concluded there were no factors suggesting the speed limit should be reduced. This was accepted.

The question of weed spraying was raised on verges and pavements. Some is done by County and some by District council. This year had seen a lack of coordination with the result that several areas had not been sprayed at all with resulting weed growth and potential damage to infrastructure. It was stressed that close cooperation must take place next year to ensure a satisfactory service for parishes is maintained. Contacts are Peter Hoskins (CCC) and Jim Maguire (SLDC) if a parish has specific problems

A proposal to introduce an experimental TRO in Kendal marketplace which would move the disabled parking spaces was deferred to allow interested parties to be further consulted. Finally it was noted that the funds allocated for the community care health project (ICC) have been reduced £63K to £38K, so the amounts available to individual parishes will be reduced accordingly..