

KILHAM PARISH COUNCIL REPORT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING - MAY 2017

My report is a summary of the activity of Kilham Parish Council in the period from May 2016 to April 2017. Throughout this period I have enjoyed the support a full complement of 13 councillors who together have a width and depth of understanding of all facets of Kilham life. Council members agreed to oversee specific interests to further enhance these close links with the community.

These interests are:

Newsletter Feedback Group - Mark Buckle, Gerry Horner and Christine Snowden;

Village Hall and Youth Club - Megan Price;

Neighbourhood Watch - Geoff Seward;

Local Transport - Denise Hayhurst;

Kilham Playing Field Association and Kilham School Governors - Mark Buckle;

Women's Institute - Christine Snowden;

Fracking - Jane Humphry;

Asset Maintenance - Gerard Conlin, Christine Snowden and Geoff Seward;

Website Maintenance - Gerry Horner;

Defibrillator monitoring and maintenance - Lorraine Scarth;

The Administration/Finance/Personnel Working Group assists the Clerk with the governance of the Council - Geoff Seward, Sandra Van der Kooij, Mark Buckle and Caroline Barratt.

The diligence shown by these various groups and individuals has transformed the decision making process because of their preparedness at meetings and their ability to give good background information and answers to councillors questions. I believe everyone is appreciative of the businesslike conduct of the meetings which creates a sense of a job well done without the undue stress that can result from being ill-prepared.

At the end of last year's report, I set out the expected outcomes for the year. I'm reasonably content, although we have experienced some delays and frustrations, that all outcomes on the list have been realised with the exceptions of the replacement signage and the resurfacing of the cemetery access road.

The intended outcomes were:

- 1 to update Kilham's Emergency Plan;
- 2 to install the village map and information board;
- 3 clean and restore the War Memorial;
- 4 repair the cemetery wall and paint railings and gates;
- 5 resurface the cemetery access road;
- 6 refresh the signage in the cemetery;
- 7 replace three bench seats;
- 8 install the village defibrillator;
- 9 continue the development of the website and newsletter;
- 10 refresh the signage in the village hall Play Area;
- 11 release of funds from the D'Arcy and Elizabeth Knowsley trusts;
- 12 and monitor fracking related developments in our area.

The community response to our request for help with the updating of the Emergency Plan exceeded all expectation and is truly heartening. It is much clearer now, than before when the initial request for help in 2012 was made, that there is a need for a preparedness for

the unthinkable. Just as we buy insurance cover for our homes and vehicles our Emergency Plan is our 'cover' for those extreme events we all hope will never happen.

Defibrillator training was arranged following the commissioning of the equipment which is located in the centre of the village in the Garden of Remembrance. At this well attended meeting we learned how to use the equipment. Many questions were answered as we began to understand that the equipment is designed for anyone to use as it clearly instructs the user through the process. The equipment is frequently checked at regular intervals to ensure it is always in good working order.

It was necessary to remove the old, decaying brick, flower planter in order to install the replacement Village Map but this was later replaced with two new oak planters. WI members have kindly agreed to look after these planters, one of which will bear a small plaque in memory of Val Parton who lovingly tended the original planter and contributed so much to Kilham life.

Councillor Debbie Hayhurst updated the councillors after attending a transport seminar given by ERYC. The proposal given was that Kilham would lose its current bus service even though all parishes were assured earlier that none would be left without transport. However, following further consultations Kilham is now keeping its service, at least for the time being. She has recently written to East Yorkshire Motor Services asking if they will fund some sort of bus stop in Kilham and she is also responsible for displaying the bus timetable in the village and in the Kilham News.

Councillor Gerard Conlin with Councillor Christine Snowden worked with great patience and determination to close two charitable trusts which had been left unused for many years and had become outdated. The closure of these trusts have enabled the residue of money to be used in appropriate ways for the benefit of the community. In November Kilham School was presented with £1,850 for their library from the closure of the D'Arcy Trust. The remaining smaller amount of £69 from the Elizabeth Knowsley Trust was donated to the local food bank.

Fly posters around the village are often displayed without any contact information and are not always for the benefit of residents. The Council is now intolerant of this illegal practice and encourages local groups to use the village notice boards, newsletter and social media as appropriate.

Council requested a litter pick along the length of Pockthorpe Road from the Community Payback Team but they could not help because of recent health & safety restrictions. We are still waiting for a response from the StreetScene team who clean up after fly tippers.

Considerable amounts of dog faeces on the village pavements have concerned staff working at Kilham School as it is brought on to their premises by children who have not managed to avoid the mess while walking to school.

There is a stark contrast between the selfish attitude of a very small number of dog owners and the generous good nature of some residents who regularly pick litter from the roadside as they walk their dogs, and the WI who are organising their village litter pick.

Many of you have commented favourably on the quality of the restoration work to the cemetery wall and railings carried out by Vince and Pat. They can be often seen in the village mowing grass or doing general maintenance tasks. There is ample evidence that they both take great pride in their work and we are grateful for that.

There are no major projects planned for the coming year. We expect to complete those outstanding items from last year's list. Some substantial tree maintenance work will be carried out this autumn in All Saints Churchyard. There are also plans to enhance the appearance of the Garden of Remembrance by replacing broken paving slabs and a rotten bench seat and installing a new smarter litter bin. Funds have been allocated in the budget to support our local community groups such as Ray's Voices and the new Computer Club where a bid for support can be demonstrated to be of benefit to Kilham residents. Because of the recognised community benefit there will also be continued financial support this year for the Kilham Playing Field Association and the Driffield School Twilight Bus Service.

A detailed draft budget took into account the increased administration costs and rising professional, insurance and auditor fees. The program of repair to and maintenance of the assets of the village was carefully costed as was the support given to community activities. We wished to retain all this whilst keeping a healthy financial reserve to cushion the Council from the impact of any unforeseen expenditure.

In January, after receiving the recommendations of the Finance Team, Council agreed to increase the precept from £20,000 to £22,300 for the financial year of 2017/18. This is an annual increase of £5.65 on Band D or 11.42% and is the first increase of the precept since 2009.

I have already acknowledged the unfailing support of your councillors towards me and I wish to express my sincere appreciation to each of them. They tolerate my moments of grumpiness and ineptitude with undeserved generosity.

Claire Boston has been our Clerk and Financial Officer for nearly four years. This year the Personnel Team met with Claire and together thoroughly reviewed all aspects of her work and pay. This resulted in the Council's approval of a modest pay increase in recognition of Claire's outstanding performance and the exceptional professionalism she brings to the work of this Council. Kilham could not be better served and we councillors wish to express our sincere thanks to her.

Please type 'kilham council' in to your web browser if you have not yet viewed our website which is soon to be refreshed and improved. It contains useful and interesting information as well as providing you with a means of communicating with us. Gerry would be interested to hear from you if you have old or new photographs, or interesting articles about Kilham life to share. Your views are always helpful to us and we will be pleased to welcome you to any of our monthly meetings whether it is to listen or to have your say.

Geoff Seward

Chairman, Kilham Parish Council

8th May 2017