

**STANWIX RURAL PARISH**

# **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Crosby-on-Eden Parish Hall**

**Wednesday, 1st May 2024**

**7.00 p.m.**

**Under the chairmanship of Mr C Nicholson (Chairman of the Parish Council)**

**The Parish Meeting is open to all Electors of the Parish and can discuss all parish affairs and pass resolutions about them.**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th May 2023 (attached)**
- 3. Chairman's Report for 2023/24 (to follow)**
- 4. Any other matters concerning the Parish**



**S Kyle  
Clerk to the Council  
20 April 2024**

## STANWIX RURAL PARISH

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held virtually on 11th May 2022 at 7:20p.m.

#### 1. Present

The Chairman, Mr C Nicholson (Chairman of Stanwix Rural Parish Council), 6 Parish Councillors, 1 Cumberland Cllr, 5 members of the public and Mrs S Kyle, Clerk to the Parish Council.

#### 2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2022

Approved and signed by Mr C Nicholson.

#### 3. Chairman's Report 2022/23

##### Introduction

This time last year I mentioned that 2 years and 7 weeks had elapsed since the first Covid lockdown, and that we could look forward to celebrating The Queen's Platinum Jubilee under relatively normal conditions. How could we have foreseen that just three short months after that celebration she would remain only in memory, as her son ascended to the throne in her place. A transition of major constitutional impact, executed seamlessly by virtue of detailed forward planning.

A major change of significant local impact occurred last month. Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council and Carlisle District Council, the latter being the inheritor of 865 years of civic history, merged into the single Cumberland Council. Lacking appropriately detailed forward planning, this shift in power has seen the introduction of a wholly inadequate reporting system with regard to highways, increasing community charges that are impacting many on lower incomes, and the implementation of a policy that seriously damages the local economy. A far from seamless transition that happened, appropriately enough, on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

##### Precept

Despite official reports that the worst is over and good times are just around the corner, the cost-of-living crisis remains unabated, especially with regard to heating bills and the cost of food, while the media still runs stories on how many people are forced to decide between heating and eating. In view of this the Parish Council has again taken the decision not to increase the Parish Precept. During 2023/2024 the precept will therefore remain at its 2019 level. The Parish Council's ability to extend this restraint is possible only through the financial stability enabled by the Parish Council's continuing exercise of prudent budgetary control and monitoring procedures.

##### Activity

Financial assistance has been provided to the three community halls in the parish - Houghton Village Hall, Crosby-on-Eden Parish Hall and Linstock WI Hall; Houghton In Bloom and the Houghton Wildlife Group.

By subsidising the cost the Parish Council also enables the ever popular Summer Play-Days to go ahead as usual this year in Houghton and Crosby-on-Eden again. Both schools will be notified of dates, which will also be published on the Parish Council website, social media sites and notice boards – these sessions are usually booked very quickly so stay alert!

The Parish Council continues to be consulted on planning applications, in its role as a Statutory Consultee. Although fewer than usual have been received since April last year, possibly due to rising costs and constrained budgets, some are quite involved with one in particular demanding a considerable amount of attention.

### **Conclusion**

The change in local government mentioned at the start of this report meant that we said goodbye to three of the Parish's district ward members - Cllrs Elizabeth Mallinson, Fiona Robson and Paul Nedved. I am very grateful for this opportunity to thank them for their very much valued contributions of both time and effort in support of the parish and its communities, and also for their financial help in respect of various community projects. Similar thanks go to Cllr John Mallinson, who I am pleased to say stays in place. He is now joined by Cumberland Cllrs Helen Davison and Brian Wernham, whose wards are also overlapped by the parish – I welcome you both.

Finally, I turn to our Parish Clerk and Proper Officer, Sarah Kyle. It gets more difficult to find new superlatives that I can use in thanking her that I've not already used over the years. A good Parish Clerk is a vital asset, the true value of which is often underestimated by the uninformed. An exceptional one is priceless! To paraphrase Proverbs, Chapter 31 – vs 10 and 26: "She is worth far more than rubies... She speaks with wisdom." So, on behalf of the entire Parish Council and the wider community thank you, Sarah, for keeping us all on the straight and narrow with your encyclopaedic knowledge of process and procedure. And just from me to you, countless thanks for your always considered and astute advice, unfailingly delivered with good humour, which makes my job as Chairman so much easier than it could be.

C Nicholson

#### **4. Open Forum**

No matters for discussion were raised and the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:09p.m.

Signed:

Chairman: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024