

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR THE PARISH OF DALE ABBEY HELD AT THE
GATEWAY CENTRE DALE ABBEY ON THURSDAY 19 MAY 2016**

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Famer (Chair), S Bown, T Davies, C Just, R Oates, J Smith, Councillor C Hart (DCC), Parish Clerk

1 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 21.5.15

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meetings held on the 21.5.15 be approved.

2 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO BE PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN, COUNCILLOR PETER FARMER

I think I can safely say that the past year was quite eventful, beginning as it did with the elections last May. Part way through the May 2015 AGM two newly elected members resigned, this action not only disenfranchised the electorate who voted for them but also more than doubled the ward election costs, costs which have to be borne by all of our charge payers and electors.

We are pleased to welcome two new councillors, Russell Oates and Steven Street, and we are delighted that they both represent Kirk Hallam wards

Unfortunately, due to the demolition and rebuild works at Dallimore School we are still unable to hold meetings in Kirk Hallam but we fully intend to return to Kirk Hallam just as soon as the situation allows

Each year, on remembrance Sunday, the Parish Council is represented at the afternoon Remembrance service in Dale Abbey and a wreath is laid on behalf of the community, I would love to see this tradition extended into Kirk Hallam and hope that we may be able to arrange something this year.

Our long term sponsorship of the hanging baskets in both Kirk Hallam and Dale Abbey continues and is much appreciated by residents. Our Christmas lights switch-on events were again very successful and the attendance of Ilkeston Brass in both Kirk Hallam and Dale Abbey made a fine start the festive season. Last year we invited children from the parish to join us in the Gateway Centre for fun, games and storytelling.

Our involvement in the Derbyshire County Council Snow Warden Scheme continues and we hope to add more volunteers from Kirk Hallam in the future. Our Last community litter pick was held on 14th November last year as it was decided to pass this initiative on to the village community and we are pleased to see that a successful event was held at the end of March this year and hope that further events will be held in the future.

The Parish Council were consulted on 12 planning applications over the past year, and we made comments and recommendations on 7 of the applications. The major application for the regeneration of the Stanton site was withdrawn and to date the Parish Council have heard nothing more on this issue.

We were very pleased to meet our new PCSO Rob Stanesby who has committed to attending as many Parish Council meetings as possible and will provide us with updates if he is unable to attend.

Road safety issues continue to be one of our priority items and we take every opportunity to involve the Highways department and to highlight any problems, including, potholes, fly tipping and damaged signage.

The state of the road surface on Tattle Hill has been a long standing issue with the County insisting that the road is unadopted and is a footpath only but with the invaluable help of Councillor Carol Hart most of the large potholes have now been resurfaced.

Footpath issues featured quite regularly at parish Council meetings last year and we were as surprised as anyone to see what we considered to be an unnecessary footpath installed on Cat & Fiddle Lane, we are still trying to ascertain the true cost of the works. It is particularly annoying when our requests for minor works are turned down by the County on the grounds of cost. We were however successful in getting part of the footpath from Hagg Lane to Cat & Fiddle Lane resurfaced after many years of trying.

Our iconic red telephone box has now been painted and re-furbished and paving will be laid around the box to help prevent grass and weeds from encroaching.

We have continued our involvement with Digital Derbyshire and taken every opportunity to campaign for an improved broadband service in the village.

We have invested in new play equipment for the Moor Lane playing field, a new climbing frame slide and a basket swing have been installed and it is good to see that they are both being well used, we employed the services of a "mole Man" to eradicate a mole infestation. At the same time our street furniture was re-painted helping to enhance the village street scene.

In response to requests from parishioners the Parish Council have decided to fix two dog tethers onto the inside of the five bar gate of our Moor Lane playing field to allow visitors to tether their dogs whilst using the field, dogs will not be allowed on any other part of the field.

We have continued our representation on a number of outside bodies including the Borough and Parish Liaison Forum, Erewash Museum Community Forum, the Spondon in need charity, the Borough Council Standards Committee and the Community Police Panel

Our total income for the coming year, which includes both concurrent function and precept monies totals £18,161 compared to £19,401 for last year, I trust that charge payers will note that there has again been no increase in the council tax levy for the Parish. Changes to the financial compensation scheme has now made small local authorities, like the Parish Council, eligible for cover, as part of our ethical banking policy we have decided to deposit some of our reserve funds with the Derbyshire Credit Union, formerly Erewash Credit Union, which aims to support the more disadvantaged members of our society.

I would like to express our sincere thanks to Councillor Carol Hart who is both our County and Borough representative and to Borough Councillor Bruce Broughton for their continued support and to PCSO Rob Stanesby.

Finally, I would personally like to thank all of my Parish Council colleagues for their support, all of whom give their time freely for the benefit of our community.

3 TO NOTE THE COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT FOR 2016/2017

RESOLVED to note the agreed Council Tax Precept/EBC grant of £7,000 for 2016/2017.

