

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Giles Archibald, Leader of the Council

LGA

As Leader I have represented the Council on the active outside body for The LGA General Assembly.

The LGA General assembly meets annually, usually at the yearly conference however due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was held virtually in 2020.

The LGA's primary focus and efforts over the past year have included funding for local government, adult social care and health, education, housing, inclusive growth and devolution and supporting councils. In the last twelve months the LGA has been extremely helpful in both in keeping Councils informed and in representing councils at Westminster. It has been highly successful in arguing for financial support for councils during the pandemic.

I have represented South Lakeland District Council at this assembly since 2016

The outcomes of the virtual assembly were a new election of the President of the association for 2020/21, Cllr Jamieson elected as the Chairman of the LGA and four new vice-chairs of the association.

The General assembly elected nine Deputy Chairs for 2020/21 as set out in the annual report, and new appointments for members of parliament and Peers as Vice President for 2020/21 were made.

The General Assembly received the LGA Group financial statements for the year to 31 March 2020 and noted the Audit Committee Annual Report.

Joint Districts Board

This year has been dominated by the Pandemic and Local Government reform (LGR). The group was extremely helpful in the early months of the pandemic in sharing ideas and experiences across the Cumbrian Districts. We received regular updates from the PCC, CCC and from the Health trusts as to the status of the pandemic from their perspectives.

LGR was discussed at length. Not all the districts joined the County's letter to the government asking for reform. Once the request came from government for bids for reform, we were unable to reach agreement on a possible unitary structure, with the result that the districts put in three different bids.

Cumbria Leaders Board

This board is used for sharing information amongst the District and County leaders, the PCC, the LDNP, the LEP, the third sector, CALC and the Health trusts. We discussed the Climate Change initiative (Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership) which is now jointly led by the County and Cafs, potential actions to counter racial discrimination, the state of the pandemic, the local economy, the white paper on the healthcare system and support for certain charities. On two occasions, James Jamieson, the Chair of the LGA joined our meetings.

South Lakeland Local Committee

Cllr Jonathan Brook and I were both invited to attend the meetings of the South Lakeland local committee of the County Council. We are very grateful for the opportunity to join these meetings and provide SLDC's perspective on the many projects reviewed by the committee. We are able to give input on new road markings, repairs, maintenance, lighting, gully cleaning and weed spraying, to mention but a few of the items discussed at these meetings. We meet (as a Joint Area Working Group) with the chair of the committee and a senior officer to discuss items raised at these meetings and other issues where the responsibilities and interests of the two councils intersect. Our normal schedule of meetings this past year was somewhat disrupted by the pandemic. I expect regular meetings to resume shortly.

Councillor Giles Archibald

Leader of the Council

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Jonathan Brook, Deputy Leader of the Council

Cumbria Housing Group (CHG)

This County-wide body is composed of members and officers from all relevant authorities across Cumbria. This includes the 6 District Councils, the Lake District National Park and the County Council. The Group is made up of lead politicians who have responsibility for housing (and wellbeing) issues in their areas.

I remain as Chair of the Group which, depending on business, meets between 4 to 6 times per year.

The purpose of the CHG is to:

- Enable collaborative working
- Help ensure a consistent approach to housing matters
- Encourage the sharing of knowledge and information
- Enable discussion of key issues
- Help provide economies of scale through joint commissioning for example of reports/studies

The objectives of the CHG are to:

- Provide advice and strategic direction with regards Housing and Wellbeing matters to the leadership of each authority represented.
- Ensure that a clear understanding of the key issues relating to Housing and Wellbeing can be clearly set out to Leaders as well as other groups and organisations that are planning or delivering associated services.
- Help in the co-ordination of joint activity in relation to Housing and Wellbeing where this is agreed is appropriate.
- Identify opportunities for co-ordinated activity across authorities with regard Housing and Wellbeing (including the delivery of new homes in Cumbria).
- Contribute to the production of responses to consultations and requests for information as appropriate.

The CHG has met virtually over the last year.

Subjects discussed and responses made during the year have included:

The Housing Delivery Strategy produced by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP). This covered issues across Cumbria including housing growth, affordability and community sustainability, housing regeneration and improved quality of housing.

The Public Health Strategy, presented by Cumbria County Council looking at the wider determinants of health and addressing the causes of ill health over the 10 years of the plan.

Changing Futures and Green Homes Grants and the Decarbonisation of Social Housing Fund.

The Domestic Abuse Bill, the Planning White Paper and the Social Housing White Paper.

