

WEST BRETTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019/2020

Introduction

Over the past year the Parish Council has met in the village hall once a month, with the usual exception of August. We were also unable to meet in April due to restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 emergency. We are happy residents attend our meetings and time is set aside for them to raise issues and ask questions. The Parish Council filled two vacancies arising after the May election so that the council has its full complement of six Parish Councillors.

Highways

Issues relating to highways continued to feature regularly in the business of the Parish Council during the past year.

Further damage to a resident's boundary stone wall at the junction of Bretton Lane and Huddersfield Road caused by vehicles turning at the junction raised continued concerns about the number of HGVs using Bretton Lane.

A meeting took place in October with officers from the highway authority to identify the status of proposed road safety improvements. No progress has been made in reducing the speed limit on Huddersfield Road to the south of the village and the highway authority are having second thoughts about imposing restrictions.

In December the parish council was consulted on safety measures at the junction of Huddersfield Road and Bretton Lane. The road markings associated with this scheme have now been laid and we await the proposed associated variable message signing.

The Parish Council continues to respond to residents' concerns on highways issues and monitors progress by maintaining an action plan, updated regularly, where issues raised are identified and progress in resolving them is monitored.

Crime

Police usually do not attend our meetings nor do we receive a written report on crime. However in February PCSO Liam Adams attended to take questions from residents and offered support in response to requests from residents for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village.

Environment

The council continues to employ the services of a contractor to undertake regular grass cutting on the highway verges within the village, the grounds of the village hall, and the small grassed garden area in the grounds of the church.

The Parish Council has funding from an electrical contractor which is allocated for tree planting on public land in the vicinity of the village.

Dog fouling on footways and verges within the village has been a source of complaint and raised as an issue by a resident. In response stencils markings on pavement have been installed.

Fly tipping has been observed around the Parish and we appreciate the efforts of Wakefield Council's Streetscene workers in undertaking the prompt removal of such rubbish.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

The Parish Council maintains close links with Yorkshire Sculpture Park. We are grateful to Helen Featherstone for providing reports at our meetings about events and developments at Yorkshire Sculpture Park and responding to residents' concerns. Residents were offered a time-limited complimentary winter pass giving shopping discounts and free parking

Bretton Hall

Mark Finch of Rushbond attended our meeting in September 2019 and presented an update on the proposed development of Bretton Hall.

Community Funding

The Parish Council continues to use money from the precept to provide financial support to village organisations and groups. This year funding has been provided to the cricket club (towards building extension costs), to the church (in support of production costs of the parish magazine), to the school (towards the transport costs of educational visits), and to the over 50's club (towards the cost of room hire for their meetings).

Planning

The Parish Council continues to review planning applications.

Remembrance Day

The Parish Council laid a wreath at the war memorial at the Remembrance Day service. We would like to thank the Police for providing their services carrying out the traffic management.

Christmas lights

Although a Christmas tree is no longer provided by Wakefield Council we would like to thank them for replacing the Christmas lights on the existing tree outside of school and also the school for allowing this. The Christmas lights are much appreciated by all.

And finally

On behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank our District Councillors for their hard work, support and attendance at our meetings, and their willingness to take on board issues raised by residents and the Parish Council. I would also like to thank my fellow parish councillors for their support during my year in the Chair. I, along with my fellow councillors, would also like to thank our Clerk for all her hard work and administrative dedication in supporting the work of this council.

David J Spaul
Chairman 2019/20
West Bretton Parish Council

WEST BRETTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020/2021

Introduction

This year we were unable to meet face to face in the village hall due to restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 emergency. However, we were able to hold monthly meetings using zoom, starting with a meeting in August 2020.

Highways

Highway issues continued to feature regularly in the business of the Parish Council. The main issue of concern is speeding through the village. Recent safety improvement works, comprising road markings and coloured hatched areas at the junction of Bretton Lane and Huddersfield Road appeared to have had made little difference to the speed with which vehicles travel onto Bretton Lane. However, recently a new interactive variable sign, to replace the existing one, has been installed within the 30mph limit facing drivers entering the village from the north.

In December, members took the opportunity to attend a zoom meeting with Wakefield Highways representatives, district councillors and members of other parish councils within the rural ward. It gave an opportunity to share road safety concerns with the highway authority, and learn of those of adjacent parishes.

The Parish Council gave a cautious welcome to plans by Wakefield Council to promote buffer speed limits of 40mph and 50mph to the north and south of the village respectively, in the hope that this may assist in controlling vehicle speeds within the village itself.

We are currently investigating costs and identifying potential locations for conducting speed surveys within the village in the future to identify the potential need for future traffic calming measures.

Environment

The Parish Council continues to employ the services of a contractor to undertake regular grass cutting on the highway verges within the village, the grounds of the village hall, and the small grassed garden area in the grounds of the church.

Fly tipping has been observed around the Parish and we appreciate the efforts of Wakefield Council's Streetscene workers in undertaking the prompt removal of such rubbish. In response to a request from the Parish Council several residents have volunteered to undertake litter clearing duties and have been supplied with litter-picking equipment by Wakefield Council.

The Parish Council had, without success, looked at potential tree planting on either public and private land in the vicinity of the village.

We are now looking at ways to benefit the community through the refurbishment of existing benches and promotion of more seating within the Parish, for the benefit of local residents, and the provision of planters to improve the village environment. We also investigated issues associated with the potential provision of allotments, should a need for them be identified in the future.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

The Parish Council maintains close links with Yorkshire Sculpture Park and we are grateful to Helen Featherstone for continuing to provide reports at our meetings about events and developments and responding to residents' concerns. Reopening after a four-month closure, a pre-booking system was introduced requiring individual visitors to purchase tickets, which include free car parking, thus removing the temptation for visitors to park on village roads. A resident's pass is provided to all local residents allowing free entry to the sculpture park.

Community Funding

The Parish Council continues to use money from the precept to provide financial support to village organisations and groups. This year funding has been provided to the cricket club (towards building extension costs), to the church (in support of production costs of the parish magazine), to the school (towards an adult bench and enhancements to the front garden). With extra funding available the Parish Council has also chosen to ring-fence monies for future spending on community facilities (benches and planters) and road safety.

Planning

The Parish Council continues to review planning applications.

Remembrance Day

The Parish Council laid a wreath at the war memorial at the Remembrance Day service. Due to Covid-19 restrictions attendance by the public was discouraged and attendance limited.

Christmas lights

The village Christmas tree lights were illuminated, once again, at the front of the school and we would like to thank both the school and Wakefield Council for making it happen. The Christmas lights are much appreciated by all.

And finally

On behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank our District Councillors for their hard work, support, dedication and attendance at our virtual zoom meetings, and their willingness to take on board issues raised by residents and the Parish Council. I also would like to thank my fellow parish councillors for their support during my extended time in the Chair. I, along with my fellow councillors, would also like to thank our Clerk, once again, for all her hard work and administrative dedication in supporting the work of this council.

David J Spaul
Chairman 2020/21
West Bretton Parish Council