4 BOROUGH/COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Derbyshire County Council Annual Report Councillor Carol Hart

This is my last year of this 4 year term of office and elections for Derbyshire County Council will be taking place next May, I have decided to put my name forward again next May, all things being equal, and hope to continue representing the Breadsall/West Hallam ward, with apologies to those villages not included in the title of the ward, unfortunately the Electoral Commission do not like the titles of wards to be too wordy!!!

Again as I have said for the past 3 years it is so frustrating to be in opposition, I do still hold the position of Shadow Cabinet Member for Public Health which covers Health, Community Safety, Derbyshire Sport, Trading Standards, Libraries amongst other things but I am afraid although everyone knows there have been cuts in the DCC budget I get so upset with some of the cuts that have been proposed over the last year in particular, the first couple of years there were many areas that could be trimmed down and made more efficient and, of course, it does get harder as time goes on and still savings have to be made but it is all about priorities and I am afraid my group have many different priorities to the controlling group.

We have had many cuts in different services areas, mobile libraries have had their deliveries cut back but I think most areas are still being served even if the service is reduced and the visits are less, school crossing patrols are being cut, some schools are losing their 'lollipop' persons and I can accept that if they have puffin or pelican crossings this might be acceptable but where there are no puffin/pelican crossings I think it is essential that this facility is kept in place, it has been decided that when a 'lollipop' person resigns they will not be replaced, what a pity that DCC has not worked with schools or even the local parish council to see if there is a way of still providing this service. One of the biggest cuts that has been announced is the cut in funding to Community Transport, along with this is now the consultation that is happening about withdrawing all subsidies from bus companies, this would have a massive impact on particularly rural communities including the villages in my ward, some of these services are not heavily used but for the people who use them they are essential, whether it be older people who do not or cannot drive, people working shifts, people wanting to get to hospital for appointments or even visiting, we cannot isolate our communities. Hopefully I have managed to get the message out to the parish councils in my ward about the consultation on bus subsidies and I am hopeful that there will be a good response from my ward area and many people putting forward their reasons for wanting to keep their precious

bus service. The Community Transport organisations across Derbyshire delivered a petition to a Full Council meeting recently asking the Cabinet to look again at their decisions to cut funding, the petition was the largest ever received by DCC, some 22,000 signatures, unfortunately although it was debated and supported by my group the Cabinet and back benchers of the controlling Labour Group turned this down. There is also consultation going on to close some of the Children's Centres, including the West Hallam Centre, again it seems as though the most effect will be felt in the rural areas rather than the urban areas, I think everyone appreciates that some of our most deprived areas need extra help but it should not always be to the detriment of the rural areas.

Still lots of complaints about the state of the roads and pavements, the Government has given councils some extra funding for getting the potholes repaired, I believe it the amount was, I believe, £1.6 M. DCC say that this is a drop in the ocean, what I cannot understand is that although we have not had a bad winter over Derbyshire there has still been an overspend on this budget, goodness knows what will happen if we have a bad winter!! The frustration again is that I have just been handed a list of work that will hopefully be carried out in my ward on roads and pavements but unfortunately this is a 5 year plan and there is no indication as to when any of these projects might happen, I understand that all those roads and pavements listed will be inspected and placed in priority order, I can only keep monitoring and lobby if there are areas that are in urgent need of attention.

As you will have probably seen from your recent Council Tax bills DCC have set a precept of 3.99%, there did have to be a referendum called if they wished to precept more than 2% but this year the Government have said that Councils could precept an extra 2% as long as they ring fenced it for Adult Care, because of the pressures on Adult Care basically because most of us are living longer, thank goodness, this was something my group could support.

I have been pleased to help some local organisations in my ward with a grant from my Community Capital Grant Fund but this year no organisation in Dale Abbey has applied but for the first time since I became a County Councillor I spent all of my year's allocation of £4200 (this has to cover all of my ward of course) but I am pleased to say that the fund is now open again, unfortunately due to the cuts the amount I receive will be £3,800 as the amount has been top sliced by DCC to give to the many Luncheon Clubs that deliver a service across Derbyshire, they cut their funding so are now taking it from the Member Grant Scheme to compensate

Dale Abbey has very much the same problems of many of our rural villages and most of it is to do with traffic, whether it be speeding traffic, inconsiderate parking and overweight lorries transgressing the weight limits and very often frustration occurs when DCC officers do not seem to see the same problems as local residents and the Parish Council, certainly some road markings on the main road have caused concern and although accidents have been reported nobody seems to want to re-look at the problems, this is still a major gripe of mine that accidents are not correctly reported and therefore statistics are very often misleading. There have been other problems in the village one being Tattle Hill and despite numerous attempts to get things done DCC still maintain that they are not responsible for the road, there have also been problems with Rights of Way etc., and then the debacle of the 'Road to Nowhere', the cost of which has varied with each FOI request put in, from £20K at the start to £25+ , whatever a complete waste of tax payers' money.

