

Hebden Parish Council Newsletter

Winter 2012/3

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 of the electorate in the Ibbotson Institute. This will be held Wednesday April 3rd at 7.30pm this year, where the Council can report to, and be questioned by, the local electorate.

Council Meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks. Members of the public may attend as observers. You are welcome to attend any of these meetings of the council.

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.

The Council Minutes are published on the Hebden website once they have been approved by the Councillors.

http://hebden.org/parish_council_minutes.htm

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 past 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. The Council also receives environmental grants from Natural England. In 2012 income was greater than expenditure so 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. The street lights are un-metered and repairs have to be met by the Council. Meanwhile we continue to have electricity supplied via an account with NYCC. There has been an unexpected expense as the Council needed legal advice about ownership of part of the Village Green. This has now been successfully resolved and the Land Registry entry corrected.

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 2012 may be summarised as follows:

Brought forward from 2010	£ 8418	Expenditure	£2651
Receipts	£3222	Reserves to carry forward	£8989

Council Main Duties and Responsibilities

2

Street Lights

Hebden Parish Council is responsible for the 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.

includes Backstone Edge Allotment where free-holders 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.

Playground

The Council is pleased to maintain this for the children of the village and visitors. The grass is cut regularly. The playground is annually inspected on behalf of RoSPA and any recommendations followed up.

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

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 2012-2013

Most Council business is concerned with repairs to walls, getting the street-lights 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.

Land Letting

For several years the Parish Lands have been let to the same farmers with very little bidding as a result. It was decided to ask David Hill to assist the Council in setting up 3 year Farm Business Tenancies and asking for sealed bids for the different fields. This change was advertised in the Craven Herald and on notices in the village. Since February 2nd the agreements are now in place for the next 3 years..

Highways

The Council has been regularly informing CDC about the various potholes in the village. There has been particular concern about the state of the road towards the river and also on the back lane. Concern at the state of the road surface over Brook Street Bridge which is Listed has been raised with NYCC.

Recently the part of the safety fence by the ghyll roadside was demolished by a car and the Council has requested its speedy repair as a safety issue.

The Playground

The Council keeps the grass cut and keeps the equipment up to the standards set by the annual inspection. Minor repairs were undertaken after the last report.

Notices

Parish Notices are displayed in the board outside the Institute. Work has been completed in the Institute and there is now a heated cupboard where the Parish Council archives can be more safely stored. Recent records are kept by the Clerk.

There was a local election in 2012 and Cllr Richards stood down. Although Notices were displayed no new villagers put themselves up for election and the 4 Councillors were re-elected unopposed. Further notices failed to attract someone to fill the 5th place so the Council co-opted Mr George Coney who agreed to take up the position of Hebden Councillor.

Other village news

Road Verge Project

A small group of volunteers led by James Ferguson of the Wildlife Trust cut and raked the verges on the road sides around the village centre. Sadly the funding for this has stopped so it never happened in 2012..The idea was to encourage wild flowers and insects. If there is enough local interest James says he still has the rakes etc so the villagers could continue to cut and rake.

The Village Institute

The Institute is having a fund raising year starting with a duck race on Easter Saturday and a coffee morning on 27th May, Spring Bank Holiday. There is to be a raffle over the summer with tickets on sale from April with the draw on August Bank Holiday Monday so please support all these events. Anyone willing to help please contact Pat Hodgkins. Tel. 752025 or ph@daelnet.co.uk