

Parton Parish Council

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting May 2019

1. Councillors

The council entered 2018/2019 with 10 councillors. Following the governance review 11 councillors will be elected at the parish council elections in 2019. Kevin Young was re-appointed chairman and Joyce Bestford was appointed vice chairman at the annual meeting in May 2018

2 Ward and County Councillors The parish council were saddened to hear of the death of Ward Cllr J W Bowman in late 2018. Cllr Bowman had been a ward councillor for many years and had always supported the work of both the parish council and other organisations in the village. There was no by-election and the ward were represented by Cllrs Jackie Bowman and Gillian Troughton until the end of their term of office. At the county council elections in May 2017 Martin Barbour was elected for the Howgate division which includes the parish and he attends parish council meetings.

3 Ward Boundaries review. The Boundary Commission review of the number of ward councillors and the ward boundaries was completed in the year and the district council elections in May 2019 will be fought on the new boundaries. The old ward of Distington was renamed Distington Lowca and Parton but the boundaries remain as before. It will now be represented by two councillors.

4 Meetings of the Council

The council meets normally on the second Wednesday of the month save in August when it does not meet. Meetings take place in public at the Village Hall A public participation item is included in every agenda.

5. Finance

The parish council accounts are detailed in a separate paper. The council started the year with a balance of £10754.97 It received £9722.29. It made payments of £10982.47 and ended the year with a balance of £9494.79. The accounts were audited by the internal auditor who was satisfied and he was reappointed for the current year. The accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 were audited in July 2018 by the external auditors and were passed.

6. Highways. The A595 has been subject to repair work on a number of occasions in the year. This inevitably causes queues along the road but does mean that it is easier for residents in the village to join the main road. The parish council's efforts to

persuade Highways England to install a central reservation to allow a safer crossing by pedestrians at the top of Parton Brow on the A595 continue and during the year a consultation exercise was undertaken with drawings to show how the junction could be remodelled. The parish council now awaits progress but given that the draft now proposes land acquisition it is not expected that action will be seen during the next financial year. Highways England has also given early notice of possible changes to the Pelican garage junction outside but close to the parish. Road repairs in the village during the year have resulted in certain roads being closed for short periods

7 The Moresby Embankment diversion. Representatives from the parish council along with councillors from Moresby and the clerk at Lowca met Highways England officers on two occasions during the year. Informed discussions took place but it is now clear that unless the Moresby Embankment deteriorates to such a degree that it is obviously unsafe no action will be taken until a decision whether to build an Eastern relief road around Whitehaven is taken. We were told that there is constant monitoring of the land beside the A595 south of the Lowca junction with the trunk road. A decision whether to include the Eastern relief road in the 2020/2025 Department for Transport major road schemes is expected in the 2019 autumn statement. It is accepted that the A595 from the Pelican garage to the Howgate roundabout is over capacity now and we were told of plans to resurface the road. A scheme to improve the drainage on the A595 will go ahead which is aimed at remedying the problems at the foot of the Rectory Brow.

8 Flooding

There was no serious flooding in the year but erosion continues on the foreshore to the north of the Long Arch. The district council flood and coastal protection officer is aware of the problem with the outlet valve and repairs have been promised but to date no action has been taken. The parish council responded to a county council consultation on the long-term future of the coastline in Cumbria and a report of that consultation is expected later in 2019.

9 Police and Enforcement

PCSO Hollie Dennis remains the delegated PCSO for the parish but has not attended any meetings She does however now provide a report covering the previous months logs of incidents reported These in the main relate to minor anti-social behaviour and road traffic incidents.

10 Memorial Garden

Dog fouling continues at the memorial garden and mares' tail is a problem. The contractor undertook work to clear the ground but more work will be required The contractor said that the ground was too dry for further planting during 2018. There was minor damage when the play boat wheel was broken. There may be interest in a further bench in the garden

11 Grass cutting and Landscape work

The young people of the North Copeland Youth Partnership have undertaken litter picking days in the village with particular emphasis on the play area and the foreshore. Problems with dog owners failing to clean up after their animals is a particular concern given that the foreshore and the beach are used by many walkers and not only those exercising dogs. The football field is cut by the district council under a contract with the parish. The council contracted the district council to trim both the infield path towards Lowca from the A595 and the non-conformist grave yard.

12 The War Memorial. The parish council contacted the garden centre who has undertaken work for an adjoining parish for some time and they were happy to replant the ground inside the walls and repair the wall and fencing. The general response was positive and the parish council will ask for planting at the war memorial and at the foreshore garden. It is hoped that a volunteer will repaint the walls surrounding the war memorial and the adjacent benches

13. Donations The parish council made five donations to local good causes. These were the Great North Air Ambulance, the Cumbria Community Foundation Winter Warmth Fund, the North Copeland Youth Partnership, Whitehaven RL supporters and the Parton Old Folks fund.

14 The Village Hall

The council continue to work with the village hall management committee. Further details are given in the Village Hall report.

15. Parton Play Areas

There was damage at the play area in the year and as a result a bench and table had to be removed. One unit is now starting to show wear. The Main Street play is extremely well used by the children of the village. A local resident continues to check the equipment on a weekly basis and undertake litter picking.

16. Parton P C Website

The website has been operating for a number of years on www.partonpc.co.uk and contains information about the council and its councillors together with an archive of parish council meeting minutes. Information about the Howgate Distington partnership is posted.

17 Planning Applications There were only two applications in the year. One was for approval of reserved matters following outline approval at Bank Yard Road and the second related to work to repair and reconfigure existing structures at Moresby Hall. The district council no longer forward decision letters. The parish council were also consulted on the street naming and numbering for a housing development on the property formerly known as the Beachcomber.

18. Locality Working

The parish continues to work with the adjoining parishes of Distington Lowca and Parton on issues common to all. The group the Howgate and Distington partnership have been acknowledged as a locality within Copeland. There have been fewer meetings than normal during the reporting year. A separate report has been prepared.

19. Consultation/Planning Applications The two main consultations in 2018/2019 were in relation to the coastal strategy mentioned earlier in the report and a Highways England early consultation on a possible Whitehaven Eastern relief road. The Copeland Local Plan was restarted in the year and it is expected that the first round of consultation will be undertaken in autumn of 2019.

20 St Bridget's Church of England Primary School Mrs Higham who had been the headteacher at the school for many years retired at the end of the Michaelmas term and Ruth Colley her replacement was welcomed at a parish council meeting she attended during the year.

21 Presentations There was a presentation about autism given by County Cllr Hawkins. Diane Taylor from Age UK spoke about community connections and loneliness in the rural areas. Warren Birch, a county council officer, attended a meeting to talk about the community rail project. Cliff Walker the district council community service manager attended a meeting to talk about his work with the enforcement team.

J C Shaw April 2019.

