

WRIGHTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2019

1. PARISH COUNCIL Chairman and Vice-Chairman

At the Meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2018 Councillor Mr F Hodgkinson was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the year 2018/2019, and Councillor Mrs J Burton was elected Vice-Chairman.

2. PARISH COUNCILLORS

At May 2018 Wrightington Parish Councillors were:-

APPLEY BRIDGE

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| Mr J Clinch | 16 Clifton Crescent, Wigan. |
| Mr C House | 77 Runshaw Avenue, Appley Bridge, Wigan |

MOSSY LEA

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| Mrs Judith Burton | 2 Courage Low Lane, Wrightington. |
| Mr Frank Hodgkinson | Acrefield House, 17A Broadhurst Lane, Wrightington. |
| Mr F Johnson | 351 Mossy Lea Road, Wrightington. |
| Mr P Gartside | 2 Chisnall Avenue, Wrightington. |

The Parish Council began the year with 6 members. The Parish Council eventually had to accept that Councillor Gartside, who had been living with his son for many months due to a deterioration in his health, would not be returning as a Parish Councillor and therefore a casual vacancy was declared. During the course of the year the Council received an application from Mr Julian Finch, a resident of Appley Bridge, to join the Parish Council. Mr Finch had been a Parish Councillor previously however, due to a difference of opinion and a change in personal circumstances, Mr Finch withdrew his application. Following this, the Parish Council received 2 further applications from Mrs Katie Jukes and Mrs Robina Critchley, both residents of Appley Bridge, to join the Parish Council. After having complied with Parish Council appointment protocol and attending 3 meetings as observers, Mrs Jukes and Mrs Critchley were appointed as Appley Bridge Ward Councillors on Wrightington Parish Council with effect from the January 2019 Parish Council Meeting. Recently the Parish Council were disappointed to have to accept the resignation of Parish Councillor Jim Clinch. The Parish Council remains at 6 Parish Councillors and 2 vacancies, 1 in each ward, following the recent Parish Council uncontested elections. The Clerk has attended Liaison Meetings with West Lancashire Borough Council Officers and other Clerk's to assist with various issues arising during the course of the year. Councillors have attended briefing sessions, Councillors Code of Conduct Training, open days, public consultations and site meetings to address issues which arise in the Parish as required. The Chairman was once again nominated to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Parish Councillors attended the Institution and Induction of Revd. Stefan Mykola Dnistrianskyj as Vicar (half time) of Heskin with St James the Great in October 2018. Councillor Critchley has recently replaced Councillor Clinch as the Parish Council representative on the Peter Lathom Charity. The Parish Council and Councillors continued to work throughout the year with Borough Councillor Mrs Baybutt, Borough Councillor Mrs Evans and County Councillor Fillis.

3. FINANCE & PROCEDURE

All advisory, informative and procedural documentation used by the Parish Council were reviewed, amended and approved as required during the course of the year and formally adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. Following a detailed Budget Meeting, it was determined that the Parish Requirement for 2018/19 would be £16,800.00 – top up grant of £613.00. The Parish Council precepted upon West Lancs. BC for the sum of £16,187.00 for the 2018/19 financial year. Concurrent Contributions were also received. Changes in the way the Parish Council Finances are handled, implemented in 2003, continue to ensure that financial matters function efficiently and

effectively. The Parish Council again appointed Mrs Margaret Stewart as the Internal Auditor for this and ensuing years. The Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31 March 2018 were audited by PKF Littlejohn, with the only matter arising being that the Clerk should have been informed by the previous auditors to correct the input of an incorrect digit in last year's return rather than carry it over to this years. They said this was not a problem and was only being raised to help with the completion of the annual return in future years. The Council has taken all the action necessary throughout the course of the year to satisfy audit requirements prior to the submission of the end of year financial report to the external auditors. The Councils Financial Statement for the year ending 31 March 2019 will be approved at the May Parish Council Meeting.

4. PLANNING

The Parish Council is notified of all planning applications within the Parish and is able to submit comments, observations and objections when necessary. The Parish Council however, has no power of direction or decision making in these matters.

44 Planning Applications have been dealt with by the Parish Council during the year in comparison to 43 applications last year.

The following are some of the planning applications discussed in the Parish during this year:

The Parish Council objected to the removal of a condition to allow retention of the ground floor of the original dwelling to create a holiday let at Tunley Farm, Tunley Lane. The Council pointed out that the permission was only granted provided the original dwelling was demolished and therefore to remove the condition requiring this, would set a precedent for future applicants to do the same.

The Parish Council objected to the planning application to erect 2 dwellings between 321 and 325 Mossy Lea Road, the application was subsequently refused by the Borough Council.

The Parish Council objected to the construction of a 5MW gas fired power plant at Appley Lane North Landfill site because, if permitted, it would prohibit the use of the site for small scale rail based uses in the future. The environmental impact of the proposals on Appley Bridge, its residents and the wildlife in the area would significantly outweigh the benefits of allowing this use of the site.

