**Lindale and Newton in Cartmel Parish Council**

**Annual Report**

**2020/21**

**1) The Parish Council – An Overview**

## The Parish Council is a statutory local authority set up under the Local Government Act 1972. It operates in the area of a defined civil parish or group of parishes. In Cumbria there are three types of local authority - the County Council, the District or Borough Councils and the Town or Parish Councils.

Parishes are the smallest areas of civil administration in England. Parish Councils provide the statutory tier of local government closest to the people. (Civil parishes should not be confused with ecclesiastical parishes and their Parochial Church Councils.) Parish Councils are seen as an essential part of the structure of local democracy and have a vital role in acting on behalf of the communities they represent.

They:

* Give views, on behalf of the community, on planning applications and other proposals that affect the parish.
* Undertake projects and schemes that benefit local residents.
* Work in partnership with other bodies to achieve benefits for the parish.
* Alert relevant authorities to problems that arise or work that needs to be undertaken.
* Help the other tiers of local government keep in touch with their local communities.

The council is made up of councillors elected by the electors of the parish although if the number of candidates does not exceed the number of seats there will not be an election. Every year the council elects one of them to be the Chair of the council. The council has a paid officer who organises meetings and helps to carry out and implement the council's decisions, it is a dual role which also covers the financial management of the council’s budget and finances in the capacity as the Responsible Financial Officer of the council - this officer is called the Clerk. The Clerk does not vote or make decisions; that is the role of the councillors.

Parish Councils have a range of powers and duties which essentially relate to local matters, such as looking after open spaces, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters, and much more. They also have the power to raise money through the council tax.

All meetings of the council and its committees are open to the general public and the press, except in very exceptional circumstances. However, the Covid pandemic meant that meetings have had to take place over Zoom this year. The time and place of meetings is advertised beforehand, on the parish notice board and website, and if the meeting is on Zoom the login details will also be available. You cannot speak while the normal business of the meeting is being conducted. However, some time is allowed at the meeting when members of the public may address the council on an issue that concerns them.

The council minutes are held by the council's Clerk and are available for public inspection. It is best to make arrangements in advance to see them. The Agendas for each meeting are placed on the Parish Council Notice boards by the Post Office in Lindale and the Village Hall in High Newton. Meeting agendas and approved minutes are also posted on the Parish Council’s website.

The Parish Council is consulted by the relevant Planning Authority (which is the National Park Authority) on all planning applications. Any views expressed by the Parish Council will be taken into account by the Planning Authority before a decision is made, providing the points made are relevant to the determination of a planning application. The final decision is made by the Planning Authority, **not** the Parish Council.

1. **Parish Council Responsibilities**

The Parish Council is responsible for the following areas within the Parish:

**Lindale**

* The Recreation Ground, play equipment, including the Skateboard area and the bridge over the stream.
* The two bus shelters.
* Wilkinson Monument.
* Coronation Tree Area.
* Yew Tree Green.
* The War Memorial.
* Benches around the village.
* Waterfall area (verge near roadside)
* Cattle trough.
* Windermere Road
* Toilets in Recreation ground

**High & Low Newton**

* Ornamental Gardens.
* Bus shelter.
* Benches in ornamental gardens and 2 others in village.
1. **Chair’s Statement by Councillor Ian Maynard**

During the year the Parish Council was unable to hold full council meetings from March 2020 to June 2020 because of COVID. This meant that there was no AGM last year. From July the Government allowed remote meetings so we have met every month via Zoom since then. Councillors have also attended other meetings remotely.

Throughout the year the Parish Council have responded to a number of consultations and surveys from CCC, SLDC, LDNPA and considered 16 planning applications.

As the Parish Council does not have any sources of income, finance is raised through the precept process which is charged as part of your local SLDC Council Tax. The Parish precept for 2020/21 was £17,395, this represented a 0% increase on the previous year. This has contributed towards the upkeep of the Parish Areas and other running costs. The parish council has been able to operate within this annual budget, with a surplus of unallocated/unspent funds at the year end. For 2021/22 members of the Parish Council agreed an annual budget of £17,395. So that for the ninth year running there will be no increase in the precept

The amount shown on Council Tax bills may vary due to a change in the way Council Benefit is funded caused by the numbers receiving benefit in our parish and the way SLDC receives funding from Central Government.

The Parish Council is being asked to take on a lot of extra responsibilities and this means extra costs. We have made savings where it seemed reasonable but the cost of unavoidable commitments has increased. Councillors are unpaid volunteers, but we rely on the paid services of our Clerk for much of the clerical work which is involved; she looks after the finances, provides valuable guidance and advice, deals with correspondence, prepares papers for our meetings and keeps the minutes. There are also additional costs in respect of the Parish Council’s responsibility for the public toilets in the recreation ground. We are grateful to South Lakes Services for donating the cost of the cleaning service to the toilets, and to the organisers of the bonus ball for their contribution to costs.

The Parish Council usually organises and takes part in two litter picks in the parish in Autumn and Spring but COVID guidelines meant that these could not take place. Several residents regularly pick litter around the Parish and we are very grateful for their efforts.

Since the last AGM the Lakeland Audi development on the site of the old Lindale Inn has been almost completed despite contractual and COVID related delays. We are in regular contact with the Planning Authority to try and resolve some issues of non-compliance with the original planning application.

There has been some progress towards leasing Lindale Church but COVID and other factors has meant significant delays. Further information can be found on the Lindale Community Trust website at https://www.lindalecommunitytrust.org.uk/

We have commissioned major trimming of overgrown vegetation and removal of a dead tree in High Newton Ornamental Gardens.

Archie Workman is Parish Lengthsman for Allithwaite and Cartmel and he has set himself the aim of renovating all the historic road signs in South Cumbria. He has recently completed the A590 sign and milestone in High Newton which both look splendid. We are very grateful for his determination to save this part of our local heritage

The handrail on the steps leading to the John Wilkinson has been replaced before corrosion made it dangerous.

We are intending to resume physical meetings from 18th May 2021 after village halls are allowed to reopen. The first meeting will be an Annual General Meeting to elect officers. We then aim to continue with monthly physical meetings. There will not be a physical Annual Parish Meeting of electors due to social distancing guidelines.

Our major project this coming year will be the refurbishment of the toilets on the playing field. Most of this will be paid for by a Covid related grant from SLDC but has been held up as Covid restrictions have prevented us visiting the site to plan the project.

Finally, I’d like to thank my fellow councillors for their dedication to maintaining and improving the environment of our Parish, and to our Clerk, Debbie, for her significant contribution to the work of the Council. We still have a vacancy for a Councillor for the Lindale ward following the resignation of Cllr Armstrong but we are pleased to welcome back Cllr Marwood in May 2021. We also have a vacancy in the Newton ward, and it would be very satisfying to restore a full complement, in the interests of local democracy. Please volunteer if you have an interest in local affairs.

**Councillor Ian Maynard May 2021**

1. **Parish Councillors**

**Lindale Ward:-**Cllr Maynard (Chair 2020/21) Cllr Squire (Vice 2020/21)

Cllr Marwood, Cllr Winder, Cllr McClure, Cllr Clarke.

**Newton Ward:** Cllr Wightman