

# **PARWICH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Good evening and welcome to the Parwich Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2018/19. 2019 marks the end of the Parish Councils 4 years in office. As such, all previous members were required to re-stand for election should they wish to do so. There was a total of 6 Applicants for the 7 vacancies and therefore all were automatically elected without contest leaving 1 vacancy which can be filled by co-option should we choose to so.

There are also a number of Councillors who have either resigned or chosen not to re-stand for election this term.

I would like to take this opportunity to give thanks to Tracy Marshall for her efforts during the previous 4-year term. Thankfully in the latest elections there was a sufficient number of applications to ensure that the new council is quorate, but this time 4 years ago the village was in danger of losing its Parish Council. Had it not been for Tracy stepping in as a Councillor there would not have been sufficient numbers to make the Council quorate.

Thanks also go out to John Barnett, who retired from the Council in November 2018. John's accounting skills, acerbic wit and tendency to speak his mind will be missed by the Council.

I would also like to thank Stuart Chambers for his short but sweet tenure with the Parish Council. I understand that Stuart has expressed interest in the vacant councillors' position.

Thankyou to the 5 previous Councillors for re-standing and a special welcome to our newest Councillor, Fiona Hadfield. For as long as I have been on the Council, Fiona has taken an interest in the Council's operations, frequently attending meetings to observe the goings on and offering assistance on the volunteer days. Fiona's knowledge of local matters and issues will be invaluable to the Council.

I will now give a brief outline of some of the things the Council has been involved with over the previous 12 months.

### **PUMP HILL**

Works to Pump Hill have progressed steadily during the past 12 months. A survey of the existing area was carried out which identified a number of areas of undergrowth and trees to be thinned out or trimmed back. This work was carried out during the village clean up and maintenance day. Recently, works have begun on the 2 new access points to the Pump Hill area. It is hoped that these new entrances will encourage residents and guests alike to visit this under-utilised area. There are also plans to form a "Friends of Pump Hill", which the Council hopes will encourage residents to get involved in a local project to the benefit of the village as a whole. Special thanks go to Lynette Coyne for all her hard work involved in the preparation of surveys and outline design drawings as well as overseeing the execution of the work.

### **SALE OF LAND AT MEMORIAL HALL**

The Parish Council was approached by a Local Resident regarding the sale of a small area of ground forming part of the Memorial Hall. The Council has taken the decision that, subject to contract, they would agree to sell the land at a fair market price obtained by a local Estate Agent.

### **NEW PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

At our last AGM I advised that the Council had secured funding for a new item of play equipment. I am pleased to announce, and as I am sure you will all be aware, that a new Climbing Frame was procured and installed on the Children's Play Area in September 2018 providing further play opportunities to both local and visiting children alike whilst in keeping with the aesthetics of the village. After much deliberation and negotiation, the price of the climbing frame was agreed at circa £12.5k. After taking into account the funding received from Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund (via the Derbyshire Environmental Trust) and the Derbyshire Dales Local Project Fund the actual cost to the PPC was less than 25% of the amount paid which I believe represents excellent value to the village.

### **PARWICH MOOR SOUTH TENNANCY**

The Parish Council was advised in July 2018 that the current tenant of Parwich Moor South (an area of approximately 28 acres) wished to surrender his tenancy of the land. The Council took the decision to appoint Bagshaws to act as Agent to the Council in order to obtain tenders from interested parties for a 10-year Farm Business Tenancy Agreement. From the numerous tenders received, the Council narrowed the tenders down to a shortlist of 4, from which the successful tender was selected. The decision was taken based on numerous criteria such as the proposed usage, upkeep and maintenance of the land, stewardship of the existing ecological and historical features as well as the rental value offered. The new tenancy has ensured an increase in rental monies to the Council, whilst at the same time ensuring a valuable asset is available for the use of a local resident.

### **MOWING**

The mowing tender represents a significant proportion of the precept received by the Council. We are now into the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3 year for the mowing of the village green spaces. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Tom Moorcroft for his efforts. I have received numerous comments from local residents commending the wonderful job done by Tom. I personally do not recall the village open spaces ever looking better.

### **OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE**

The Council has been in discussions with DDC regarding the locations and effectiveness of road signage throughout the village as well as the introduction of any new signs in order to safeguard local residents and in particular make the village a safer place for Children.

The Council organised 2 village clean up days on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018, both of which were well attended and ensured that much warranted TLC was given to various areas of the village. As I have stated in previous reports, these clean up days enable residents to help keep the village beautiful and an enviable place to be. The days are always enjoyable and residents are free to do as much (or as little) as they please, whilst at the same time saving the Parish money that can then be allocated to other schemes. With this in mind the PPC is holding another clean up day on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

### **FINANCE**

The decision was taken during the last budget review to increase the precept from the 2017/2018 level of £8,755.00 to a new value of £9,255.00 (an increase of £500). This constitutes only the 2<sup>nd</sup> increase in the previous councils 4-year term of office, totaling a cumulative increase of £755.00. The decision to increase the precept was taken in order to permit the periodic spending on larger one-off items (i.e. the new play equipment), to provide sufficient reserve to maintain the village to the desired standard in the future should costs increase (i.e. the mowing tender), to meet any unexpected expenses should they arise and an attempt to avoid any large precept increases in the future. Despite the increase I believe that the precept charge still offers excellent value for money. The Council continues to collect rental monies from the Parish owned agricultural land and as stated earlier we have now secured increased rental income resulting from the creation of the new tenancy agreement for Parwich Moor South

### **CONCLUSION**

Finally, on behalf of the Council, I would like to offer my thanks to Andrew, our Clerk. Andrew continues to work tirelessly for the Parish working considerably more hours than what he is contracted to and paid for. Securing of funding for the new play equipment is just one example of the value of the work done by Andrew for this Parish.

I believe that the Parish Council is an invaluable asset to the village which allows local residents to have direct involvement in the administration of matters important to the community, and therefore it is important that residents are willing to stand for the local council and give up their time free of charge. It would be to the detriment of the village should the council discontinue and therefore I would also like to thank the current councillors as well as local residents for their valued efforts.