

# **PARISH COUNCIL'S REPORT 2018**

## **CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL**

The structure of the Council has remained stable for the majority of the year. However, in September, for personal reasons, Councillor Jan Jowett resigned from her role as Chair, a role she held for over two years but retained her position as a Councillor. Councillor David Brooks was elected Chair in her place.

In December, the Clerk resigned. Although we have advertised the vacancy with some 23 local councils and parish meetings, we have, as yet, been unable to identify a suitable replacement. In the meantime the duties of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer are being carried by the Councillors.

If any members of the villages have an interest in taking on the role of Clerk/RFO (paid) please discuss it with one of the Councillors.

## **COUNCIL WEB SITE**

The Council website has now been available for some two years and it is gradually being populated with key documents, policies and briefing papers. The agendas and minutes of all meetings are published there as are the year end financial records and audit conclusions.

We encourage all residents with internet access to use the website regularly; its address is: [www.prestonunderscarpc.co.uk](http://www.prestonunderscarpc.co.uk)

## **PLANNING**

We continue to receive planning applications for consideration at Council meetings. Members of the public are encouraged to send in their comments directly to the planning authority and to come to the Council meeting to raise questions and to make representations to the Council prior to our submitting a response to Richmondshire District Council's Planning Department.

The application for planning permission to build a development of six dwellings at the East End of the village has been approved; the notice of approval is on the RDC planning web site. The approval is accompanied by a comprehensive list of planning conditions and the Council has secured agreement from RDC that we will be invited to contribute to the discussions of the conditions when appropriate.

## **HIGHWAYS**

The roads and footpaths in and around the village continue to be a source of frustration and the harsh past winter has not helped. The Council has persevered with Highways to keep the roads clear of mud and has also received agreement to keep the salt-bin at the west end filled, at least until the end of this winter; thereafter Highways will review the situation.

The Council has had discussions with Highways regarding their proposal to create a turning circle at the west end. The Council believes that to do so will exacerbate parking problems and that the proposal is quite unnecessary. A decision from Highways is awaited.

It would be very helpful if residents brought any road and footpath problems to our attention, also if they reported problems directly to Highways, to help increase the pressure.

### **DATA PROTECTION**

Towards the end of the year it became apparent that the new Government regulation - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - will impact the work of the Council and its contacts with residents. We have quite a bit of work to do to ensure compliance and we will in due course be required to email those of you presently on our emailing list to seek your permission to retain your data and to contact you in this way. When you receive the request please respond otherwise we will not be permitted to email you with updates, Council information and the like.

### **BROADBAND**

The village now enjoys high speed broadband. Thank you to everyone for your help in the long campaign to achieve this.

### **CEMETERY**

We are pleased to report that there have been no further incidents of vandalism. The Council is in the process of establishing a separate area for the interment of ashes.

### **THE STANNEY**

The quarterly safety inspections continue to be undertaken in conjunction with the annual professional assessment by Sean Stockdale. The year has been relatively uneventful, with only minor remedial work being required.

The whips which were planted last year all seem to be thriving.

### **VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

There was no general village maintenance day during the year. However, several volunteers generously gave their time to repair and spruce up the village seats. For that we would like to express our thanks to Denis McGregor, John Green, David Hall, and Ian Johnson. Thanks also to David Amsden for his work cutting the verges along Light Lane.

### **DOGS**

Dog fouling, although much improved, is a continual, but hopefully, declining concern. We hope this situation endures.

## **THE QUARRY**

Two quarry liaison meetings were held during the year. The meetings are very positive and a major contribution to the good relations with our neighbour. They are a good opportunity to catch up with local quarrying activities and to ask any questions about how these may be impacting upon life in the village. All members of the public are invited and the minutes of the meetings are published on our web site.

## **CONCLUSION**

Another year has passed and with it the large array of matters great and small that come along for the Council's consideration. The Councillors have all worked very hard over the year to solve problems and to make decisions in the best interests of all of the village. We hope that you agree with us and we thank you for your help and support.

Finally, I cannot end this report without offering on behalf of the Councillors our heartfelt thanks to Jan Jowett. Her dedication and hard work as Chair were exemplary and the mentoring she has provided to me as the new chair has been invaluable. I also wish to thank the Council as a body for their support and hard work and for their dedication to achieving the best outcomes for the residents of Preston under Scar.

D.Brooks

May 2018