Updates from various sub groups and working groups including the Strategic Housing, Homelessness and Wellbeing Group and the Housing Supply Group.

Ongoing issues of COVID-related homelessness and the Next Steps Programme. The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol and the Care Leavers Protocol.

Changes to Cumbria Choice and the Extra Care Housing Forum.

The CHG has been reinvigorated over the last couple of years and is in a good position to influence housing-related issues across Cumbria over the coming 12 months.

Cumbria County Council Local Committee for South Lakeland and Cumbria County Council Highways and Transportation Working Group

I have attended a number of meetings of the Cumbria County Council Local Committee for South Lakeland and the Cumbria County Council Highways and Transportation Working Group and these are a matter of Public record. Close working with other tiers of Government and key partners is crucial to enable the delivery of efficient and effective services for our residents. This remains an ongoing priority.

The Lake District National Park Partnership (LDNPP)

I have attended a number of meetings of the Lake District National Park Partnership and these are a matter of Public record. Close working with other tiers of Government and key partners is crucial to enable the delivery of efficient and effective services for our residents. This remains an ongoing priority.

The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) Places Strategy Group

I have attended a number of meetings of the Lake District National Park Partnership and these are a matter of Public record. Close working with other tiers of Government and key partners is crucial to enable the delivery of efficient and effective services for our residents. This remains an ongoing priority.

Local Government Association – General Assembly

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the Local Government Association General Assembly last year due to the COVID pandemic.

North West Housing Forum and SPARSE Rural

The North West Housing Forum is part of The Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) which represents the views of housing organisations in the North of England. This is a membership organisation made up of local authorities, Arm's Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and associations that provide social housing for tenants. The NHC bring its members together to share ideas, and represents their interests and ensures they are heard at a regional and national government level.

The Sparsity Partnership for Local Authorities Delivering Rural Services (SPARSE Rural) is a grouping of member Rural Local Authorities in England. SPARSE Rural is apolitical. It has two meetings of Councillors each year.

The group seeks to represent the views of more than 12 million people living in the rural areas of England on local government financial issues

Councils serving rural areas, on average, receive less grant per head of population from Government Grant. As a consequence rural residents have to pay higher council tax per head than in urban areas. They have to pay this extra amount however from a local earned wage that is significantly lower than elsewhere in England.

I have not been able to attend the meetings of these bodies in the period covered by this report. This is because meetings of these bodies have tended to clash with meetings and work relating to this Council, which has had to take priority during the COVID pandemic.

Councillor Jonathan Brook

April 2021

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 –

Councillor Dyan Jones

Lake Line User Group

Representing the daily users of this vital and important stretch of line between Oxenholme and Windermere, whether residents commuting, school children or visitors, the Lake Line User Group has been instrumental for many years in liaising and challenging decisions made by Northern Rail, together working to address issues experienced by customers whilst also monitoring standards of service and monitor progress of works and proposals. They fundraise, produce surveys and provide additional information in a quarterly publication of activities to inform interested parties and the general public.

Their positive relationship with Northern Rail throughout the difficulties of recent years demonstrates how bodies/groups of this nature are essential to both inform and provide feedback playing an active part in improving services.

This year my time has been taken up largely with council action around Covid so not attend online meetings due to unavoidable diary clashes. However, their chair has kept members of the group up to date throughout this period.

For further information about LLRUG, follow the link below.

www.llrug.co.uk

Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership

As a result of the establishment of a shared, dedicated project lead, this officer and member group which holds meetings regularly and formally engages with Cumbria County Council and District Councils now works much more strategically to explore best use of shared resources (Northern Resource Park) and some common resources (Cumbria Waste).

With the extra resource of this project officer, alignment of services to provide best value through shared good practise is transforming what was once an ambition into a reality. An exciting period to ultimately provide a single vision for waste in the county and create new relationships to proactively provide benefits for many. In short, the name of this group states what it is and does.

If you are interested in a briefing note with further information, please let me know.

Councillor Dyan Jones

Ward Member for Windermere
Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 –

Councillor Chris Hogg

Lancaster Regeneration Partnership – Outside Bodies Report

LCRP has had a productive year with some key projects coming to fruition. The most notable being the Stainton Aqueduct project which is due to be celebrated with an Aqueduct 10k which was originally meant to take place to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Canal.

There has also been some marketing activity (200th Anniversary) and a rebranding exercise. In addition to this work is being done to look at interpretation and signage along the length of the Canal route.

