

Report to the Annual Meeting of the Parish by the Chairman of the Parish Council May 2018

Welcome thank you for coming along this evening. I would like to start by thanking all Parish Councillors for their time and effort which is given voluntarily and to the best of their ability and following a spate of resignations last year I believe that in the new administration we now have a great cross section of committed residents making up the PC. There had been public concern about the way that the WPC operated in the past but those issues have been addressed and hopefully going forward we can all look to more harmonious interactions in the future. I would also add that I do not consider it fair for people who never come to any meetings to criticise the efforts made by those volunteers through snide comments on social media. We do encourage residents to come along to meetings and be more involved so that they can see how decisions are made and voice their opinions in an appropriate manner.

Local Plan

After many consultations the Local Plan for York has been submitted to the Government for inspection. It will be subject to scrutiny by the Planning Inspectorate and we await their comments.

Policing

Apart from a recent spate of thefts from the industrial estate there is very little reported crime, although there are occasional bouts of anti-social behaviour including evidence of drug use.

Play Area

The play area is in good condition and is well used. During the year the PC were handed funds from the now defunct FOWP in the order of £4,500 for a hip hop swing. Once a feasibility study has been carried out some equipment may have to be moved to make room for this new apparatus and until such time the funds will be ring fenced.

Bus Services

Unfortunately we do not now have a Sunday service and were in danger of losing the Service 18 but due to the efforts of CYC, the Ward Councillor, Wheldrake Parish Council and other parish councils along the route the Service 18 has been saved for three months in order that a permanent solution may be found. It goes without saying that a lot of people have put in a great deal of effort to preserve this service so please 'use it or lose it'. It is a vital service for some villagers so please whenever possible do use the bus.

Precept

At the budget meeting in December the Parish Council agreed to hold the precept at its current level. This is in order that its financial position could be put into suggested 'good practice' which is a balance of between 50 and 150% of the precept. This will put the PC on a better financial footing particularly with regards to repairs and maintenance of PC assets going forward.

Lengthsman

The Lengthsman's contract was awarded to Toby Johnson by the previous administration and there have unfortunately been considerable teething problems with this contract. The work undertaken has been adequate and, hopefully, now that there has been a season's experience these problems will be ironed out.

Defibrillator

We now have two defibrillators in the village, one at the village hall and one on the pub. It might be prudent for us to consider having one located at the industrial estate, and perhaps Cllr Myers might consider having it located on his premises to provide the modest power supply.

The Parish Council on behalf of itself and all residents would like to record thanks to Paul Hodgson who retired this year from the Parish Council after having been a member for 30 years. His contribution to the village has been gratefully received and his knowledge over the years has been invaluable.

Thanks also, once again, to Dave Dick and his helpers for the festive lights on display over the Christmas period. Thanks also to those who provided the power for the lights.

Finally, I must comment on the concerns that residents have over the apparent friction that exists with several organisations within the village. There has been an element of adjustment in the fact that the PC is endeavouring to operate within the bounds of Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct for Councillors which has not always been the case in the past. I am sure that with a willingness on all sides for improving the lives of our residents and by providing excellent facilities we can all share in a sense of pride and care in our community,