

Annual Parish Meeting – 2020/21

Chairman's Address

This report starts back in April 2020, which was the same month that the Covid 19 restrictions forced us to stop face to face meetings. The Monthly zoom meetings then took over, which was a challenge to start with, but we managed to carry out the duties of the council albeit with some restrictions.

Around the village we got Highways to repair and reinforce the bank of the Beck near the Cross where the water was undercutting the road, cleared the old pond area on North Street, where garden rubbish was being dumped and cleared the Greendyke.

We were pleased when the new Flood Alleviation Scheme on the east side of the village was finished, Covid restrictions had delayed its completion date and since then with the heavy rainfall, we have now seen it in action. The Environment Agency notified us they were carrying out a review of the water courses in this area, so we have attended many site meetings to discuss the continued maintenance of the Beck, but they are refusing to dredge the silt out, even though we have asked many times. We are still waiting the results of the review.

During the lock down we carried out repairs to the road on the allotments and gave grants to the school for new laptops and to the Church to assist with the maintenance of the churchyard. There was also a grant to repair Santa's Sleigh before Christmas. We installed external lighting on the village hall to provide an illuminated route to the defibrillator and replaced the fuse box so the Christmas tree lights, which we replaced with new, could be lit up. The bus shelter on the B1188 needed a replacement glass section and so we got the rest of the glass and the roof cleaned at the same time.

We replaced the worn damaged bench seat at Harrowby Close and installed a new bench in the grounds of the Village Hall. This is a 'happy to chat bench' and we were very pleased when a family living in Jersey said they saw our intention to put in this seat and volunteered to pay for it in memory of their mother, Mrs June Robinson.

In the playing field, we didn't collect any fees from the clubs as they were restricted to when they could use it, but we continued carried out annual maintenance of the field and trees. We received a request for a dog free running area, which is still being looked into, but the amount of space needed and the cost of fencing the area may be beyond the land we have available and our budget. We are also currently looking into providing exercise equipment on the field. It was identified during lockdown that access to exercise equipment in gyms was prohibited and installing outdoor equipment would be beneficial to the wellbeing of Digby residents. A set of designs have now be selected and grant funding is being applied for.

The Parish Council is currently made up of 6 residents and there is still a vacancy for one more, so if anyone is interested please let us know. We work within the restrictions of local government and training is provided. Our monthly meetings are open for any members of the public to attend and we are now back to face to face meeting. Our minutes are displayed in the 2 noticeboards we have and on our website. The website underwent a refresh during the last year, as LCC closed down the old sites and opened up a new version.

I would like to thank my councillors for all their work and dedication, it has been a difficult year for everybody, but we have managed to continue with the upkeep of the village and have been able to carry out improvements throughout the pandemic.

