

Chairman's Annual Report to Kirk Deighton Parish Council

18th May 2021

1. Covid - 19

In my chairman's report last year, the covid-19 lockdown had just started and we were experiencing the unprecedented situation of living with a pandemic. Little did we know that it would take more than twelve months till we could hopefully return to the normal life that we used to know.

Nearly all the parish council meetings have been held virtually and many village activities were cancelled.

One noticeable exception was in May when villagers gathered, observing social distancing, to wish Frances Dick, a resident, a happy 100th birthday. The celebrations being covered by the local television news crew.

The parish council have coordinated help for any vulnerable residents throughout the Covid pandemic. But we thank the many neighbours that have provided help with shopping and prescription collection outside of the council system.

2. The Parish Council's financial position to 31 March 2021

The cost of running the Parish to 31 March 2021 was £5925 which includes the cost of grass cutting. This is covered by a Precept claimed from Harrogate Borough Council paid in April and September each year.

The income for the year was £6145 (Precept £5984, NYCC grass cutting contribution £161)

The precept for 2021/22 will be £5844.

The balance in the bank at 31 March 2021 was £9703 although there were some outstanding invoices to settle from that sum which have now been paid.

3. Councillors

During this year we co-opted Debbie Marriot on to the parish council. We all look forward to welcoming Debbie in person as since her co-option we have only been able to hold virtual meetings.

Sadly, David Scolah, who served on the parish council for many years and as chairman until 2016, died in June. A book of condolence was opened at the village hall and signed by many residents. Due to covid restrictions it was not possible to attend his funeral, but villagers turned out on mass to pay their respects as his coffin was conveyed slowly through the village. The parish council will be installing a bench in his memory opposite the cricket ground in the village.

4. Planning and Development

The planning and development in the village has been restricted due to the covid situation.

There are no major developments directly within the parish but approved major housing developments in both Wetherby and Kirk Hammerton in the coming years will have a detrimental affect on traffic in the district.

We are grateful for the help that BWP (Better Wetherby Partnership) has given the parish council and their determination to stop more housing in the area putting local services under severe pressure.

5. Safer Neighbourhood and Traffic

An overdue speed survey was eventually carried out in October 2020 on Main Street. The results concluded that the village did not have a problem. As the council were not consulted on the location of the survey, we have commissioned additional surveys to take place when all the Covid restrictions have been lifted and traffic levels return to normal.

We have reserved funds to pay for VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) but we will still have to abide by the many constraints applied to their use.

6. Grass Cutting and Village Appearance

We are grateful that the Covid restrictions did not prevent Pullans Landscape and Maintenance from cutting the grass in the village. Residents were permitted to take daily exercise within the village, and we are grateful that many used the opportunity to litter pick keeping the village looking tidy.

Neil Copley of Pullans kindly donated an exceptionally large Christmas Tree and installed a permanent socket to be used every year. The parish council purchased new lights and had an electrical supply connected. In a year when there were few bright occasions the tree was a welcome site on Main Street, and it is hoped that in normal times the turning on of the Christmas lights will become an annual celebration.

The parish council was happy to contribute to the repair of the church clock. However, thanks to Cllr David Halpin appeal to residents all the necessary funds were raised saving both the parish council and the church having to contribute. Happily, the hour chimes can once again be heard across the village.

7. Newsletter

Councillor David Halpin undertook to edit and publish a Kirk Deighton newsletter. There have been two editions, the latter being printed professionally.

8. Aims and Objectives

To continue to lobby NYCC to attend to the poor condition of the roads in the village. With the massive increase in dog ownership and residents walking them locally, due to lockdown, to get NYCC and HBC to improve some of the pathways and empty the waste bins more efficiently.

David Richardson
Chair Kirk Deighton Parish Council
May 2021