

Chairman's Report for Parish Meeting 2016

Agenda - Item 4:

I would like to report on the activities of the Parish Council.

The Parish is small with about 100 houses and about 170 people of voting age and as such the requirements and facilities of the parish are minimal. The cost of running such a parish is provided by the general rates charged by SKDC, this last year this was £9.27 per parish band 'D' household, the PC prepares a budget to cover our requirements and the funds are requested from SKDC.

With a total of 100 houses contributing to our costs we have no capacity for major projects, and we feel that most parishioners who live in our community do not expect wasteful spending. So, our horizons are limited.

Because we had an election of parish councillors in 2015 we were faced with a bill for that election of £564.93 which had not been budgeted for in 2014, this surprise cost has therefore effected what we have been able to do.

For many years David Watson was both a parish councillor and clerk to the parish council a task which he did cheerfully without any payment of his costs. After moving out of the parish David thought someone else should take on the role and to her credit Councillor Jenny Crow stepped forward and has taken to the role of Clerk and Parish Councillor and again, like David, she does this without charging the parish for her costs for which we must all thank her.

I would like to add that Parish Councillors (unlike district councillors) do not receive any payments for their PC work or time on parish business. If the parish clerk was not a parish councillor the cost to the parish could be considerable and in a parish of our size the cost of a paid clerk would be a burden on us all.

So, what have we managed to do?

Firstly we have tried to put ourselves (The PC) in line with national guidelines and to this end we have adopted The SKDC Members Code of Conduct and as some of the PC's work is laid down in statute, which we have to follow, we have now adopted our Standing Orders to guide us through the legal and also general requirements of what and how we proceed.

For some time the telephone kiosks have been available for purchase by the parish and the new 2015 PC took the opportunity to purchase these iconic items and use the Irnham kiosk as a book swop location for parishioners whereas it is intended that the Bulby kiosk is used as an information centre.

Our thanks to: Colin Gibson, Ian and Mandy Dawson, Clair and Rowan Day
Kevin and Lawrence Doran

For the work they have done in cleaning, repairing, painting and putting the kiosk in Irnham into service and looking after it.

I have lived in the parish for 31 years and although we have held some nice events in the parish during that time the PC felt that it would be beneficial for parishioners to come together informally and it was decided to organise a 'parish get together' prior to Christmas and we held a sing along at the Griffin Inn on the 18th of December – this was arranged with Chris Overland, our publican, at a modest cost to the parish, and to defer some of the costs we held a raffle for some prizes that were donated by councillors, parishioners and the publican; the donation to the raffle contributed to the cost of the evening.

The resulting singing was accompanied by Martin Fuggle on his key board and our thanks to Martin as his contribution enabled the evening to be a great success with several parishioners meeting for the first time which was part of our intensions.

The PC provided a Christmas tree outside the Griffin Inn, the tree being donated by Councillor Ayres, and power was provided by the Griffin Inn for which we thank them both.

As Parish Councillors we have limited authority and perhaps act as the eyes and ears for the District Council who we ask to carry out work that constantly generates itself and we are forever reporting to the council. Although it may not appear so we have managed to have holes in the roads repaired, hedges cut back so that motorists have better vision, a new 'Z' bend sign installed. We will also have some temporary 30mph signs put up in an attempt to slow some motorists speed. These will appear and disappear from time to time in an attempt to reduce speed in some restricted speed areas. Councillor Amanda Ayres has taken on the role of contacting SKDC on many highway issues and we thank her and Councillor Jenny Crow for these tedious endeavours.

As Mrs Smart of Bulby would have been alone on her 90th Birthday the PC arranged to give her a plant and a cake and Andrew and Jenney Crow spent some time with here which was much appreciated by her.

Mark Green (now Councillor Green) responded to a request to make a 90 degree bend safer for road users between Bulby and Marwood, a job he did willingly without compensation and probably with a finish better than our district roads department. Out thanks to Mark for that.

Following requests from our Bulby residents the PC instigated, and have held, a meeting with "The Deer Initiative" to see what can be done to reduce deer causing damage to hedges, fences, gardens, trees, etc., and for our farmers - their crops. The Deer Initiative have subsequently carried out population surveys. This is ongoing.

Also ongoing is the problem the Parish have with the internet and Councillor Crow has been instrumental in pursuing this – hence our meeting tonight with Stephen Brooks.

Ongoing we have arranged with the Griffin Inn to hold a parish party at the Griffin Inn on the 12th June to mark the Queens 90th Birthday. It will include our own bake-off competition with prizes for a Birthday Cake fit for our Queen. The Griffin was chosen as the venue, not only as a provider of food and drink, but also in case of poor weather. All parishioners and their children are welcome.

Our parish have few amenities – The Church and the Griffin Inn being our main public meeting places. As we feel that for many people the churchyard is a place of refection for their deceased friends and relatives the PC have supported the church with a donation to maintain the churchyard. It is normal for parish councils to do this and many contribute considerably more than we are able to.

We would like to thank Chris Overland for letting the PC have a room at the Griffin for our meetings without cost to the parish.

Chris Overland has also agreed that the parish may plant a Christmas tree outside the Griffin Inn – planting a tree, we hope, will enable us to have a larger tree in time and avoid problems with the wind. A permanent electrical connection was installed last year which we will continue to use.