

Annual Parish Meetings Chairman's Report 2017

General Comment

At the beginning of the year the Parish Council elected Councillor Parry to be its Chairman. Unfortunately Andy had to stand down due to a personal bereavement and ill health. I would like to thank Andy for volunteering to take on the position during difficult time for the Parish Council, we wish him well in his recovery.

On behalf of myself and all the councillors I would like to express our appreciation for the work carried out by our Clerk Ann Pyle in providing the Council with a very professional and efficient service again during the year. I would also like to thank our District and County Councillors who regularly attend our meetings. They provide us with a vital link to the next level of local government.

I would like to thank all the councillors for the time and work they have given voluntarily. During the last year there have been 13 parish council meetings, over 200 articles of correspondence to consider, sub-committee meetings to attend, external meetings, planning site visits and financial reports that take up a great deal of time and effort to fulfil. Well done to you all, the work you do is often unseen and essential to the communities we represent.

The most important issue last year, and most likely the year ahead, has come from changes in central government planning policy and guidance. Hambleton DC identified the Local Plan was out of date potentially leaving the district open to large inappropriate developments. They have been working hard to show the district is already meeting its 5 year target for new developments prior to the new plan becoming operational.

Applications for large developments in and around the village before this process has been completed have raised awareness of the issue and led to a co-ordinated team being set up to develop our own Neighbourhood Plan.

Understandably developing the village is a divisive issue which has led to emotional debate from the start, however it is becoming clear that our parish is required to take a share of new development and no doubt there will be difficult meetings and decisions for the Parish Council ahead. However we now have an opportunity to play our part in shaping the development of our community for the better and I encourage everyone to engage in the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group** is a Parish Council sub-committee lead by Allan Mortimer made up of people from the community willing and able to help guide the plan through the process. The steering group members have the challenging job of developing a Neighbourhood Plan that represents and has the support of the parish. I would like to express my thanks to the members for the time and commitment they have given to the project but especially to Allan Mortimer who has shown great commitment, skill and enthusiasm leading the team.

The Parish Council have a number of sub-committees to support the work of the council:

The **Financial Committee** reviewed the budget set by the council against the anticipated spend and recommended retaining the precept at £43,000. This was approved by the full Parish Council and covered the predicted expenses including, the loan repayments to the Public Works Loan Board and a fund for a new burial ground. The land for the burial ground has now been purchased for £35,000 and work has started to prepare the site for future use. The treasurer's help and guidance through this process has been a major asset to the PC and I commend Councillor Jones for his excellent work.

During the year the Treasurer has produced quarterly accounts which were reviewed and accepted by the Council.

The Parish Council has reviewed and commented to the **Planning** Authority on 75 planning applications varying from minor tree work, traveller sites, house extensions and large housing development near the Wickets.

The **Footpath Committee** report on any problems they become aware of relating to footpaths within the parish. In the last year we have also been working to get the riverside footpath (upstream from the bridge) repaired. Funding is in place from the precept and a £1000 grant from Councillor Swales's budget. Tees River Trust have been instructed to carry out the repairs. The fishing club have volunteered to help with the work and more volunteers would be appreciated to help move hardcore when the project starts later this year.

Dog waste is still an ongoing problem needing regular campaigns.

The **Event Committees** are responsible for organising the village event (music evening) and bonfire night. Last year's fete was well attended despite poor weather and received lots of positive feedback providing villagers with an ideal opportunity to get together in a relaxed environment. This year the committee have taken on board suggestions to improve the event and plenty of new activities are planned. The bonfire night was a great success again, many thanks to Councillor Cosgrove and his team. Enough donations were made on the night to cover over 60% of the event costs.

The Parish Council kept the **Sports Area** well maintained throughout the year. The Trim Trail Circuit and BMX track are in good condition and proving to be excellent facilities for the village.

The **Village Green** has been maintained throughout the year with regular grass cutting, tree inspections (and tree work by professionals where appropriate), and the monitoring and repair of any damage. Parish Council grass cutting has once again been extended to cover verges (and grass in Linden) to fill the gap created by the County Council financial cuts.

I would like to thank the **Care for our Village Association** for their voluntary work around the village and on the green for providing and maintaining the tubs.

The Parish Council also own and maintain the **village allotments and burial ground**. These areas have required monitoring by Councillors throughout the year and their work is appreciated.

Parking on the green has been a problem this year. It is being monitored and appears to be under control at the moment. Anti-social parking around the village is not within the Parish Council's control but we will continue to lobby the authorities for improvements.

Web Site

The Parish Council web site is kept up to date(www.rudbyparish.org.uk) and holds a record of Parish Council Minutes, events, links and notices.

Other Parish Council Areas of Work

- A second community defibrillator will be located at Church Hall to be operated by the First Responders.
- Teams of litter pickers organised by RPC have been clearing litter from roadsides and footpaths round the village
- Each year the PC provides and erects the village Christmas tree and lights. This is an event in itself which provides much joy to the community.

Links to external organisations.

Parish Councillors represented the council's interests on a number of outside bodies including:

The Village Hall Management Committee. Two parish councillors sit on the VHMC and report back to the Parish Council after the quarterly meetings. The VHMC made a £1000 contribution to the Parish Council during the year. These donations help offset the impact of loan repayments on the parish precept. The PC are working with the VHMC to renew and restore the play equipment in the playground by the hall.

A PC member sits on **The Bathurst Trust** which provides educational grants to local children who fulfil the trust's criteria.

The Tarran legacy has been gifted to RPC to provide money to use on the green for maintaining trees and seats.

We have also been represented on a number of different outside organisations including:

The Yorkshire Local Council Association

Stokesley and Villages Community Regeneration Group

Yorkshire County Council (regarding grants, speed signs, gritting, grass cutting and grit bins)

Ringmaster Messages – crime prevention

Campaign for the Protection of Rural England

Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club

Thank you and well done to you all once again for your contributions to a particularly busy year for Rudby Parish Council.

Jonathan Cooper
Vice Chair RPC