

Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council Chairman's Annual Review and Annual Return 2010-2011

Introduction

2010-2011 was the fourth year of the Council and my fourth year as Chairman; I would like to thank my fellow members for their commitment help and support during the last year. All members deserve a vote of thanks for the work and effort they have put in to their council responsibilities this year, as does our Clerk whose wealth of experience has been a great help during the year.

As you are aware May 5th 2011 was the time for the election of the Parish Council. Two members of the previous Parish Council decided for personal reason not to stand for re-election. Ernest Parsons had been a member of the Council since 2003 and his commitment, tenacity and contribution to the Parish will be sorely missed. Vikki Harper joined the Council in 2007 and here level headed approach and contribution to the production of Whatton Village News will be hard to replace.

There were only six candidates for the seven available seats and in consequence the election was uncontested and the following were elected:

Ray Dawson, Barbara Harris, Carole Key, Graham Linney, Gregg Redford and Malcolm Seagrave.

All with the exception of Councillor Linney were members of the previous Council.

The Parish Council is required to co-opt a member to fill the vacancy by the 22nd June 2011; thereafter the Principal Authority (in our case Rushcliffe Borough Council) may do what it thinks fit to fill the vacancy. We believe it is important that the new Council 'hits the ground running' with a full membership and we have been fortunate in having an excellent willing volunteer for the position. At the meeting which took place immediately before this meeting Jan Ayres was co-opted onto the Council. Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council therefore now has its full complement of councillors;

Cllr Jan Ayres,
Cllr Ray Dawson,
Cllr Barbara Harris,
Cllr Carole Key,
Cllr Graham Linney,
Cllr Gregg Redford and
Cllr Malcolm Seagrave.

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Communications and Community Engagement

This council recognises the importance of communication, public involvement and transparency in the work of your parish council:

- An open session included at every meeting where residents are able voice their concerns or suggestions on issues affecting the Parish.
- A Newsletter (Whatton Village News) to keep residents informed about the work of the Parish Council and issues affecting the Parish
- The usage of the Parish Council Web Site has increased over the year and residents are encouraged to visit the for up-to-date information on issues affecting the Parish

Precept and Budget

Our total income is derived from the precept.

In setting the precept for 2011/2012 we had to consider a number of factors:

- Advice from the District Auditor as to the level of our General Reserve – this should be equal to our annual revenue expenditure which is currently in the region of £8,500. The need for a
- Capital Reserve – we started two years ago to build a Capital Projects Reserve. We have continued to build the reserve further this year by allocating £500.
- The need to maintain and improve services to our residents.
- The current financial situation

The Budget for 2011/2012 amounts to £10,885 (2010/2012 Budget: £11,045; 2009/2010 Budget: £10,855). The precept for 2011/2012 was therefore set at £10,885.

Planning

The local planning authority is only obliged to 'take note' of our comments or objections. We take planning applications very seriously and encourage residents to attend our meetings when planning applications are discussed. Where we object to planning applications we have do so purely on planning issues. We continued to monitor Planning Applications in the parish.

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Playing Field

The Parish Council jointly owns the Playing Field with Aslockton Parish Council and in May 2006 signed a deed of dedication with the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust) effectively creating a trust and ensuring that the Playing Field remained a recreational facility in perpetuity. Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council and Aslockton Parish Council is the sole trustee and day to day management of the facility is devolved to the Whatton and Aslockton Playing Field Committee, to which the Parish Council has a right to appoint two members.

In April 2010 the Whatton and Aslockton Playing Field Trust was registered with the Charity Commission and a joint Sub-Committee of Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council and Aslockton Parish Council was established to undertake the role of Trustee on behalf of both Parish Councils. The sub-Committee consists of Six Members, three appointed from each of the Parish Councils.

The management structure introduced in 2006 has reduced the level of the Parish Council contribution from a high of £1,500 to £900 in the 2011-2012 year.

Grass Cutting

Technically we are only responsible for the Green in front of Ivy Row, the verges are the responsibility of the Highways Authority and the amenity spaces (the areas at the end of Azimnghur Road and Green Walk) are the responsibility of Rushcliffe Borough.

A programme was set up in 2006/07 and has been continued:

- The Green in front of Ivy Row;
- The Green by Green Walk;
- Verges on Beverley's Avenue, Cottage Avenue and Green Walk;
- The Green are at the Junction of Dark Lane and Grantham Road;
- The verges at the Junction of Main Street and Grantham Road;
- The verges on the East side of Dark Lane;
- The verges along Grantham Road to Orston Lane; and
- The verges around the Green in front of Ivy Row.

Rushcliffe Borough Council has informed us that they will cut the Green on Green Walk and the land at the end of Azimnghur Road twelve times a year and we continue to monitor those areas.

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Power of Well-Being

The Parish Council was the second to adopt the Power of Well Being in the County. In order for the new council to be able to adopt the power, Cllr Linney will be required to attend a training course in its use, before the new council can adopt the power.

Challenges for the Future

The proposed Localism Bill may provide additional powers to Parish Councils and to local residents, especially in the planning area. We will continue to monitor the progress of the Bill and establish the requirements that will be needed to be met for the Parish Council to be able to adopt any new powers conferred by the Bill.

The Budget pressures on the Principle authorities (Rushcliffe Borough and Nottinghamshire County Councils) and the Localism Bill may provide opportunities for the Parish Council to deliver additional services. We will continue to keep all areas under review.

GR Redford

Chairman – Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council

May 2011.

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Budget 2011-2012

	Total	Revenue Costs	Reserves and Accruals	<i>Budget 2010- 2011</i>
Audit Fee	300.00	300.00		<i>350.00</i>
Salaries	3,240.00	3,240.00		<i>3,200.00</i>
Postage/Telephone	110.00	110.00		<i>110.00</i>
Printing	90.00	90.00		<i>90.00</i>
Subscriptions	220.00	220.00		<i>220.00</i>
Meeting Expenses	200.00	200.00		<i>180.00</i>
Insurance	460.00	460.00		<i>440.00</i>
Chairmans Fund	25.00	25.00		<i>25.00</i>
Misc Expenses	200.00	200.00		<i>200.00</i>
Newsletter/Website	250.00	250.00		<i>200.00</i>
Grass Cutting Costs	2,800.00	2,800.00		<i>2,500.00</i>
Playing Field Costs	900.00	900.00		<i>1,000.00</i>
Grants and awards	1,000.00	1,000.00		<i>1,000.00</i>
Election Cost Reserve	200.00		200.00	<i>100.00</i>
Playing Field Reserve	0.00		0.00	<i>0.00</i>
Capital Projects Reserve	500.00		500.00	<i>500.00</i>
General Reserve	400.00		400.00	<i>930.00</i>
Total Costs & Reserves	10,895.00	9,795.00	1,100.00	<i>11,045.00</i>
Reduction in General Reserve				<i>-1,000.00</i>
Bank Interest Received	-10.00	-10.00		<i>-10.00</i>
Precept required	10,885.00	9,785.00	1,100.00	<i>10,035.00</i>