

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL MILLBECK
ON Wednesday 25 March 2009 at 7.30 pm**

PRESENT : Mr J Wilson (in the Chair) Mrs J Boniface Mrs B Bulman Mrs E Helme
Mr D Roberts & Mr J Wood In attendance : Mr Bill Bell from
Underskiddaw Local History Group; Clerk.

2009.16 **Apologies** were accepted from Mr T Gibbs

2009.17 **Declarations of Interest** None made.

2009.18 **Minutes**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the last meeting, held on 28 January 2009, subject to a correction to the number of the bus route referred to in 2009.07

2009.19 **Opportunity for Public Participation**

No member of the public present.

2009.20 **Underskiddaw Village Hall**

A report was received from Mr Bill Bell about a micro hydro-electric scheme which was under consideration on behalf of the Village Hall Committee. This would involve collecting water at the site of one of the old weirs higher up Mill Beck and running it through a pipe with a drop of approximately 100 feet to a turbine located at the rear of the Hall. From there the water would be returned to the beck. Electricity so generated would be sold to United Utilities, and its value as a “green energy” credited to the Village Hall. This additional income would be used for maintaining and upgrading the hall for the greater benefit of the local community. A preliminary survey had indicated that there was a potential business case for undertaking such a project. The outline plan agreed so far would need to be the subject of a detailed feasibility study, which would be expensive. Accordingly the first step would be to apply for funding to carry out such a study. In order to make such applications the Village Hall Committee would like assurance that the scheme had public support and would be regarded as a community asset. If the project were to be judged feasible there would need to be liaison with the Community, the Environment Agency, the National Trust and others. The Councillors discussed this and agreed that in view of the tremendous benefit which the local community derived from all the activities at the Hall, and the community spirit which it was clear would be fostered by such a project, that the Council would like to support it wholeheartedly. Councillor Bulman proposed Councillor Roberts seconded and IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously that the Council approved the hydro electric project and would do everything possible to support it.

2009.21 **Finances** The Council approved the following cheques to be written
: Thornthwaite cum Braithwaite PCC for copying charges
£10.34 Braithwaite School for photocopying £27.74 CPRE subscription
£25

2009.22 **Lake District National Park Authority**

There had been no planning application nor notification of any decisions since the date of the last meeting. Residents had raised concerns about two matters. First some developments had been noticed at a field adjoining the A66 near Crosthwaite Church. A large hut had been erected in the field, a portaloo and other small sheds had appeared, a van was frequently parked there, hard standing had been laid down, and a mail box had been hung on the gate. Lights had been seen in the hut after dark, and smoke had been coming from the chimney. A letter had been written to the planners who replied that they were satisfied that there was no intention on the part of the owner to live there and that the field was being prepared for use as a smallholding. It was agreed that note should be kept of activities in the field and that the Clerk should write to inquire what the criteria were for assessing when a use amounted to residential occupation. Secondly there were concerns about additional buildings and features at the stables development in Thrushwood. Also the hedge had been allowed to grow so high it was a danger to pedestrians crossing the road. It was agreed that recent developments, including the installation of a large steel container, should be checked and a letter written to the planners. It was agreed that the names of Councillors Roberts and Bulman should be put forward for the parish tours in September with Councillor Boniface as a reserve. Information about a conference on “Lakes for Living” at Windermere was presented, but as the cost was over £600 plus VAT for the whole event and £120 plus VAT for a day as a non-resident it was agreed it would be clearly improper for public money to be spent for councillors to attend this, especially as the topics appeared to be aspirational rather than practical.

2009.23 **Allerdale BC**

The Minutes of the Police Forum were noted and put for circulation and the appointment of Harry Dyke as interim Chief Executive was noted.

