



Steeton-with-Eastburn Parish Council

STEETON WITH EASTBURN PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMANS ANNUAL REPORT to the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

This is the report on the Council’s work for 2016/17. The last Parish meeting was held on 6th April 2016 There have been 11 full Council meetings this year and also 11 meetings of the HUB Management Committee. There have also been 4 meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan working group the group have also held 2 public consultation events to comply with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Legislation. This year has seen the resignations of two Councillors, Cllr Christine Butcher who was only on the Council for a short time. The other was Cllr John Weller who was I believe on the Council for over 25 yrs. I would like to offer my personal thanks to John for his support over my years on the Council and my time as Chair.

Projects we have undertaken this year:-

The trees planted last year, with funding from the Yorkshire Bank Community Fund to form an avenue along Cartmel Lane were, unfortunately last weekend vandalised by some mindless idiots. The whole avenue has been destroyed. This matter has been logged with the Police as criminal damage, therefore I would ask that anyone who has information to please let me know so that this can be passed on. I have also made a commitment to replace these trees, either by getting a grant or by coming round with a begging bag seeking donations. But one thing I am certain about is that they will be replaced, the mindless idiots will not win.

In my report last year we were looking into the possibility of opening up back Memorial Wood to make it more accessible. However after taking advice from the Police, consulting with near neighbours and finding that at this time there are no grants available for this, we have decided to defer this plan for 5 years, after which we will revisit it and re-evaluate where we want to take this project.

The area of rockery that borders Skipton Road has had the scrub holly tree removed and the other trees tidied. This has opened up the view into the Memorial Garden, making it a far more pleasant area. We are in the process of having the rockery edge planted up with more appropriate and colourful plants which I hope people will appreciate. I would just like to point out to the one or two people who have been asking for the wild garlic to be removed from the Memorial Garden, this will not be happening. The Memorial Garden is a wild area and is not gardened it is allowed to go natural and will remain as such.

The Council are in the final stages of acquiring two pieces of land from Bradford Council under Community Asset Transfer legislation. The pieces in question are Corn Mill Green and the small semicircle of grass at the end of Chapel Road adjacent to the Methodist Chapel. They are being transferred on a fifty year lease at a peppercorn rent. On the piece by the Methodist Chapel we are proposing to put a permanent Christmas tree (anyone wishing to sponsor this please let me know). We are also working with Steeton Primary School to secure a Royal Horticultural Society grant which would enable the children to work on planting up the site as part of their education. If we are successful in obtaining this grant the R.H.S. provide local horticultural experts to work with the children on designing, planning and planting the area.

Following on from last year, when we were awarded Foundation Status of the Local Council Award Scheme, we are now ready to submit our application for the next level of the award which is the Quality Award

The Quality Award

To achieve the Quality Award a council demonstrates that it meets all requirements of the Foundation Award and has additional documentation and information in place for good governance, effective community engagement and council improvement. The Quality Award criteria include the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence.

Chairman.....

Date.....

This award is peer reviewed by a panel of Councillors from an outside area and is recognised as a sector standard to be achieved, showing a high level of good and effective governance.

The Clerk and I have over the last 12 months been working with the Emergency Planning Team from Bradford Council to produce a community resilience plan. This plan covers all the details needed by the emergency services and local authority in the event of an incident occurring in the Steeton with Eastburn area. The HUB will be used as the local base for this. All the equipment needed for this has been funded by Bradford Metropolitan District Council. Steeton with Eastburn were selected as the pilot area for the introduction of this plan and it is now being rolled out across the whole of the Bradford District.

FINANCE

Full accounts for the year 2016/2017 will be available on the Councils website in due course. After much deliberation the Council decided to increase the precept this financial year. We have not increased the precept by a large amount it works out at two and a half pence per house per week over the year. We have done this because, as people will know, Bradford Council are withdrawing services and we need to be in a position to be able to step in to cover some of these therefore need to build a reserve. Fortunately Bradford Metropolitan District Council once again decided to pass on the full amount of the rate support grant they received from central Government. The Budget for 2017/18 is £ 46,585 which equates to £30 per year for a band D property.

CRIME

Crime remains low in Steeton and Eastburn but this is no reason for residents to become complacent. Inconsiderate parking is still a problem. It appears to be getting worse now that the barriers have been introduced in the car parks at the hospital. The other areas where parking is a serious problem are School Street and Market Street near to the school and along Keighley Road. A working group has been established to examine this problem and meetings have taken place between highways; police, warden service, school, Parish Council, ward Councillors, education Bradford and the Ward Co-ordinators' office to try to come up with a solution to this problem and we are still working towards that.

WEBSITE and NEWSLETTER

Publication of our newsletter continues and delivery is being done by Worth Valley Publishing. It would appear that things are working well and the vast majority of residents are receiving their copies. The website has had a complete makeover in the last year, which I'm pleased to say is a great improvement. It is now looking far more professional and fit for purpose.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

The Neighbourhood Plan has progressed greatly since my last report. To comply with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning legislation, we have held two formal consultation sessions, one in Silsden and one in Steeton where over 160 people dropped in. Many made comment or wrote in later with comments, all of which are being evaluated and where necessary changes and amendments are being made to the document. We hope that the document will be presented to both Councils in early June where, the Plan will formally be signed off. It will then be submitted to Bradford Metropolitan District Council for them to undertake the final parts of the process, wherein they consult for a period of 6 weeks. The Plan will then be sent to a planning inspector and if everything is in order a Referendum will be called. Subject to the result of the Referendum the Plan will either be adopted or rejected. If it is adopted it will then become part of the planning considerations for this area.

I would like to thank Cllrs for their support throughout the year. Special thanks must go to Rosie Sanderson for the work she has done throughout the year and especially the work she has done to enable us to apply for the Quality Council Award status