The key topic which continues to be the focus for the group is the upgrading of the footpaths and the potential to increase walking and cycling either on the canal route or spurs off the route there will continue to be engagement with parishes and residents. This remains a key focus for the group. There continues to be a conservation work (Heritage and Nature) along the route and volunteers continue to work hard on a variety of maintenance work and other projects. There are also some interesting links with Kendal Futures ideas.

The pandemic has emphasised the importance of nature and exercise in keeping people healthy in both mind and body and the Canal has proved popular especially for walkers and this can continue to be developed and LCRP recognise the importance of the partnership members in this and other areas.

Finally, the search for a new Chairman continues with Robin Yates filling in temporarily.

Councillor Chris Hogg

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Rachael Hogg

North West Employers

NW employers is a member owned and led organisation. Membership consists of 41 local authorities including SLDC.

As a member we have access to a range of resources, information guides and webinars that can be shared across our organisation.

All the NW Employers meetings have been held via Zoom. Throughout Covid NW Employers have kept members up to date with national HR Guidance and their specialised HR advice line. They have recently developed 'The Essentials of Remote working' aimed at managers who want to build their confidence in managing remotely. Online events have continued through the pandemic.

As a cost saving NW Employers they have moved to smaller premises, still based in Salford.

Councillor Rachael Hogg

Executive Board member – NW Employers

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor John Holmes and Councillor Susanne Long

Annual report from SLDC nominees to South Lakes Housing (SLH) Board – May 2021

SLH continues to dovetail its strategic properties with those of SLDC, particularly with respect to the Council's objective of Housing and Communities. SLH delivery plan contributes to the Council's priorities of working across boundaries, delivering balanced communities, a fairer South Lakeland and addressing the climate emergency. SLH has also supported The Bay unitary authority proposal and continues to seek opportunities for collaboration around the supply of new affordable housing, energy efficiency and digital transformation to name just a few shared agendas.

Business Strategy: Our Direction 2025

The Board has reviewed its strategic priorities and plans following the impact of the pandemic and reinforced the corporate themes of Growing, Greening and Transforming. SLH is ambitious about the positive and lasting impact it will have over the next five years and beyond on improving customer experience, homes, neighbourhoods, energy efficiency, affordability and a new supply of quality homes. Like many social, community-based housing associations it is grappling with the challenges of meeting growing housing need, decarbonising an ageing housing stock, and mitigating against the real risk of future flooding. This, in addition to the core expectations of keeping our homes safe and maintained to a good quality. SLH objectives and key milestones to 2025 are shown below:



Covid-19

Like many other businesses in the district SLH have also been affected by the impacts from the Pandemic. Throughout this period SLH has been supporting tenants through welfare calls,

by ensuring tenants get quick access to welfare benefits and ensuring that no tenant was evicted, completing essential health and safety works as well as emergency and essential repairs.

There have been several delayed investments, mainly on planned repair improvement programmes such as heating replacements, loft and cavity wall insulation (c.£1.5M), and a small backlog of non-urgent repairs (c200) which we aim to clear by the end of May, which would mirror our speedy delivery immediately following the end of the first lockdown.

The economic impact on residents is of concern given the high furlough rate in the district so the Board will closely monitor the impact on rent collection going into next year, although due to added focus and engagement with tenants struggling with their payments rent collection and rates performed much better than anticipated.

About 15% of the SLH workforce had Covid-19 during the year with several more self-isolating and a few shielding. 'Covid secure' risk assessments have been put in place and regularly reviewed. Colleagues are reporting high levels of engagement – 91% still feel connected one year on from largely remote based working. SLH achieved the 'Better Health at Work' bronze award following an assessment in late January 2021 and recognises progress towards encouraging a healthy workforce. SLH anticipate moving to a hybrid way of working as part of an agile working framework. The use of the office is being reviewed, moving this to a place of collaboration rather than 'transactional computer-based work' is likely to be the outcome. The organisation also wishes to take the opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint in line with our Greening objective.

Development

SLH is delivering more new homes for the district securing new development opportunities and 37 new homes were added during 2020/21 despite the challenges of the Covid-19. This includes the flagship development of 17 homes at the former Ulverston Town Hall, 5 new eco homes built at a former unappealing garage site at Parkside Road in Kendal and 2 bungalows at a similar site in Allithwaite.

SLH have completed legal exchanges and achieved starts on site for both our Boon Town and Halton Mill (Lancaster) schemes towards the end of March, so the construction of 48 new homes will be imminently underway on those sites, and Homes England milestone targets for both schemes have been achieved. The next phase of acquisitions at Oakfield Park, Kirkby Lonsdale from Russell Armer Homes, comprises 6 smart new houses on a very attractive new development. The forecast completions for 2021/22 is 73 new homes. Shared ownership units continue to feature as a significant and growing element of the future pipeline which will help younger people to be able to afford to live in the area.

