

## **PARISH COUNCIL REPORT 2018/19**

Mr Graham Judge was elected Chairman and I was elected Vice Chairman at the Annual General Meeting in May 2018.

The Parish Council meets on the first Monday (not Bank Holidays) of each month, with the exception of August and January, starting at 7.15pm. Members of the public are always welcome and they have an opportunity to raise items of community interest, during the first item on the agenda 'Public Forum'. Whilst there is no requirement to do so, if there are items that individuals, or groups, would like speak about, it is helpful if they could contact the Parish Clerk or one of the Councillors in advance of the meeting. This is not to prevent items being discussed, quite the contrary, it means we can ensure we allocate adequate time for a proper discussion.

Overall, the last 12 months has been a relatively quiet period for the Parish Council, but events over the final few weeks of the year were interesting, and somewhat controversial. I will turn to those in a moment, but there are other matters which are worthy of comment and I would like to address these first.

### **Drainage**

One of the continuing problems we face as a village is the impact on our roads following heavy rainfall. This is a long standing problem and the worst affected area was, without doubt, along 'The Street', particularly opposite the 'Three Horseshoes'. Over the past few years we had numerous meeting with the County Council over the years in attempt to improve the situation. This constant lobbying by the council has now paid dividends and most people will have been aware of the extensive works carried out during April. Given the very heavy rainfall we have experienced since the works are completed, I think it is fair to say that there has been a vast improvement in the drainage on this stretch of road. There are those who take to social media accusing the council of doing nothing, but I think we can take some credit for the success of this project.

### **Policing**

The Parish Council has been very disappointed at the lack of police presence at our monthly council meetings, and there is no Police presence at our meeting this evening, something that has caused the Parish Council some concern.

## **Speeding**

Speeding continues to cause problems within the village, particularly along Barrow Hill, Bury Road, and Colethorpe Lane. Recent additions to traffic calming along Bury Road have had some impact but, despite our best efforts, there are some residents who take no notice of speed restriction signs and drive at speeds that show a total disregard for other members of the community. All the roads I have mentioned are on routes used by children attending local schools and I would urge everybody to respect the limits. They are there for a reason - they are not targets to be beaten.

## **Communication**

The Parish Council has worked very hard to keep the community informed about our activities. Last year we updated and improved our own web site, and formed a collaboration with the operator of the 'Barrow Life' web site, and the Barrow 'Facebook' page. Those of you who use the Barrow 'Facebook' page will also be aware that the council now post information we believe is relevant to the community on this site. Council agendas and minutes are available on the web site, and financial accounts are available to be viewed by arrangement with the Parish Clerk. A financial report will be given this evening and this will also be available on the web site. We continue to deliver our quarterly newsletter 'Newslink', which was introduced in 2013, free to every house in Barrow and Denham.

## **Donations**

We continue to receive numerous requests for donations and, as in previous years, we do respond positively to these when resources permit and we believe that there is a clear local interest in making such donations. Some donations are to national charities, such as Age Concern, while others go to local groups. We also try and support the Village Hall Management Committee when resources permit, and we gave significant support to the Town Estate Room refurbishment

## **Planning**

This is certainly one area which has generated a great deal of publicity in recent weeks. In March the council held an 'Exhibition' to seek residents' views on a **POSSIBLE** Community Project that would provide additional recreational facilities, a new Village Hall, Assisted Living/Care Home, and some additional housing. Residents were encouraged, via forms available at the 'Exhibition', to give us their views before any decisions were taken.

**NOTHING HAD BEEN AGREED, AND NO PLANS SUBMITTED. THEREFORE, IT IS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING THAT PEOPLE WERE INVITED TO SUBMIT VIEWS ON A PROPOSED PLAN FOR 160 HOUSES WHEN NO SUCH PLANS EXISTED.**

However, the PC do take all the concerns that have been expressed very carefully and are continuing to evaluate all points of view before any decisions are made

### **Finally**

Finally, at the recent elections two members of the council decided not to stand for re-election. Martin Sanders and Graham Judge and I would like to thank them for the contribution they have made.

I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for their support over the past 12 months. Whatever we manage to achieve as a Parish Council, it is very much a team effort, and we are extremely well supported by Kat Bowe, our Parish Clerk, who works extremely hard on our, and your, behalf. Thank you Kat.

**John Pearson**

**16<sup>th</sup> May 2019**