The Parish Council objected very strongly to the proposals to build 400+ houses on 3 separate sites in Appley Bridge as part of the proposals in the West Lancashire Local Plan Review. The significant development proposals in the local plan review were extremely controversial, not only in Wrightington but in the whole of the Borough. As a result of the level of objection from residents of West Lancashire, and the Parishes in the Borough, the local plan review has been halted and, it is hoped that revised proposals for reduced development across the Borough will be consulted on in due course.

At the recent April Parish Council Meeting Mr O'Dowd, the new owner of East Quarry, West Quarry and Parbold Quarry, attended the Parish Council Meeting to outline his proposals for East and West Quarry and to answer questions from residents on his proposals, plans for which it is believed have recently been submitted but which have not as yet come before the Parish Council for observations. Mr O'Dowd's proposals include emptying East Quarry and filling it with inert materials brought in to Appley Bridge by rail and transported from the pad at West Quarry, via a tunnel under Appley Lane North to East Quarry. The quarry will be filled and developed in segments over a period of years. The proposals also include relocating local businesses from East to West Quarry, widening of Appley Lane North to facilitate the installation of a roundabout and 2 zebra crossings on Appley Lane North. The proposals include a number of shops fronting Appley Lane North and up to 350-370 houses on East Quarry. There is concern that the proposals will change the face of Appley Bridge, will result in an over-development of the site and that there is no evidential need for this level of development. The Parish Council await the planning application and the promised public consultation on this matter.

The Borough Council do not have to notify neighbours when a planning application is submitted to them, therefore in cases where adjoining occupiers, or others affected by applications, become aware of proposed developments it is always advisable to submit observations and objections directly. Parish Councillors and members of the public can access all planning applications by logging onto the West Lancashire Borough Council website. By inputting the planning application number, address of the property or type of planning application and approximate location or date, the application details, maps, plans and associated documents can be viewed and comments, objections and observations submitted online.

5. PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The Parish Council is the first tier in the democratic structure of Local Government. The Council can also act as a pressure group putting forward the views of residents on topics affecting the area. The following are some of the areas in which Wrightington Parish Council have been involved during the past year:

The Parish Council once again produced their Annual Newsletter distribution being undertaken by Councillors, the Clerk, Borough Councillors and other volunteers in the Parish. The Council would like to thank all those who volunteered for their assistance with delivery and hope that they can rely on their support again this year.

The Parish Council made a Donation during the year of £100 to North West Air Ambulance. The Council purchased and installed a 6th Defibrillator in the Parish in the doorway of In Touch at Dangerous Corner. The purchase of the defibrillator was assisted by a grant from our County Councillor.

The Council recently agreed to support Chorley Borough Councillor Whittaker's request to write to Bishop Rawstorne Academy and ask that they amend their admissions criteria to allow children from the foundation Parishes, which includes Wrightington, to have a better opportunity to get in to the school.

POLICING

PCSO Andy Holderness remains responsible for Policing Wrightington, Parbold, Hildale, Bispham, Dalton, Newburgh, and sometimes beyond when the need requires.

PCSO Holderness attends Parish Council Meetings when possible following up Police matters as required.

A road closure was obtained and Policing put in place to enable Remembrance Day plans to proceed as in previous years. The Parish Council, following a request from the Community Association, purchased lamp post poppies which were displayed on lamp posts on Appley Lane North from the village hall down to, and along Mill Lane to the boundary with Wigan, on Remembrance Sunday to coincide with the WW1 commemorations.

VILLAGE HALLS

Fire detection and security at the village halls is monitored and checked annually and all electrical equipment has been PAT tested. Christmas Trees were again erected at both Village Halls and both Village Halls were again used in May for the Local Council elections.

APPLEY BRIDGE

Parked cars remain a problem on the village hall car park. With the assistance of the PCSO some vehicles have been successfully removed. Notices have recently been placed on the windscreens of vehicles informing them of the installation of a barrier at the entrance to the car park to ensure that parking remains only for use by village hall users. Work is underway to determine the correct location and dimensions for the barrier, prior to its installation. All village hall users will be provided with a key and a parent and a teacher from All Saints School will also be given keys so that parents can use the car park at school opening and closing times. Part of the boundary wall to the left side of the hall suffered damage from tree roots which, during the passage of time, caused a

section of the wall to fall over on to the walking footpath adjacent. Following negotiations with West Lancashire BC, a section of the wall was rebuilt and a metal fence used to bridge the remaining gap between the fence and the tree. The cost of the work was divided equally between the Parish Council and West Lancs. BC. CIL money received over the last 3 years has been used towards the cost of the repairing the fallen wall and, replacing the 4 large arched windows in the main hall with double glazed UPVC windows. The new windows have made a huge difference to the look of the village hall and the Parish Council has recently been informed that their Capital Bid to West Lancs. BC for 2019/2020 to replace the remaining windows and doors in the hall with Gray UPVC, double glazed units has been successful. The capital bid also included a sum for painting exterior woodwork and metalwork and installing additional exterior lighting to better illuminate the car park. A number of constructive Village Hall Committee Meetings have taken place during the course of the year and issues arising have been dealt with in due course. The Village Hall continues to be used on a regular basis for various meetings and classes including jujitsu, the Women's Institute, yoga classes, exercise classes, Slimming World, the Pensioners Association and Old Hall Brass Band. The hall is also used for polling purposes as required.

