



## **CATTERALL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 at 7:00pm at Catterall Village Hall**

**In Attendance:** Cllr I Brayshaw (Chair), 4 Members of the Public (4 of which are Parish Councillors) and E Millington (Clerk and RFO)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Shaun Turner and 4 Parish Councillors and the reasons accepted.

### **2. Declarations of interest and dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest nor any request for a dispensation for any item on the agenda.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

### **4. Annual Report of the Chairman**

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Parish meeting.

As usual can I personally thank each and every one of you for the hard work and commitment you have given over the last twelve months. We still have a number of vacancies, so if you know of anyone interested that fits the criteria, please encourage them to come along.

Emma has continued to work hard and with the Parish whilst studying for her qualification, I would formally like to thank her for her hard work and commitment she continued to show.

Can I record our thanks to Paul also for his continued commitment and hard work he has done around the village this year.

I would also like to record my thanks to the Village hall committee that is continuing to promote the village hall as a valuable asset to the village.

The Bloomers have continued with their hard work and we are now seeing some changes to the 'beds' in and around the Queen Elizabeth II field, their continued commitment through the last year does not go unnoticed.

We have had a few challenges this year, notably the damage caused to the wheeled paly area by some inconsiderate youths, which have just recently been spoken to by the Police, I hope this is just a one off incident and we do not see this as a starting point for further incidents.

This year I had the honour of bestowing the first Freeman of the Parish to Ted Richardson just prior to his 100th Birthday, he was unaware of the award and very

pleased to have been recognised by the Parish, which was only saddened by his recent passing. Our thoughts are with his family at the time. I would like to thank Councillor Sharples, for suggesting that Ted Received the award. Ted has been a valued resident of Catterall

We are hearing that the Policing and Crime commissioner, has again secured funding to wards Anti-Social behaviour and other initiatives so let hope that he can tackle some of the issues we are seeing in the village let's hope their commitment to addressing anti-social behaviour will have a positive step in the area.

Once again thank you all very much for your support and I look forward to being able to support you and the Parish for the coming year.

Thank you.

Cllr Ian Brayshaw,  
Chair, Catterall Parish Council

*Members accepted this report.*

## **5. Report from the Responsible Finance Officer**

Year Ending 31st March 2024

Catterall Parish Council brought forward £72,952.55 from 2022/2023

Precept £98,000

Receipts £39,399.59

Staff Costs £49,976.81

Payments £52,188.68

Giving a balance of £108,186.65 to carry forward to 2024/2025

**Precept:** The Parish Council took into consideration budget recommendations and increased the precept by 7.69% in 2023/24. However due to the growth of Catterall, Band D properties only faced increase in council tax of 1.72% from £92.97 in 2022/23 to £94.56 in 2023/24.

**Receipts:** The receipts figure is very high in 23/24 due to a large VAT reclaim. This reclaim arose as a result of the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field improvement work undertaken in 22/23.

Bank interest increased due to a full year of banking with Unity Bank, from £354.47 in 22/23 to £2,000.52 in 23/24. This is significantly more than the interest received from previous bank account provider.

The CCLA account paid £1,847.15 in interest.

The Parish Council received a grant of £600.00 from Lancashire County Council's Parish Champion towards the new parish noticeboards.

**Staff Costs:** Staff costs have increased this year due to a pay award back dated to April 2023 and to an increase in the Lengthsman's hours from 1st April 2023.

**Payments:** As the Lengthsman took on the playing field grass cutting in 23/24 a new battery powered grass mower was purchased.

The wooden noticeboards at the Village Hall and at Stone Cross Gardens had started to rot and were replaced by new noticeboards.

A seat was purchased and sited on Baylton Drive to commemorate Cllr D Sharples 40th year as a councillor to Catterall Parish Council.

New lights were purchased for the playing field Christmas tree and made a big impact.

The playing field was well maintained in 23/24 with tree work taking place and repairs to playground equipment. Vandalism on the wheeled play area resulted in costly repairs.

A donation was given to the Royal British Legion, to Garstang Festive Lights and to Catterall Village Hall towards the toilet refit.

Some budgeted projects didn't take place in 23/24 such as the CCTV review, the funds for this have been earmarked for 24/25.

There was an underspend on the training budget. These funds were to allow the new Clerk to undertake CiLCA training. A grant was given, in form of a discount towards the training sessions. The training was delivered in 23/24 and the enrolment fee for the qualification will be due in 24/25.