SLH is now active on sites right across the Morecambe Bay area; including Barrow (Walney Island, Askam and Dalton) and Lancaster. SLH are also involved in a development opportunity in Sedbergh along with Broadaces Housing Association and Engie, as part of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan. SLH is an active participant in the South Lakeland Housing Advisory Group that is coordinated by SLDC.

New Funding

In last year's report I referenced that SLH were reviewing treasury management options. This work has now concluded, and this has resulted in a new loan facility of being agreed with NatWest, together with our other loan portfolio, bringing a total loan facility of £60M.

This will ensure that there is sufficient capacity, matched with access to SLDC and Homes England grants, to deliver the ambitious SLH target of 500 additional homes completed or started on site by 2025. In total Homes England grant drawdown amounts to £2.68m.

Funding to deliver energy efficiency targets is less clear, but it is hoped that SLDC will support SLH to access Green Homes Grant and Social Housing Decarbonisation funding. We will need to work hand in hand to maximise the grant allocations and together make South Lakeland greener.

Yewbarrow Lodge

The closure of the Yewbarrow Lodge sheltered housing scheme in Grange-over-Sands has seen the successful relocation of all residents. The closure followed a review of current and future demand for sheltered housing, where a third of the flats were vacant with some empty for over two years. This was a sensitive period and additional time was taken to locate suitable alternative accommodation. The smooth transition was assisted by specific and individualised allocations, including rehousing to adapted new build homes on other sites.

SLH are working on a series of options for the site and this will be discussed with the Town Council and ward Councillors in due course. Despite several different architects looking at the site it appears that the existing building will not provide for a viable alternative use and we may need to look at replacement to make better use of the site.

Governance

SLH retained the highest governance (G1) and viability (V1) rating from the Regulator of Social Housing during 2021 despite the additional challenges around providing sufficient evidence of viability and ability to withstand further economic shocks linked to Covid-19 and Brexit. This is important assurance for stakeholders such as SLDC, for tenants, funders, and potential future investors.

At the end of 2021/22 SLH will have been an independent Housing Association for 10 years, following the successful transfer for homes from SLDC in March 2012. It is therefore an appropriate time to reflect on the positive relationships between the two organisations and ensure that any future arrangements are future focussed and in the best interest of our shared objectives.

The regulations governing the conduct of Housing Associations have alerted in the intervening years, restricting the Council's voting rights as part of the reclassification of Housing Associations in 2017. Similarly the sector's new Code of Governance to be adopted by SLH underline the need for SLH to strengthen its independence and SLH aim to pursue this with the move to have a skill and competency-based approach to Board membership rather than the constituency based arrangement established at transfer.

SLDC Nominated Non-Executive Directors

John Holmes' term on the Board was due to end in 2020 having served the maximum 9 years permitted. But following agreement with SLDC this was extended for a further year as SLDC was not able to proceed with its annual meeting of nominations to outside bodies (due to Covid-19). Although, not in compliance with SLH Code of Governance, this will be 'explained' within SLH's 2021 financial statement. John is due to retire at the in May 2021. Susanne Long joined the Board in 2020.

Susanne attended 5 out of a possible 6 meetings. John attended 8 out of 9 possible meetings, even the virus beat John's usual 100% record!

Councillor John Holmes and Councillor Susanne Long

04 May 2021

Schedule 1 - Performance

The following KPIs illustrates the latest performance.

