

SEBERGHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Parish Council Chairman: Alan Rule. Tel. 016974 76410

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

held at Welton Village Hall

Wednesday 20 May 2015 at 7pm

- 15.1 *Apologies: Councillor Fairbairn*
- 15.2 *The Chairman of the Parish Council presented a report on the activities of the parish council in the previous year. (Attached to the minutes)*
- 15.3 *The Chairman invited any comment from parishioners.*

Parishioners were given the opportunity to discuss with Councillors, any issues or concerns they may have within the Parish. The Council represents the community and values their input.

No issues were raised.

Helen Sturges, Northern Fells Village Agent attended the meeting and gave a general outline of activities in the parish and invited any ideas for future activities.

This was followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 pm

Chairman's Report to Annual Parish Meeting – May 2015

Welcome to this Annual Parish Meeting. This meeting gives me the opportunity to summarise the Parish Council's work over the past 12 months, and to invite any questions or suggestions.

In the past year we co-opted three councillors to fill vacancies - Maria Chesters-Bouma, Christine Tinnion and Ken Graham, and I am pleased to say that all seven serving & co-opted councillors stood again in the recent elections, and have now all been appointed as councillors for a further 4 year term.

The Council still has one vacancy, and if anyone is interested in being co-opted to the Council they should contact myself or the Clerk for details.

Following the resignation of the Chairman and Clerk at the last Annual Meeting we discovered a number of aspects of the Council's governance, administrative & financial arrangements which required immediate attention to enable the Council to operate in compliance with legislation & guidance. We are fortunate to have appointed Veronica Stockdale as our new Clerk and, with her experience & knowledge in Parish Council administration to guide us, and with the efforts of all Councillors, we have been able to bring about a number of changes. These are all reported in our minutes which are published in the press, and displayed on noticeboards and on our website.

Some of the other issues we have dealt with in the past year are:

- Pursuing the Highways department to repair potholes. This is a never-ending process, and it is important that anyone who knows of roads where repairs are necessary reports them to the Highways Hotline. They have also been asked to resolve the flooding caused by water run-off from land in Churchtown & Sebergham Mill areas which we hope will be completed soon.
- We have gained a commitment from Highways to level & resurface the lay-by at Sebergham Bridge to prevent flooding & tidy the area. A new parish notice board will be installed there when the work is complete, and we are grateful to Northern Fells 'Men in Sheds' for renovating our existing noticeboards and agreeing to make the new board.
- Vehicles speeding through the parish remain a safety problem and we are continuing to use the roadside Speed Indication Devices which appear to have some success. In collaboration with the Police, we hope to have trained volunteers operating hand-held speed guns in key locations very soon & they will report offenders to the Police for appropriate action. We hope these efforts will contribute to keeping traffic within the speed limits.
- When we are asked by Allerdale to comment on planning applications we do our best to reflect any views we receive from local people, either at our meetings or by personal contact with councillors. We receive a number of wind turbine applications, and continue to pursue our long standing policy of supporting only small turbines up to a maximum of 15m hub height designed to supply farms and/or local businesses where they do not adversely affect other residents.

- We are making strenuous efforts to get a reliable & effective Broadband service provided to ALL properties in the parish as soon as practicable. BT are installing a fibre cable through Welton village to supply superfast broadband to Caldbeck, and have advise that this could readily be connected to local properties & extended into the remainder of our parish. We are attempting to persuade Cumbria County Council to authorise this using the EU funding available because we see it as the most sensible option and is greatly preferred to requiring residents to sign up individually with a private wireless broadband provider for a potentially more expensive and less reliable service. We have considerable support in this aim from our MP (Rory Stewart) and our Borough & County Councillor (Duncan Fairbairn).
- Finally, I would remind you about the Sebergham & Welton Parish Website on which we try to communicate progress, and hope you will make use of this.

We have made considerable progress during the year, and are continue with this work, but we do need the views of local people on the things that concern them most and what they wish us to try to do on their behalf.