CARLISLE PARISH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of a meeting between representatives of Parish Councils and the Executive of the Carlisle City Council held on Thursday 28th November 2002 at the Village Hall, Newtown, Irthington.

This was also the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Association on 28th November 1977 at the same venue.

1.Present

The Chairman, Cllr J Holland, Cllr A Toole, Mayor of Carlisle and all those signatories to the attendance register attached to these minutes.

2.Welcome

The Chairman, Cllr J Holland welcomed everyone to this special meeting, arranged in two parts, the second being to celebrate the 25th anniversary or the Association. She especially welcomed all those present who had been at the inaugural meeting on 28th November 1977. A copy of the minutes of that meeting were available to everyone.

Part 1. Business meeting

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs K Braithwaite, Voluntary Action Cumbria, Mr L Victory, Cumbria County Council, Cllr H Bradley, Carlisle City Council, Mr P Stybelski, Carlisle City Council, Cllr N Holmes, Wetheral PC, Cllr C Ridley, Brampton PC, Mr M Gardener, Burtholme PC, Cllr P Robinson, Carlatton and Cumrew PC, Mr B Telfer, Mr K Bell, Rockcliffe PC, Cllr F Heaton, Hethersgill PC and the Chairman and Clerk, Waterhead PC.

4. Minutes of the last joint meeting held on Monday 27th May 2002 were agreed.

5.Matter Arising therefrom

Health Group

Cllr R Bloxham, City Council, reported that early in the new year the LSP and Primary Health Care Trusts were completely reorganising the Local Health Group. Parish Council representatives would be included in the new membership.

6.City Council Support for Parishes

Mr D Beaty, Economic Development Manager said that The recruitment of a replacement for Mrs Pat Jefferson was proceeding well and he expected an announcement soon. He also confirmed that the City Council was able to make available an office in the Civic Centre for the purpose of bringing together organisations serving the Parishes. These included the City Council, VAC, Enterprise in the Community and The Parish Councils Association. This initiative was welcomed.

7.Footpaths

Mr M Battersby, Director of Environment and Development, in response to previous request for clarification, circulated a briefing on Rural Highway responsibilities.

8.Organisational review

Mr D Thomas, City Treasurer, said that Leisure Services will shortly become a 'not for profit' Trust. The City Council was also meeting soon to finalise the Housing stock transfer to the newly formed Carlisle Housing Association. Approximately 35% of City Council staff would be leaving direct employment. The impact was to cause a review of the organisation which would now be managed through 12 Business Units. Details of new directors and contact points for the Parishes would be published soon. Mr Thomas said that he and Mr Euan Cartwright, Director of Leisure and Community Development would be retiring in the new year.

In answer to a question from Cllr B Earp (Wetheral PC) in regard to the future management of Tullie House, Mr Thomas confirmed that the City Council was looking at the creation of a 'not for profit ' Trust.

9. Comprehensive Performance Assessments

Ms Karen Hook, Best Value Officer, reported that the City Council was to be the subject of a new external inspection regime, a comprehensive performance assessment similar to Ofsted inspections in Schools. There would a team approach by inspectors who would visit Carlisle in early spring 2003. Representatives of parish councils would be consulted especially on council services and liaison arrangements

10.Date of next meeting

The date of the next joint meeting will be held on Monday 9th June 2003. The City Council will be the hosts.

Part 2. 25th Anniversary celebration.

Clir A Toole, Mayor of Carlisle congratulated the Association on its 25th Anniversary. He acknowledged that parish council service was often a first step in local government politics. He spoke of the special, almost unique, relationship that existed between the City Council and the Parishes and said that he was proud of what had been achieved. Clir Toole wished the Association well for the future.

Mr Melvyn Redgers, the first chairman of the Association, recalled the inaugural meeting in 1977. Despite being a foggy night there had been a good attendance. A district committee had been in place following a reorganisation of local government but relationships at joint meetings between the committee and the Borough Council were not good. It was therefore decided to focus the agenda on the bigger issues and reduce the number of representatives to make for better meetings. This had worked well.

Mr Redgers talked of the role of parish councils and spoke of view at the time that the urban areas of the city might have benefited more by having their own parish council.

The present City Council grant system was founded on a grievance by the parishes that double rating operated without good return. This had led to talks between the City Council and the Association, resulting in the concurrent grant system of today.

In regard to planning applications Mr Redgers said that this had moved from a state of 'no right to consultation' to every parish council being given plans and fully consulted. There had been a district wide need for training of Clerks and Councillors to ensure informed consultation.

Radio Carlisle, had for about 10 years, provided a twice weekly magazine programme to keep people up to date with parish and village affairs. Many of those attending tonight had contributed to a very enjoyable and informative period.

Mr Redgers paid tribute to the clerks who were often underpaid and under appreciated. He said that parish councils represented very good value for money when one considered their ability to encourage voluntary involvement and let work to local contractors at less cost than the City Council.

Finally Mr Redgers thanked the officers of the City Council for the advice and technical support. He looked to along relationship with the Association – one which was the best in the County and the envy of many other parts of the Country.

The Chairman, Cllr J Holland, in thanking the Mayor and Mr Redgers, looked at some of the achievements of the Parish /City Council relationship.

Village Hall surveys leading to wide improvement of facility and use, Housing surveys in respect of low cost housing, the summer play scheme, financing the cost of the 4 yearly elections — unique in the County and finally the recent agreement to provide a full time rural support post and the creation of a multi agency office, including the Association, at the Civic Centre to support parishes. She said that the Cumbria Association had recently agreed to adopt the Carlisle model for the rest of the County

Cllr Holland thanked Mr Gordon Nicholson and Ms Lyn Wild for their work in regard to Village Halls, Peter Oliver and Mike Gardiner for IT support. She paid a special tribute to Cllr Jane Johnson, Mrs Pat Jefferson and Cllr and Mrs Rutherford for their hard work in organising this celebration.

The formal part of the evening was concluded with a presentation, on behalf of the Executive Committee by Mr Redgers to Mr Pat Jefferson in recognition of her tremendous help and support to the Association since its inauguration.

Finally Cllr Jane Johnson cut the celebration 'birthday' cake and all present enjoyed an informal buffet.

CARLISLE PARISH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

MEETINGS ATTENDANCE REGISTER

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Jane Johnston	Carbole Parsh Connal Assoc		
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Ian Portey	St. Curberts Without		
BRIAN Sudd	Chairman - To		
DAVID TOWNSON	L. Charlena		
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WILLIAM CIRAHAM	HATTON PARISH POUNCIL		
Mike Gardner	Burildae Paint Cail		
KEITH MARGAN	CALC		
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