

# Caton with Littledale Parish Council

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## Minutes of the annual parish meeting on Monday 16th May 2016 at 7.15pm.

### Present:

Cllr G Beckett, Cllr H Diggle, Cllr R Elvis, Cllr R Gibbons, Cllr K Hill, Cllr D Nesbitt,  
M Skeldon & J Walmsley (chairman).  
G Mason, clerk to the parish council.  
S Brown, previous clerk to the parish council.  
Mark Bartlett, Lancaster City Council.

### 16/1 Apologies for absence.

Cllr R Paine, Cllr Kynch, Cllr J Jackson, Ms P Cresswell.

### 16/2 Minutes of previous meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

The minutes of the previous meeting were signed as a true record by Cllr Walmsley.

### 16/3 Items: Community emergency planning with Mark Bartlett. Civil Contingencies Office, Lancaster City Council.

Mark Bartlett, civil contingencies officer with Lancaster City Council, attended the meeting to discuss community emergency plans. He explained that in single incidents the emergency services and/or local authority can be expected to attend as normal but when there is large scale disruption, such as during the Storm Desmond blackout, or widespread adverse weather conditions the responder agencies will be stretched and have to prioritise their attendance across the district.

In these circumstances any community that has thought about and prepared for disruptive emergencies will be much better placed to support itself and vulnerable residents. Preparations might include maintaining hard copy lists of contact numbers, knowing where to go to get various pieces of equipment, access to 4x4 vehicles or tractors etc.

If a decision is taken to produce a plan it will have to be done by the community as they have the necessary local knowledge but there will be assistance where necessary and quality assure the final document. A local table top exercise could also be run to test the plan if that is supported and he will share the finished document with the emergency services.

Although it may be appropriate to form a small working group to develop a plan it was recommended that ownership of the final document is adopted by the parish council who could ensure it is maintained and kept up to date.

Mark mentioned the community fund for Lancashire and Merseyside that is launching a scheme whereby local community groups will be able to bid for funds to improve resilience at village halls and similar buildings so that they can be used for emergency purposes. When the documentation is available Mark will forward to the PC but it should be noted that the PC, as a statutory body, will not be able to bid but any committee that runs the hall or a similar group will.

### 16/3 Annual report from the chairman of the parish council.

Cllr Walmsley reported that this year they parish council have started many projects including the neighbourhood plan and the parish emergency plan which, by the middle of June, should both come to fruition.

Considering the precept and expenditure, the parish council agreed to pay £1,000 per month towards the Victoria Institute administrator. They have also put a lot of effort and money into Fell View park for maintenance and equipment, bark and cushion flooring which is essential spending for

an excellent resource.

The village maintenance includes the war memorial cleaning & refurbishment, grass cutting & planting. The weeping willow has been removed and there will be three replacement trees planted in the autumn.

A Christmas tree has been planted to stop purchasing a tree every year which can cost £80 or £90.

There has been a problem with people parking vehicles in bus stops. Cllr Walmsley thanked Cllr Nesbitt for her work in trying to keep the areas clear.

The bus service has been reduced and the last bus to the village is 6.40pm and there is no Sunday service.

There have been problems of speeding on Low Road. Hopefully the new SPiD will encourage the drivers to slow down. Cllr Walmsley thanked the councillors who look after the SPiD.

The noticeboard which was positioned near Wavecrest hairdressers, fell apart and was unrepairable. It has been agreed that to have the noticeboard sited in the Methodist church grounds.

**16/4 Statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.**

The year started with a total of almost £ 39,920 held in the accounts. Throughout the year, The existing clerk of some 14 years retired and a new clerk was appointed, meaning an overlap of hours in the first two months, plus a gratuity payment for long service. Insurance costs rose, although the parish council have secured a three year long term discount. Audit and LALC subs also rose. Capital purchases during the year are a step ladder ( for accessing the SpiD ) and new notice board for Brookhouse.

The play area is regularly checked and during the year cushion fall was replenished to ensure the level was in accordance with suggested guidelines and playsand was also replaced.

Overall, around £ 8,300 less was spent in the year, but £2,000 of that was allocated to a neighbourhood plan, which will continue into this year.

Sadly, council cuts mean that the budget needs to be carefully thought out to cover the rising costs of services and funding, once provided by city and county councils but now to be found from parish councils.

With this in mind, the cumulative balance at the year end is £ 41,506, ensuring there is a healthy contingency fund. The toilet cleaning funding has been cut by 50% for the 2016-17 year.

The precept for the current year is £28,159, in line with last year. The clerk resigned at the year end and Mrs Gill Mason is now in place.

**16/5 Open forum: On which any resident on the electoral register may participate.**

A member of the public enquired what would happen in the long term regarding the bus cuts.

Cllr Walmsley reported that LCC had offered parish councils community transport grants to help purchase a minibus but the responsibility would be too much to run a service. Cat Smith had met with Stagecoach and they had learned from the revisions in Cumbria.

Any update from the bus users group in July will be published in the link.

Meeting closed at 8.04pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

