

Hebden Parish Council

Newsletter

Winter 2010-11

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, all Councils are obliged to ensure that most of the papers associated with council business are accessible to the electorate. This Newsletter is Hebden Parish Council's means of informing the electorate of their rights. Hebden Parish Council has always had an open policy of representation, and its minutes, letters and accounts have been available for inspection. The electorate can view these by appointment with the Clerk.

However, the best opportunity to find out what is happening in your Parish is to attend the Annual Parish Meeting. You are also welcome to attend any meeting of the council.

Council Meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks. Members of the public may attend as observers.

The Annual Parish Meeting of the electorate is usually held in March or April where the Council can report to, and be questioned by, the local government electorate.

The other event of local interest is the Annual Land Letting which is usually held on the last Wednesday in January but in 2011 will be on the last Tuesday.

Events are advertised in good time on the Parish Council Notice Board, which is now to be found on the board outside the Ibbotson Institute. All meetings are held in the Ibbotson Institute and usually start at 7.30pm.

Council Finances

The Council acts as trustees for two sets of parish lands and receives an income from the lands in the form of rents, grants and wayleaves. Income from the Land Letting varies from year to year but there has been a downwards trend.

The Council's policy is to try to limit spending within their income and so avoid asking the electorate for a precept. In recent years expenses have increased and the Council has had to draw on its reserves. Money was received for an Easement over the Common which has been added to our reserves. This coming year the Council hasn't had to ask CDC for financial assistance so there will be no Parish precept.

The money is primarily spent on street lighting, the children's playground, land maintenance and administration. Last year money donated by the Sports Committee and Fountaine Trust was used to repair and improve the playground. The street lights are un-metered and the Council has an ongoing problem with the npower account which it is still trying to finally resolve. Meanwhile it has agreed to have electricity supplied via an account with NYCC. Over £1100 was spent on a new street light and repair to a fixture on Brayshaw Lane.

The Clerk receives a stipend, but the Councillors give of their time freely and claim no expenses.

There is an internal audit by a local elector and a summary submitted to external auditors for their inspection.

The audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2010 may be summarised as follows:

<i>Brought forward from 2009</i>	<i>£ 11439</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>£4221</i>
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>£3294</i>	<i>Reserves to carry forward</i>	<i>£10512</i>

Council Main Duties and Responsibilities

2

Street Lights

Hebden Parish Council is responsible for the seventeen street lights to be found around the village. If you see a problem with any of them, please let the Clerk or a Councillor know.

Planning

The primary Planning Authority for Hebden is the Yorkshire Dales National Park, but the Parish Council is a statutory consultee.

For many planning applications, the YDNP Planning Officer has delegated powers allowing him to make decisions based on established policies. If, however a consultee has a reason why the policy should not be followed, then the application is referred to the YDNP Planning Committee.

In general, the Parish Council bases its recommendations on the visual impact of the development; any effect it may have on the heritage of the village; and on the possible impact on the

social fabric of the village.

All responses to planning applications made by the Council are available for inspection at the YDNP Centre Colvend or from the Clerk.

Playground

The Council is pleased to maintain this for the children of the village and visitors. The grass is regularly cut. Money from 2 donations has been used for repairs to the slide and swings.

Parish Lands

The Council is trustee of two sets of parish lands. The Recreation Grounds of High and Low Green (which are registered village greens) and the Town Lands which are a number of fields around the village. It also

includes Backstone Edge Allotment where freeholders have rights of turbary. Income is derived from the letting of the land and grants.

Liaising with other Authorities

Most of the services provided to the community are the responsibility of other local authorities, including Craven District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

The Parish Council work in partnership with these authorities to help them fulfil their obligations.

The Parish Council monitors the state of the roads and footpaths, the effectiveness of the cleaning services and so on, and ensures that any problems are reported to the appropriate department.

The Council, however has no authority in these matters.

Council Report 2010-11

Most Council business is concerned with repairs to walls, getting the streetlights to come on and go off at the proper times, answering queries from CDC or writing to the Yorkshire Dales National Park about planning matters.

The following are the more significant matters to have arisen in the last year.

The Public Toilets

CDC closed this facility in October 2006. The Council had strongly objected to this closure from when it was first suggested. Many letters were sent but without success. CDC began to arrange for its demolition until the costs involved put a halt to this. Meanwhile the building remains closed.

Affordable Housing

After a lot of objections to the use of a field designated as an open space of historic interest (Site 055) this will no longer be considered for affordable housing.

Highways

The Council continues to inform Highways about potholes and drainage problems. To try to discourage parking near the Bus Stop a white line has been paint-

ed from the bridge to the shelter. There are further discussions as there is still a safety issue here. Highways Dept has suggested it is possible that Bus Stop markings be put down on the road.

The Playground

The Council has used the two generous donations it received for the repair and improvement of the village play area.

Road Verge Project

Volunteers from the village have again taken part in the Roadside Verge Project organised by the YDNP and Wildlife Trust and have cut and raked the verges on the road side up the ghyll and in the village. This is to encourage wild flowers and insects. It is an ongoing project over many years so look on the notice board for further information from the Wildlife Trust.

Safer Hebden

The Council has been concerned at the speed of traffic coming down the hill into the village as the 40mph sign is often ignored, particularly by motor

bikes at the weekend. Attempts to get the speed limit reduced to 30mph through the village on the B6265 has failed to meet the necessary criteria as there are insufficient houses alongside the road. Speed checks are still being undertaken to try to get a Flashing Speed matrix sign erected.

Changes to Parish Boundaries

CDC has been reviewing the size of Parishes and the number of Councillors per resident. It was suggested that Hebden join with Hartlington Parish. The Council felt that this was of no benefit and that Hartlington had better connections with Burnsall so it was opposed by Hebden Parish Council. CDC has agreed not to implement the change.

Notices

Parish Notices are now displayed on the board outside the Institute. Work is being undertaken in the Institute to make a safe, dry cupboard in which to keep the Parish records.