METRIC	19/20 Outturn	20/21 TARGET * target revised at May Board	31 MAR
Void rent loss	0.81% (£120k)	1.5%* (FP assumption)	1.26%
	<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Void rent loss is counted from the point when a property is let, void loss £188.6k, 1.26%. When including expected void loss of properties not yet let then performance is c1.52% (£227k) which is forecast for end of year.</i> • <i>HouseMark have reported a forecast of 1.35% for the sector by the end of March.</i> 		
Rent collection	100.59%	97%* (100% before CV-19)	100.33%
	<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Income Team's performance has exceeded expectation during this difficult year, and we are delighted that they not only exceeded the revised Covid target but exceeded their original target and achieved a rent collection rate of over 100% for the year.</i> • <i>This is a key risk for SLH and since the start of the pandemic we have been monitoring the rent collection and arrears on a weekly basis. We intend to continue this practice going forward.</i> 		
Rent arrears	2.5%	3.5%* (1.9% before CV-19)	2.45%
	<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HouseMark are forecasting 35% increases in rent arrears across the sector since March 2020.</i> • <i>From the first lockdown we haven't been able to take court action (except in certain circumstances i.e. ASB). This ban was lifted mid-September but came back into force in December. The winter truce which is preventing most evictions was due to expire on 21.02.21, but the government have just announced a further extension to this. This means we do not have the ultimate sanction - where needed. That said in recent years we've only evicted on average 5 tenants per year for non-payment of rent.</i> 		
New supply & acquisitions	18 (9 new supply)	35* (47 before CV-19)	37 (all new supply)
	<p><i>Comments:</i></p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 Ulverston Town Hall, 4 at Forge Weir View Halton, 3 at Winfield Gardens Allithwaite, 2 at Boarbank Lane Allithwaite, 5 at Parkside Road, Kendal and 6 at Oakfield Park, Kirkby Lonsdale. 		
Repair completion times	93%	75%* (92% before CV-19)	84%
	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall performance year to date is slightly better than anticipated though has reduced from 86% to 84% due to the number of jobs completed that had been held due to the current lock down. 199 non-essential repairs in backlog, target to clear by end of May. The number of jobs held due to covid continue to reduce as we are now accepting appointments on all internal repairs up to 2 hrs duration. Every tenant who had a job held has been contacted at least once in March to rebook their work in. 199 jobs still require an appointment as tenants have not yet responded to our contact. After 3 attempts, tenants will be written to respond or the repair will be cancelled. 		
Customer engagement (digital reach)	New KPI	500	2,688
	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community facebook group with 571 followers. 2117 actively engaging via Mailchimp surveys – no surveys undertaken in February. These tools didn't exist last year. Website users: 34,800- increase of 8491 from previous year Website Acquisition: Organic search: 20164- increase of 4159 from previous year. Direct search: 11481- increase of 3174 from previous year. Referral: 3189- increase of 60 from previous year. Social media: 1723- increase of 59 from previous year. Other: 352- increase of 352 from previous year. 		

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Janette Jenkinson

Report Ulverston Business District 2020/21

It's been a challenging, difficult but rewarding year for Ulverston BID, throughout the Covid Pandemic the Board has continued, holding regular Zoom meetings with an excellent attendance at all meetings.

The campaign to prepare for the revote began in 2019 by consulting with electorate for their views on our business plan, achievements and aspirations but sadly in March 2020 the planed revote was postponed. At this point the BID did not sit back and do nothing, joining with the Town Council they stepped in to provide "Shop Local" "Stay Safe" and "Keep Your Distance" stickers to make sure that when residents/people visited the town centre they were reminded of the social distancing rules. Through their Web Site Choose Ulverston they have promoted shops and businesses who were closed but still trading, this has helped keeping many traders/business viable during this very difficult time.

The BID works closely with Ulverston Town Council and two of the larger projects they have undertaken during 2020/21 is substantially contributing to CCTV cameras to be fitted around the town and supporting cheaper Car Parking in Buxton Place car park.

The postponed revote was given the go ahead during the latter part of 2020 and in fact took place during October 2020, much to the relief of members of the Board it was a YES VOTE, this was some achievement due to the fact of the pandemic and disaster it has brought to the world.

The BID held their AGM via Zoom on Wednesday 17th March, 2021 and the Board now consists of the following:

Hospitality – Jan Hancock, Charlotte Hagen and Wendy Barry.

Retail – Gavin Knott, Michelle Scrogham, 1 vacant place.

Large Business – Trevor Ronson, Dennis Round, 1 vacant place.

Small Business – Sarah Mammatt, Anita Garnett, Toni Martinez.

Schools – Jan Heffernan, Richard Butler, 1 vacant place.

Charity – Beth Kennedy.

All the above were voted on to the Board.

Justin Wales is our Project Officer and we have two Council Members (who are non-voting members) Cllr. Judith Pickthall (Ulverston Town Council) and Cllr. Janette Jenkinson (South Lakeland District Council).

Our present Chair is Jan Hancock who has indicated she will stand down at our next meeting in April 2021. Jan has been an excellent Chair guiding us through many difficult times with commitment and determination, she will be greatly missed in this role but we are glad to see she is still carrying on as a Board Member.

Our Financial Officer Jacqui McCloy is also stand down due to her retirement from Trittech, we will miss Jacqui who has an excellent understand of finance, the issues they raise and the working with local authorities.