MOSSY LEA

Coffee Mornings held regularly at the village hall and supported by the Parish Council, are still well attended and continue to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. The Parish Council continue to support this village amenity by allowing the use of the village hall free of charge. A Christmas Fair was held in late November, which was well attended and an enjoyable afternoon. Hot-pot Supper and Sing-a-longs are also held. The hall continues to be used for children's parties, Yoga classes, Craft classes, by the COPD & Sleep Apnoea group, for Embroidery Classes, for polling purposes, by the Church of God and, for Meetings and Training Events by outside bodies. The Parish Council have recently purchased 2 x recycled plastic picnic tables which will be installed on the play area adjacent to Mossy Lea Village Hall by West Lancs. BC.

The Parish Council agreed to continue their contract with Fir Tree Fisheries, Appley Bridge, to plant, water and maintain the planters outside each village hall for the forthcoming season. The Parish Council agreed to plant in red, white and blue flowers this year to commemorate the RAF Centenary. Furthermore, 2 Silent Soldiers were purchased and displayed at the village halls in each ward of the Parish to acknowledge that it is 100 years since the end of World War I. The Parish Council again supported the West Lancs. BC initiative by purchasing and flying Armed Forces flags at both village halls.

Work to increase the income potential of both Village Halls remains on-going. The Parish Council would like to express its appreciation to the Voluntary Management Committees and the caretaker for all the work they do in maintaining the Village Halls.

HIGHWAYS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A number of litter picks have been requested throughout the year at various locations including Mossy Lea Road, Moss Lane, Hall Lane, Appley Lane North, Crow Orchard Lane, Courage Low Lane, Toogood Lane and Broadhurst Lane.

Bus shelters on Appley Lane North, opposite Finch Lane, and on Wood Lane, Wrightington, have been repainted during the course of the year whilst the company who installed the remaining bus shelters in the Parish has recently been contacted with a request that they be properly cleaned.

The Parish Council supported the Appley Bridge Community Association request for 2 zebra crossings on Appley Lane North, however, there has been no response or progress with this request.

Requests from the Parish Council for the installation of 2 grit bins on Skull House Lane, one near the Methodist Church and one near the junction with Appley Lane North, were unsuccessful as it was determined that Skull House Lane is on the priority gritting route by LCC.

The Parish Council successfully lobbied LCC and the bus service providers to ensure that the 113 bus service was maintained for a further 2 year period through Mossy Lea.

The Parish Council had no objections to the LCC application to stop up part of the highway verge on Broadhurst Lane. The order has now been made.

In October 2017 the Parish Council received notice of the making of the Order for upgrading Wrightington Footpath 21 (Moss Lane to Mossy Lea Road) to a bridleway. It was recently confirmed by LCC that, following receipt of objections to the upgrading, the proposals must now go to the planning inspectorate for determination however, this could take quite some time.

Drainage problems continue in several locations in the Parish e.g.: outside 15 Mossy Lea Road, near Rigbye's Bridge on Mossy Lea Road, in front of Mossy Lea Village Hall, at the bottom of Raby Fold Farm driveway and on Appley Lane North, particularly at the junction with Skull House Lane. It is understood that the money to repair the drains in the field opposite 15 Mossy Lea Road has been allocated for this purpose and that West Lancs. BC Legal Dept. is currently negotiating an easement with the landowners to allow access on to their land to install a new drain.

The 2018 Ironman Event again went through the Parish but used Tunley Lane instead of Church Lane this year. The Council understand that the residents of Courage Low Lane were adversely affected by the event and felt like they were trapped in their homes.

Pot-holes in the parish are the subject of continual discussion at Parish Council Meetings whilst footway sweeping and gully emptying remain a major concern in the Parish. More attention is required as there is no continuity in either the road sweeping or gully emptying schedules and it is understood that the majority of road gullies are now only emptied on a reactive basis.

CONCLUSION

The Council has dealt with a considerable volume and variety of business during the past year including complaints from members of the public about various matters.

Any resident who requires help or advice on any problem affecting the area is welcome to bring it to the attention of the Parish Council either through a Parish Councillor, the Clerk to the Council or at Open Forum which is held at the beginning of each Parish Council Meeting.

Report from Mrs C A Cross
The Clerk to the Council
20 May 2019