The annual Parish Meeting of Walton was held on Monday 11th March 2013 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

**Present**: John Evans, Jonathan Fowler, Alan T Armstrong, Robert Ridley, Tom Brocklebank, Ian Bullough, Fiona Evans, Ivan Whetton, Fraser Winter, Tom Winter and Brian Hogg.

**In Attendance:** County Councillor Lawrence Fisher, City Councillor Syd Bowman

**Apologies**: Gordon Kyle, Simon Wood and Alan Armstrong.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that this was not a Parish Council meeting but instead a meeting of electors where any issues could be discussed.

1. **Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting 12 March 2012**

Minutes of the Meeting were signed as a true and accurate record.

1. **Chairman’s Annual Report 2012/13**

The Chair gave the following report:

“At the annual meeting last year and during correspondence throughout the year the public asked the Parish Council to be more available to the public. To try to do this the Parish Council now have a surgery before every parish council meeting and have a Clerk’s surgery every second month.

In addition to this the Parish Council take cognisance of public opinion and try to work for the good of and following the will of the parishioners. An example of this is the request from the parishioners to actively look at bringing a pub back to Walton. We held an Open meeting to understand what the public wanted, placed an objection to the proposed plans for the building formerly known as the Centurion and continue to work with and liaise with the City Council Planning Department in this regard.

To try to provide more information to the parishioners we have installed a new noticeboard at Nickies Hill. We continue to prepare and distribute a newsletter 4 times a year and keep the website up to date with information.

The Parish Council have supported the development of the Reading Room which we believe will improve the facilities for the Parish. We also support the Community Led Plan which is due to be published in the next few months. This has asked for the views and opinions of parishioners and has developed a list of actions for taking forward. The Parish Council will consider the output from this plan and are likely to take on the high priority actions.

Looking forward to next year the Parish Council have several ongoing projects, namely agreeing to take on the land in Walton Village currently registered to the County Council, finalisation of the tree management plan and taking on high priority actions from the Community Led Plan. In addition we will work to understand and fully develop opportunities and benefits to the Parish from the Localism Bill.

With respect to finances, the Parish Council were working to a loss making budget for this year and plan to for next year. This is to keep the precept down and use the reserves we have while maintaining the services we offer.

Finally it is worth mentioning that the councillors are all volunteers and the work we do is in our own time. I would like to thank the councillors for their hard work and support and extend that to the City and County Councillors, Syd and Lawrence for their continued advice and support – it is much appreciated. While we do try to provide a service to the parish we are aware that there are some areas where people consider we are deficient and could improve. Please let us know if or how we can improve the work we do and while I cannot offer any guarantees of improvement I can promise we will do our best for the parish”.

1. **Discussion of Matters Raised by Electors of the Parish**

**Tea Room**

Mr Ridley asked whether the reading room would be used as a tea room. The Chair explained that this was a Village Hall Management Committee issue and would be referred to them, although the plan had always been to move the tea room out of the village hall as soon as possible after the refurbishment was complete. Mr Ridley asked whether there was a covenant on the reading room (similar to the Village Hall) to restrict usage. The Chair was to refer this question to the Village Hall Management Committee.

Mr Ridley complained that parking around the reading room was a problem and asked that “No Parking” signs be placed on both sides of the Green. It was queried how this would affect Mr Ridley himself as he is known to park on the Green frequently. Mr Ridley stated that he had been given parking rights by the Parish Council under the Chairmanship of Mr B Hogg – this was queried as being accurate and is to be investigated.

Mr Ridley asked that net curtains or a flower arrangement be placed on the road side windows of the Reading Room to ensure the privacy of his property. This is to be referred to the Village Hall Management Committee for consideration.

Mr Ridley asked whether business rates were being incurred by the tea room using the village hall and whether EU competition law had been considered in relation to the Kingbank café. It was queried as to the relevance of this question as the Kingbank café is not yet built and also the café will only provide breakfast and evening meals for overnight customers however both questions were to be referred to the Village Hall Management Committee for their consideration.

The Chair did remind Mr Ridley that there was a current vacancy for a booking secretary on the Village Hall Management Committee. Mr Ridley confirmed he was happy to accept this position.

Mr Ridley finally asked whether parishioners will retain priority on Reading Room bookings and the Chair clarified that the room is a community building. Mr Evans also confirmed he had written to Mrs Ridley and offered a meeting to discuss his concerns privately but his email had not been responded to.

The Clerk also clarified that although the Parish Council are the Custodian Trustees of the Village Hall buildings this does not give them any powers over management and the day to day running or business decisions. These rest entirely upon the Village Hall Management Committee although a positive working relationship was maintained and a Councillor appointed as representative on their Committee to ensure the whole parish needs were considered in decisions.

*Mr B Hogg arrived.*

Mr F Winter asked whether the tea room providers were paying twelve months rent per year. The Chair again stated this was a matter for the Village Hall Management Committee but he would confirm that a new rental agreement was being drawn up for the up-coming season which allowed a reduced rent during the winter.

Bus Travel

Mr Whetton requested that the Parish Council feedback information to the bus providers to request a more frequent service to Brampton as opposed to Carlisle. The Chair confirmed the Parish Council were looking at this matter as part of the Community Led Plan actions.

Electoral Boundaries

Councillor Fisher informed parishioners that Walton would no longer fall in a Brampton district but instead in a new Houghton and Irthington division. Thanks were expressed to Councillor Fisher as this would be his last meeting due to the change.

The meeting closed at 19.23.