I feel very proud to be SLDC's representative on the BID being involved since its inception in 2016 and seeing how they have adopted a democratic process in which they are not afraid to challenge and questions when they are concerned. They have also managed to spend over half a million pound on projects, good causes which have not only supported traders, businesses but the community as well they work in Partnership with not only the Town Council but many Ulverston Organisations.

Councillor Janette Jenkinson

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Peter McSweeney

SLDC Representation on the Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner's Panel

The Cumbria Police and Crime Panel (PCP) has been established to scrutinise and support the work of the Commissioner and is one of the key checks and balances in relation to monitoring their performance. (The PCP is not there to scrutinise the Chief Constable). The Commissioner will be required to consult with the PCP on his or her plans and budget for policing, as well as the council tax precept and certain key appointments.

Cumbria County Council is the host local authority for the PCP and will provide administrative and other support to the panel and its members.

The panel has a range of powers and responsibilities including:

- To review the draft police and crime plan
- To publicly scrutinise the Commissioner's annual report
- To review and scrutinise decisions and actions by the Commissioner
- To review the Commissioner's proposed precept levels
- To review the Commissioner's Conduct
- To review and confirm the Commissioner's proposed appointments of Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

More information can be found at <http://cumbriapcp.org.uk>

I have represented South Lakeland District Council on the Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner's Panel since May 2017. The panel has a quarterly schedule of meetings. The meetings are usually held at various venues around Cumbria and are open to the public and press. During the year from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, all meetings have been held virtually via Microsoft Teams. Members of the public have been able to join the virtual meetings if they wished to speak, and all meetings have been live streamed across the Internet so that members of the public and press can see and hear proceedings. I have attended four such meetings in the past year.

South Lakeland District Council does not make any financial contribution to the Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner's Panel. All my travel and subsistence expenses are covered by Cumbria County Council.

Councillor Pete McSweeney - Ward member for Arnside & Milnthorpe

31 March 2021

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 –

Councillor Suzie Pye

Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group

Appleby Fair MASCG comprises representatives of Eden District Council, Cumbria County Council, South Lakeland District Council, Cumbria Constabulary, North West Ambulance Service, RSPCA, two Gypsy and Traveller representatives, three councillors, Environment Agency and Highways England.

The underlining principles of the group is to deliver a safe and enjoyable Appleby Horse Fair for local residents, Gypsies and Travellers and visitors. The unique nature of this traditional event means the needs of residents, Gypsies and Travellers and visitors to the Fair must all be respected if the Fair is to be successful.

SLDC's involvement is focused on phases one and three of the fair – the time when people are travelling to and from Appleby, through South Lakeland.

There have been several meetings of MASCG recently in order that an agreement was reached to support the Fair to take place from Thursday 12th August 2021 – subject to any potential changes in Government regulations and recommendations around large events.

Citizen's Advice Bureau Trustee Board

Demand for CAB's service is growing. This last year the team based in South Lakeland have performed exceptionally well in very difficult circumstances.

Key issues and Trends over the last year were:

- Benefits & Tax Credits
- Benefits and Universal Credit
- Employment
- Debt
- Utilities and Communications

I sit as an observer on the Trustee Board, which meets quarterly.

South Cumbria Community Safety Partnership

The CSP is a statutory multi-agency partnership which includes South Lakeland District Council; Barrow Borough Council; Cumbria County Council; South Cumbria Police; Office of the Police Crime Commissioner; Clinical Commissioning Group; Cumbria Fire and Rescue; and Cumbria Probation. It works to prevent and reduce crime, protect the most vulnerable from harm, and make our county even safer for residents.

I was elected Chair of the South Cumbria CSP last year. The revised CSP Plan identifies the following priorities:

- Protecting vulnerable people, and Domestic Abuse

Aims: To help safeguard people against being exploited and abused and support those with mental health problems.

- Anti-social behaviour

Aims: To work with the local focus hubs to reduce anti-social behaviour where it occurs.

- Emerging Community Safety issues

Aims: To work with our community to ensure the CSP has the flexibility to be responsive.

- Ensure the needs of rural communities are mainstreamed within our

partnership working.

Aims: To work with all of our communities.

- Alcohol and Drug abuse/ supply and violent crime

Aims: Raise awareness amongst young people and reduce the number of bad decisions made by improving their decision making.

Gateway Group

The Gateway Group became a registered charity in early 2017 and is comprised of the most active charitable organisations in South Lakeland.

