

Witton le Wear Parish Council

Annual

Report

May 2019

Parish Council Clerk – Alan Dixon

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Witton le Wear Parish Council

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As you all know the Parish Council is made up of a group of volunteers from the village who work hard to maintain the status quo of our village and improve where we can. A lot of hard work is done outside of our monthly meetings. We don't mind this. It's what we signed up for.

Over the last few years there has been a lot of negative feedback. We hope when you read what we have achieved and what is in progress some positive feedback would be good.

VILLAGE YOUTH CLUB

This was a priority for the P.C. At an A.A.P. meeting a youth funding scheme was made available to villages without this facility. As a board member it is my duty to report to the P.C. anything that is relevant and will improve our Village.

After various meetings with the co-ordinator of the A.A.P, the community centre and Derek Brady the youth leader, it was agreed a Youth Club was essential to our village. Funding was put in place with the help of the above and the P.C. Because the A.A.P is the lead funder it had to be out sourced to Deaf Hill Regeneration Scheme.

During my last conversation with Derek, he said he was delighted with the attendance and the conduct of the youngsters. A big thank you to Lynne Docherty, a long-time supporter of the Youth Club who helps out at every session.

VILLAGE GREEN (Electricity)

This is a capital expenditure project, but one that we will have use of for many years and can be used by all the village groups. The main purpose of having electricity to the village green is to have Christmas lights where possible. After initial consultation with the Street Lighting team from D.C.C. we discovered the cables run under the village green. We have agreed to go forward with this as the expenditure is within our budget. Lighting the trees is proving more difficult than first thought. Because the branches are very old and weak, they would not support lighting. Other options are to light the trunks only or to have a large Christmas Tree lit by the Design team from D.C.C. (who light Crook market place, Lanchester, etc). Our options are also limited because of the gradient of the green. Another meeting is to be held shortly and the outcome will be reported in the Witton Word.

Cllr Cowan secured funding for the Cherry Blossom tree. Planted with the help of the Brownies. We have also secured funding to plant bulbs around our village at the appropriate time.

PARISH PLAN.

A sub-committee has been organised to have our Parish Plan updated using the results of the 2016 questionnaire. We would welcome any help from ex councillors, residents and any interested residents. This is being led by Cllr Phillip Cowan. Details of the next meeting will be in the Witton Word.

FINACIAL MATTERS.

A financial report accompanies this report and any questions will be answered by our Responsible Financial Officer at the A.G.M.

TRAFFIC AND SPEEDING.

We have explored every avenue available to us with regards to speeding. Cllr Cowan has been in discussion with Keith Jameson from Traffic Asset Management. He received a letter from him on 25 April 2019. This is too long and detailed to be included in this report but will be available to be discussed at the A.G.M.

VILLAGE SCHOOL.

Our village school is very well attended and supported by parents and residents alike. Funding was made available by the A.A.P. to help with a Breakfast Club. After school care and a nursery is also available. Many thanks to Mark Stephenson, his staff and the school governors. The Parish Council will continue to support where and when we can.

VILLAGE AMENITIES

With places of worship and village pubs closing on a weekly basis we are very fortunate that as a small village we can support what we have. Despite changing circumstances in everyday life our village amenities continue to thrive. We also have a mobile Post Office, Library and the Link 2 bus is available for residents with travel difficulties. Not to forget our defibrillator in the Red Phone Booth. Mandy Stonehouse, Clarice Smith and the committee of the Community Centre continue with the improvements at the centre which is used and supported by groups and residents for events throughout the year.

The Weardale Railway continues to run with various events held throughout the year. We also have a new sign at the Railway and will utilise this to include a "Please Drive Slowly" or similar sign.

PATHWAYS.

Eileen Kirkby and Lynda Bentley continue to monitor our parish pathways etc. Work is carried out by contractors and funded by D.C.C. Many thanks to you both.

CRIME AND SAFETY.

We continue to have a very low crime rate in our village. Police, Crime and Victim support Commissioner Ron Hogg, in his annual report urges residents to report any suspicious behaviour. A full report can be obtained on D.C.C. Crime website. Interesting reading.

WITTON WORD.

Many thanks to John Wheeler for continuing to collate, edit and oversee the printing of our very popular newsletter. This is a very valuable asset to our village and free to every household. Advertising is essential to keep this self-funding. Details and prices from John. Thanks again John.

PLANNING.

Alan Dixon our Parish Clerk monitors planning on a weekly basis. Anything concerning Witton Le Wear is appraised, decisions made and reply forwarded to the Planning Office. With the Planning laws being more relaxed things aren't as contentious as they used to be. No more paper plan. Everything is now on-line.

VILLAGE FAYRE.

Many thanks to Cllr Mary Henderson who once again is organising our Annual Fayre. A lot of unseen work and time goes into making this a successful event. Any help on the morning of the Fayre would be appreciated. Also, thank you Mary for organising the baskets and planters on the Village Green.

There are still issues where we seem to have exhausted our option.

DOG FOULING.

Bins and bags have been provided but some people still refuse to "pick up". The only option left is if anyone is seen leaving it behind, a photo can be taken as evidence and a call can then be made to the Dog Warden which will result in a fine.

PARKING

We all know parking is a very sensitive issue in our village. All I can say is please try to park in a reasonable manner with respect to our neighbours.

Thanks to all the volunteers who continue to litter pick. It can be a thankless task at times but nonetheless very much appreciated.

Our meetings are held every month. All are welcome. Dates can be found in the Witton Word and at the end of this report.

As a Parish Council we continue to help and support groups within our village.

Thank you all for taking the time to read this, my first report as Chair of Witton le Wear Parish Council. It has been a very interesting year. Sometimes trying, but very interesting. I hope you agree with what we have achieved and what is ongoing. Thank you to all Councillors for their help.

Last but by no means least - Alan Dixon

Alan is our Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. A Parish Council cannot function in the proper manner without a Parish Clerk. Alan's knowledge of everything we need to know is invaluable to us. Alan, we hope you will be with us for many years to come.

Many Thanks.

Olive Wilson.

Chair. Witton le Wear Parish Council.

Dates of forthcoming meetings to be held in the Community Centre, Witton Le Wear at 6:15p.m.

2019

Monday 10th June

Monday 8th July

No meeting in August

Monday 9th September

Monday 14th October

Monday 11th November

No meeting in December

2020

Monday 13th January

Monday 10th February

Monday 9th March

Monday 13th April

Monday 11th May Annual Assembly Meeting

Monday 11th May Annual General Meeting

Monday 11th May Ordinary Meeting