2009.24 **Cumbria County Council**

(i) Councillor Bulman reported on the Neighbourhood Forum meeting where the new Chief Executive Richard Leafe had presented his “Vision” of the National Park which consisted of A Prosperous Economy; Vibrant Communities; Opportunities for Employment; Renewable energy; Local Development Framework; Land for Business Use; Affordable Housing; World Class visitor Experience. He did not say how he hoped to achieve these things, nor did he mention the special qualities of the Park - beauty

and tranquillity. The highway Steward scheme had also been referred to as a great success. The Forum allocated grants of £5,300 in total, including £1500 for scouts and guides, £1,000 to Borrowdale for toilets and signposts, £1500 for Keswick on the Rugby Club and flower beds. (ii) The Council considered a letter concerning proposals for new waste sites, and new or extended quarrying, none of them in the National Park. Councillor Wood expressed a concern about possible increases in fly-tipping, and suggested the necessity to be prepared for this. (iii) A request to take part in a survey on Landscape Planning had been received but this was online and had so far proved inaccessible. Cllor Boniface would try this, and the Clerk would ask for a paper copy. (iv) The chair and the Clerk had attended a session on Local Emergency planning and the Chair would try to produce a questionnaire to go out with the Newsletter to start a record of needs and facilities in the parish.

2009.25 Cumbria Association of Local Councils

i) A report was given on the Highway Steward scheme which it was generally agreed had been very successful. The Highway Steward would next visit Underskiddaw in the week beginning 30 March. (ii) Clerks Direct was put for circulation (iii) The newsletters for February and March were noted : News that 3 nuclear power stations were under consideration had caused surprise in West Cumbria; the Commons Environment Committee had recommended the Government to set up a review of the planning role of the National Park, but the Government had declined to do so, finding the Park had done an excellent job. News of a Village Hall Survey should be passed on to the Village Hall Committee. A list of jobs was drawn up for the Highway Steward. The area with most concerns was near Underscar and Dobbie Garth, The hedge at the stables, and ??? would also be mentioned to him.

2009.26 Correspondence from Statutory Bodies

Various highway leaflets would be circulated

2009.27 Correspondence from non statutory Bodies

Fieldwork from CPRE would be circulated.

2009.28 Arrangements for APM

It appeared that another event would clash with this, but owing the difficulty in finding dates it was agreed not to try to change the date. Kathie Murphy had agreed to speak, and Geoff Brown would also give advice on changing to digital TV. Tea and cakes would be served at the end. The Invitation and Minutes of the last meeting would be circulated hopefully with the Newsletter, but the Chairman's Report would not be circulated until afterwards along with the accounts, and this would form the Council's Annual Report.

2009.29 Newsletter

This would include the invitation to the APM, details of the Planning Committee arrangements; observations on the developments in Crosthwaite, an up date on Neighbourhood Watch; news of the Website and the Highway steward; and possibly an introductory piece about emergency planning.

2009.31 Website

Councillor Boniface proposed that it would be convenient to separate the Council Website from its current host site so it could stand alone. The cost of technical help would be £60, and the annual cost of purchasing webspace would be £22.20 plus VAT of £3.85 or £35.88 plus VAT of £6.30, depending on how much space was needed. The cost of technical help would be £60 estimated. Ongoing annual costs would be the monthly hosting costs of £1.85 or £2.99 plus VAT and the domain name costs of £5.58 plus VAT every two years. Initially £100 had been allocated to the cost of the website (**2008.76**) of which £51.56 had been spent to date. A further sum of £150 had been set aside in the budget (**2008.90**) for ongoing expenses. Councillors resolved to accept the proposals from Cllor Boniface and to approve the expenditure indicated. Cllor Boniface advised that the site was now virtually up to date, including the Guide to the Freedom of Information documents available to the public.

2009.32 Neighbourhood Watch

The Clerk reported that out of 20 people approached as having expressed an interest 9 had replied to date. The remaining people would be approached again and an attempt made to set a date for a meeting.

2009.33 Reports from Members : Village Hall Committee

Cllors Helme and Boniface reported on two recent meetings. One of these had been a routine meeting discussing future function, maintenance issues, the hydro electric project, and certain difficulties over access to the surrounding land. The AGM had been held on 14 March for the year from November 2007 to October 2008. This reviewed a successful years events and look forward to pursuing some of the ideas arising from the Parish Plan. The Treasurer had reported that £3,000 had been raised in the year and the bank balance stood at £19,000. The Christmas Fair had been very successful, raising £1500. The Committee had been re-elected and new recruits encouraged to come forward.

2009.34 Dates of Future Meetings

These were Thursday 21 May 2009(AGM). Annual Parish Meeting
Wednesday 22 April.

In its deliberations the Council took into consideration the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and Equality and Inclusiveness legislation.