Its key objectives are to provide support and guidance to those smaller organisations or voluntary groups that do not have the resources to enable them to access much needed support and guidance and also a range of online resources.

I am not aware of any meetings over the last year. I await a requested update from the group.

Public Health Alliance

I attend the Cumbria PHA meetings, representing SLDC. Three revised priorities of the PHA which have recently been agreed are:

Tackling inequalities

- Ensuring that health is genuinely built into economic development and regen
- Developing anti-poverty work

Mental and social wellbeing recovery

- Building resources for mental health
- Building community support networks

Tackling obesity

- Weight management
- Building a healthy food system
- Promoting physical activity

Other areas of focus include Health Protection (continuing to respond to C-19 within the Outbreak Engagement Board); Children and Early Years; Healthcare public health; and Ecological public health.

Safer Cumbria

The Safer Cumbria structure includes regular meetings between CSP chairs, the chairs of other Safer Cumbria crime theme task groups (domestic violence, alcohol, reoffending and sexual violence) and an officer from the PCC's staff. This has proved beneficial to CSP chairs and coordinators allowing for an exchange of ideas, and providing opportunities for cross CSP and thematic working.

The Safer Cumbria Partnership has determined the following key priority areas:

- Domestic & Sexual Abuse
- Serious Violence / Violent Crime
- Reducing Re-offending
- Covid 19 Recovery & Stabilisation

Other areas of work include Modern Slavery, Hate Crime, Anti -Social Behaviour, Road Safety, the Criminal Justice System and provisions for Victims and Witnesses.

Councillor Suzie Pye

May 2021

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 –

Councillor Peter Thornton

Rural Services Network

Like many organisations, the COVID restrictions have proved to be both a challenge and a benefit. A challenge in that we have been able to physically meet and our conference has not taken place in the usual format, but a benefit in that we are now all proficient in meeting online, attendance has increased and we are able to react to events by having occasional meeting at little or no cost.

Our main themes have not really changed:-

- Rural housing
- Transport
- Broadband
- Health and social care services in rural areas
- Rural economy

And of course our continual fight for more resources to rural councils.

We are very much a cross party organisation and have contacts within all political party's.

The COVID situation brings many of the above issues into clear focus.

Housing

There is clear evidence of a move towards remote working which has the potential to increase the demand for housing in attractive rural areas such as South Lakeland. Will this change some of our planning assumptions reference homes in the countryside? If the occupants are not travelling in to the town every day then does this make such housing more acceptable?

Broadband

There is an obvious need for full fibre broadband in rural areas. Good broadband affects every one of the other priorities on our list.

Transport

Public transport has faced severe challenges over the past year. We have a representative from the FIRST GROUP on our executive and receive good and up to date information from the point of view of the industry.

Health

We are increasingly involved in challenging the provision of health and social care services in rural areas, especially the very rural areas outside towns. We look forward to the Green Paper on social care.

Rural Economy

In many ways, the COVID situation has benefitted the rural economy compared to other areas. The challenges will come in the next few years as many areas rebalance to take into account

an online world in which the role Market Towns may well see a shift and the difficulties of foreign travel stimulate our tourist economy.

Councillor Peter Thornton

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Ian Wharton and Councillor Vicky Hughes

Lake District National Park

The overwhelming factor the Park has had to deal with is the Pandemic and effects. All meetings post March 2020 were virtual and held on Lifestyle, with the occasional held at Murley Moss under strict Social Distancing rules. The first meeting will be held at Murley Moss next week on 13th May.

Coronavirus and Shutdowns

Shutdown of park led to loss of revenue, which led to restructuring and job cuts from the operational and commercial side. Due to loss of revenue from its Commercial operations, such as Car Parks and Coniston Boating Centre, Brockhole and Tourist Information Centres, it required Government Financial support. As a condition, it had to reduce costs to pay for the support. This led to restructuring and therefore redundancies to its Commercial and Operational arm.

The Safer Lakes Group

Main feature during lockdown was controlling the spread of the virus and checking for lockdown infringements. They started patrols with the Police to deal with these infringements. This involved into the Safer Lakes group which has now regular updates on how busy various parts of the lake district are. We saw a new demographic, people who had never visited the Lake District before and the emphasis is on education then enforcement. This has led to fresh emphasis and a relaunch/rebranding of the Countryside Code especially on Fire and litter,

The group was very effective in dealing with the influx of visitors and won a national award for Park Protection of the Year by the Campaign for National Parks.