**Carry forward:** The carry forward figure is made up of £42,329.58 in the CCLA fund, this is earmarked for a future playground refresh.

The contingency reserve is currently £39,000. The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide 2023 (or JPAG) lays out proper practice for governance and accounts of small authorities. *"The generally accepted recommendation with regard to "the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure."*

Emma Millington

Responsible Finance Officer, Catterall Parish Council

*Members accepted this report.*

## **6. Annual Report from Lancashire County Council**

None received.

## **7. Annual Report from Wyre Councillor**

None received.

## **8. Annual Report from Parish Councillors**

### **a) Report of the Wyre Area Lancashire Association of Local Councils**

The April meeting's guest speaker was Rebecca Huddleston, Wyre Council's new Chief Executive. Rebecca gave a short presentation on her experience working in local government and confirmed that she wanted to work closely with town and parish councils as they are the tier of local government closest to their communities. To support her commitment she has attended the majority of Wyre Area Committee meetings herself rather than sending another senior officer.

Tom Myerscough, General Manager of Wyre Rivers Trust, gave a presentation to the July meeting. He spoke about the work he and his team had done to improve the ecological position of the Wyre catchment area by monitoring rivers, streams and brooks to identify areas for improvement, improving river bank habitats and by educating the public in all aspects of the issues rivers face.

At the beginning of the October meeting Cllr Dave Sharples was presented with a Long Service Award by the Lancashire Association of Local Council's Chair, Cllr Phil Orme, in recognition of his serving 40 years as a parish councillor with Catterall Parish Council.

Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner, Andrew Snowdon, was to have been the guest speaker but he was off sick and his Deputy was not available to attend. In his absence John Ashurst, Area Support Officer at LALC gave an update on the work he had been doing to help those Area Committees which had either not met for some time or needed additional support.

Unfortunately Cllr Sharples, who had completed 37 years as Area Secretary, had been ill for some time and he decided to step down from the role at the AGM in January. Emma Millington had agreed to take his place and the meeting elected her as Area Secretary and I was elected Chair again.

County Councillor Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change at Lancashire County Council, gave a presentation on the work of his portfolio including plans to introduce a separate recycling collection for food waste, projects involving nature recovery and biodiversity, peatland restoration and increasing the number of EV charging points.

Cllr Jan Finch  
Chair, Wyre Area Committee

*Members accepted this report.*

#### **b) Report of the Catterall Village Hall**

The range of regular activities in the past year has included belly dancing, pilates, Catterall Brownies and Catterall Rainbows, modern dance (adults), Coffee Stop, children's dance, baby rhythm time, keep fit, Little Voices (children's singing), choir, Christian Fellowship group and a twice weekly post office. It has also hosted private events such as children's parties.

The Committee agreed to take part in Village Halls Week in 2023 by holding an Open Day to show residents the improved facilities. Unfortunately it was not well attended by either user groups or residents.

The Committee continues manage the hall in as cost effective way as possible and to invest in the facilities available for the benefit of users.

We now have an online booking facility which saves time for both committee members and hirers. This has been linked to our accounting software so that invoices are generated automatically and reminders sent out regularly until payment is made.

The Committee take health and safety seriously and ensure that all necessary inspections and testing are carried out on a timely basis. There is a risk assessment for the hall and car park and this is reviewed on a quarterly basis. All inspection and testing certificates are published on the website.

The committee has been successful this year in applying for grants. Catterall Village Hall has received the following:

- National Lottery Awards for All grant of £6,000 for new tables and chairs
- Lancashire County Council Local Member Grants of £300 towards the cost of new furniture and £360 towards new internal notice boards
- Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund grant of £1000 for new furniture
- Lancashire Environmental Fund grant of £18,500 for the refurbishment of the washrooms.
- Lancashire County Council Local Member Grant of £400 towards the cost of repairing the roof

A new fridge and hoover have been purchased.

The Committee has, at long last, managed to get a Smart Meter fitted in the village hall and this has enabled the full use of the solar panels both for the benefit of the hall directly but also by selling the surplus solar energy generated. This both saves money on energy bills and generates income.

Despite every effort to contain running costs the Committee had to take the decision to make a small increase to hire rates to keep pace with inflation.

Cllr Jan Finch  
Secretary, Catterall Village Hall

*Members accepted this report.*

#### **9. Matters raised by Residents**

None

#### **10. Any Other Business**

None

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 7:15pm.