

Eskdaleside cum Ugglebarnby Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting - Chairman's Report 2014 - 15

Finance

With the introduction of the Localised Support for Council Tax during the 2013/14 financial year, the calculation of the Parish Precept has now permanently changed. However, the Parish Council has decided to continue to again freeze its Precept request for 2015/16 at £15691.00, despite the loss of the LSCT Discretionary Grant of £1090 from Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) thereby reducing parish council income. By freezing the precept residents will be given a 0.56% reduction in the precept.

The Model Agreement monies of £3092.00 were received from Scarborough Borough Council during the year, this is against the budget of £3813 due to an underspend in 2013/14. The new Model Agreement for 2015/16 has been signed and sent to Scarborough Borough Council for an estimate of £3900.00; however, due an underspend in 2014/15 financial year this will actually be reduced. The Model Agreement monies from SBC help towards maintenance costs, for example such items as grass verge cutting throughout the parish, and is aimed to assist SBC in reducing its administrative burden of managing such tasks.

Planning Applications

55 planning applications and consultations were received during the year from Scarborough Borough Council, North York Moors National Park Authority, NYCC and Central Government. The Council is grateful to Cllrs Dave Tate and Alf Watson for considering and advising on planning matters again this year.

Public Conveniences

Due to higher project costs than expected, the Parish Council has decided to put this project on hold, and is currently researching funding opportunities to assist with the costs. Whilst the Eskdaleside toilets are in a relatively poor state they are still usable, and we remain most grateful to John Mead for keeping watch on them and locking and unlocking them every day.

Highways

Working with SBC, NYCC and the police the Parish Council has been able to tackle ongoing speeding and parking issues in Sleights.

Following notification by NYCC that the temporary VAS programme will be continuing from 2015, the Parish Council has signed up to the NYCC 4 year programme at a cost of £750 per annum. This will hopefully go some way to reducing the speeding issues on Coach Road.

Following persistent communications, and with the assistance of central government funding, NYCC have now undertaken the resurfacing of the A169 Coach Road and marginally widened the pavement outside The Spar. In addition, improvement works have been undertaken to various smaller roads throughout the parish.

Due to the sad and sudden death of the contractor who undertook the grass verge cutting throughout the parish, the parish council has had to seek an alternative contractor to undertake the work. In addition NYCC has notified the Parish Council of significant changes to the funding of grass verge cutting in urban as well as rural areas that may impact on the parish from 2015 onwards.

Environment

The management of Linden Close Wildlife Area has been an ongoing issue and the Parish Council continues to seek to come to a resolution with SBC regarding a comprehensive management plan going forward.

Dog fouling continues to be a persistent problem; however, the Parish Council has been active in liaising with Scarborough Borough Council's dog warden to crack down on this issue.

Flooding

The issues around flooding in Linden Close have been a continual area that the Parish Council has been pressing NYCC for a resolution. NYCC are continuing to work with landowners in the area to come to a solution and are continuing to monitor the situation. However, the Parish Council continues to ensure that the sandbag storage unit is full of sandbags available for residents to take in times of need.

Footpaths

The Parish Council has continued to monitor the footpaths throughout the parish. Whilst the Parish Council would prefer to have Seggimire Lane downgraded to a bridleway, it has supported the downgrading of Seggimire Lane from a Green Lane to restricting motorised vehicles to solo motor cycles. It is hoped that walkers, horse riders and nature lovers will continue to enjoy what is on our doorstep.

Other Activities

The council again had a presence at Sleights Show and this was well received by those who attended. Thanks should go to Cllr C Stephenson for taking over from Cllr J Powditch in organising the stand and liaising with Sleights Primary School in regards to the annual children's competition the council sponsors.

The Parish Newsletter continued to be produced on a regular quarterly basis and distributed to virtually all residents via the Whitby Advertiser. We are grateful to Cllr Judy Powditch for the excellent work she does in compiling each edition.

Noticeboards are continually updated with information regarding the Parish Council, relevant organisations and events in the parish and the surrounding area.

The website continues to be a central location for information about the parish council and the area and hopefully it has been of use to residents.

A summary review of the Parish Plan 2008 – 2013 was circulated to all residents and asked for suggestions for the 2015-2020 Parish Plan. Cllr J Powditch and the Clerk collated all the suggestions made by residents and councillors into an agreed format, and the new Parish Plan has now been circulated to all households within the parish.

Affordable Housing: Following a delay with the project the development is now back on track and is hoped to be completed by January 2016, with an opportunity in the summer of 2015 for residents to go to an Open Day and register their interest

York Potash: Representatives from York Potash have addressed meetings to explain progress, and the Parish Council will expect to receive continued updates as the planning application process goes forward.

Police liaison: The Council has received regular updates from the police representative regarding incidents within the area. Following a series of incidents within the parish the new Inspector for Ryedale & Whitby Safer Neighbourhood Area has been asked to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Post Office: Following persistent communications by the Parish Council and Borough Councillor G Coulson, the siting of the new post office within the Spar has now been completed. It is a great asset to the village and it is hoped that residents will continue to support this facility.

Borough/County Councillors: Regular updates have been received on matters that appertain to the Borough and County from our representatives. The Parish Council has welcomed Cllrs Helen Swiers to its meetings, and is grateful to the hard work undertaken by Cllr G Coulson.

I am grateful for the contribution of all Members.

Cllr B Truman