As always as your County Councillor I will do my best to sort problems out that are the responsibility of DCC, I can only say if I cannot get things done it is not for the want of trying

Erewash Borough Council Annual Report Councillor Carol Hart

I have continued in my role as Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Engagement and I have to say that it has been a challenging year. Along with all other councils across the Country Erewash Borough Council has had to try to deliver first class services with a reduced budget, it has been difficult but I think that we have managed to carry on delivering the services that our residents expect of us and care about without too much of an impact being made with the reduced budget.

Many residents that I have spoken to over the last year have commented on the fact that even with the cuts we have still managed to put flowers in our flower beds, unlike some local councils, and I must say that we have done particularly well again in this last year winning medals in the East Midlands in Bloom competition and our local Erewash in Bloom competition has also been well received again with many entrants including not only private residences but Residential Homes, Schools and local hostelrys.

Our Green Spaces team have also worked very hard and again achieved Green Flag status at Victoria Park, West Park and a new one Straw's Bridge (or Swan Lake as some like to call it

The Council Tax has been frozen by the Borough Council for the last 6 years but unfortunately we have taken the decision for the 16/17 budget to raise the precept, we do want to keep delivering the best service we can to our residents

and this money, even though a small amount, will help us do that, I do hope that when residents receive their council tax bills they do take time to look at where the Council Tax money goes, Erewash Borough Council get a very small share of money collected compared to Derbyshire County Council and I think that we do manage to deliver a great many services on our small budget.

We are putting more effort into the regeneration portfolio, there are two or three major projects happening in Erewash and we need to take advantage and obtain the best outcome for the Borough and its residents.

The first is the provision of the new railway station in Ilkeston, this project is happening because of a vast amount of work done by the previous M.P. Jessica Lee along with a campaign by the Ilkeston Advertiser, it culminated with Government coming forward with funding and although there have been many delays in starting the project which is being controlled by Derbyshire County Council work has now started and should be completed later this year, the second project is the HS2 provision which is most likely going to have a major impact on Long Eaton, the preferred hub is at Toton and although the route has not yet been announced, this will happen in Autumn, we do know that there will be a major impact on many residential properties and businesses in Long Eaton, the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and our Planning Manager have been working hard with the HS2 Board to make sure that we obtain the best outcome for our area, whether you like the idea of HS2 or not it is going to happen and it is essential we make the best case possible for Erewash and get maximum benefits that will go along with this scheme, having said that there is so much work to do but the scheme will not actually be delivered for many years but we need to be involved now in the planning stages. The third project has been going on for some while and it is the Stanton site, we are looking at around 2,000 houses and some light industry but unfortunately St. Gobain the owners of the site and the Planning Department at EBC cannot really agree on the best way forward for the site. There are many problems with this site and possibly the biggest is the access/egress to the site and we are in the process of doing a survey to see the best way forward. A Government Department have also intervened to try and move this site forward but there are still many delays, we have now set up a small steering group to see if we can progress this site.

We are in the process of up-dating our IT at the Borough Council and continue not only to provide more modern equipment for our members to help them in their role as councillors but we are also working to improve our communications with our residents, it is difficult sometimes to get information out in a way that it reaches all of our residents not just a few, that is why we still produce our EBC Today publication which goes to each household in the Borough, we do now do Facebook and Twitter but again we realise that there are still many people out there who still prefer the good old pen and paper but with computers in our reception areas at the Town Halls and staff on hand to help those that do not have their own laptops we hope that everyone can communicate with us if they need to.

Our refuse collectors continue to do a good job, turning out in all weathers and although the green bags sometimes cause a problem on windy days it does appear that many people have chosen to purchase the blue bins and our re-cycling targets are pretty good, but as with everything we can do better and we try to encourage our residents to do their best to help us with the different bins and contents.

We introduced an hour's free car parking after consulting with the Ilkeston and Long Eaton Chamber of Trades to see if we could increase footfall in our two main towns, this has cost us a lot of money, approximately £100K but it seems that our residents and traders in the towns appreciate it, we are continuing this scheme but it has meant we have had to marginally increase our charges at other times but we have also simplified the payment structure so that all car parks across the Borough operate on the same tariffs

The biggest area that challenges us is the leisure side, our swimming pools and Rutland Sports Park, we face stiff opposition from private providers and it does take a huge slice out of our budget but our residents expect us to provide these facilities but it is a real challenge. We have many local organisations who do good work in the Borough, whether it be luncheon clubs, helping the elderly, clubs for young people, but all too often these organisations struggle to make themselves viable, we appreciate the good work they do and we continue to provide our small grants scheme, we also provide an SLA agreement with CAB to help any of our residents who find themselves needing help.

All in all although we have had reductions in our Government grant we have continued to deliver our services without too much impact on our residents, we continue to be very prudent with our budget and hopefully we will continue to remain a debt free council.

5 LOCAL ISSUES WHICH MAY BE CAUSING CONCERN, AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARISHIONERS TO BRING ISSUES TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

None

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 18 MAY 2017.