Tactical Visitor Management Group and Local Visitor Management Plans

Subsequently, this had led to the Tactical Visitor Management Group and area plans for hotspot areas within the Park. Notably in SLDC, the East Side of Coniston, Tilberthwaite and Hodge Close, Bowness, Grasmere and around Claife. These plans were drawn up involving the local parish councils. The group is very proactive and has proved to be very popular with local businesses and residents as it is dealing with problems as they are occur.

Park Strategy and Vision Group

Currently, the Strategy and Vision group is working with the LDNPP to draw up a partnership plan for the next 5 years. The main areas of focus are . Vibrant Communities and Prosperous Economy. Sustainable Transport and Travel

Future of Farming and forestry and nature recovery and climate change – net zero. A Lake District for everyone. .. Heritage Horizons.

Rights Of Way

The Rights of Way Committee set up a lakes user group to deal with conflict issues on Green roads, it has just had its first meeting.

Development Control

Development Control has been business as usual excluding site visits, which is to be expected given the climate that we have found ourselves in – all meetings were initially virtual, until recently when a more hybrid approach has been taken.

Councillor Ian Wharton and Councillor Vicky Hughes

04 May 2021

Outside Bodies Annual Report 2020/21 – Councillor Ian Wharton

Windermere Ferry Advisory Group

The Windermere Ferry Advisory Group was reformed in 2019 and first met on 16th July. It meets twice per year, the first meeting to feed into budget process in June/July and the other to be 6 months later to update.

It is an advisory group that engages with issues around the Ferry, prioritises them and refers them to Local Committees, Officers, Cabinet etc. as appropriate and the group is supported by them.

There are 4 objectives:

- To understand the condition of the vessel and the performance of the service
- To be clear about the customer promise and to measure against that
- To have an understanding of the general business activity & how the service will develop
- To feed into the County Council's budget process and timescales

The Membership

Consists of 6 CCC Elected Members (politically proportionate), 1 SLDC member from the Lake Administration Committee, 2 x Parish Council representatives; one from Windermere and one shared between Hawkshead and Claife Parish Councils. A substitute member would be permitted from the Parish Councils. The Chair is Mr Jim Bland

Briefing

At the first meeting in 2019 they agreed the Terms of Reference and Objectives and a briefing was given on recent changes to the Windermere Ferry and to advise the Group of potential for improvements relating to marketing, communications and information provision.

In 2019, the implementation of onboard ticket purchasing from staff using hand held ticket machines which can take payments by cash or card has seen a much more efficient service with improved record keeping capabilities delivering a quicker turnaround for customers. The non-contactless payment system proved very effective since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic.

New staff were also recruited and given customer service and care training and Customer communications were improved through the use of social media posts (e.g. Twitter) and the installation of an on-board PA system.

Improvements to the vessel included a full re-paint, new graphics, rust treatment and the installation of an onboard PA system. Improving customer communications. End of shift inspections were introduced, with overnight or Sunday morning repairs and maintenance made when necessary. A detailed operations manual and a 3 year maintenance schedule had were being developed. A system of logging breakdowns and stock control system were introduced.

In 2020, ticket prices were agreed and set to remain the same as the previous year.

Coronavirus and Temporary closure of and reduced services to Windermere Ferry

Windermere Car Ferry services were suspended from Wednesday 25 March. This was due to a shortage of staff who operate The Mallard. It remained closed until 15th June when lockdown restrictions eased and continued operating with a limited schedule and shutdowns for cleansing. Due to space restrictions and loading of the Ferry, the schedule was not as punctual as normal. Hours were reduced for a week in January 2021 as one of the crew tested positive. As a result of the pandemic, turnover was down by about 46%.

Proposals for a Replacement Ferry

1. The Windermere Ferry (Mallard) is reaching the end of its operational life, with an increasing number of maintenance and repair incidents that require time out of service or time out of the water and at a significant cost to the authority both in terms of capital costs and lost revenue. This also contributes to a lack of reliability, reduced passenger confidence, impaired response times for emergency vehicles and causes considerable disruption for residents. An initial business case presenting options for its replacement has been prepared and work will continue on developing these options with a preferred option for replacement.
2. A replacement of the ageing vessel will ensure service continuity for the community, it would provide a more modern and environmentally friendly mode of transport and would support the local economy providing a reliable service for both local residents and tourists. A Financial Business Case is being prepared for formal approval through our procurement processes, as part of this proposal the Council intends to appoint a technical expert to provide support throughout the whole process. There will be active Stakeholder engagement with both the Community and Businesses in the region.

Councillor Ian Wharton

03 May 2021