

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO UPPER POPPLETON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 11th APRIL 2011

The purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting is to receive a report from the Chairman of the Parish Council and to allow residents to raise issues which they feel should be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

I have split my report into 4 sections:-

What does the Parish Council do on behalf of residents and what facilities does it look after
Who does the Parish Council give grants to on behalf of residents
What issues has the Parish Council dealt with on behalf of residents in the past year
Overview of how money has been spent on behalf of residents in the past year

What The Parish Council Does and What It Looks After

Planning – The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on all planning applications submitted for premises in the parish. The Council has a Planning Group made up of four Parish Councillors who look at planning applications and then report back to the next meeting of the full council. City of York Council is pressing for a fully electronic system but parish councils are concerned that the lack of full scale paper plans will make it more difficult to consider what is being proposed. There are also issues about who should pay for the computers, projectors and screens which would be needed to enable parish councils to consider planning applications if there are no paper plans.

Care of the Village Greens and Pumps – Upper Poppleton Parish Council is responsible for the Maypole Green and Chantry Green. The council arranges for a contractor to cut the grass on these greens at appropriate intervals and to manage the larger trees but the Clerk and councillors will usually deal with the trimming of the smaller trees.

During the past year the council has arranged for the clearing of overgrown shrubbery at the back of Chantry Green and for the investigation of suspected dutch elm disease in the large tree at the corner of the Maypole Green. Dutch elm disease has been confirmed and action is to be taken later this year. It is hoped that it will be possible to avoid the complete removal of the tree by removing the diseased branches.

The Parish Council also looks after disused pumps in Station Road, Main Street and the Maypole Green

War Memorial – The Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the War Memorial and during the course of the past year had to also deal with the unfortunate death of Marine David Hart in Afghanistan. The council arranged for a suitable inscription to be added to the memorial to record Marine Hart's sacrifice.

Gordon Benton has kept the area around the memorial tidy for many years but had to give up the task last year. He was thanked for undertaking this work and Jim Ferguson has agreed to take over from Gordon.

Litter – Your Parish Councillors undertook a litter pick on Black Dyke Lane and the verge of the A59 between Black Dyke Lane and the Red Lion. A considerable amount of litter was retrieved which it is believed had blown off refuse vehicles heading for the Yorwaste recycling plant at Hessay

Care of Village Seats – Ten of the seventeen of the seats in the parish have been refurbished during the past year

Railings in Main Street – Although the Parish Council is not directly responsible for the railings opposite the Poppleton Centre, it arranged for the City Council Highways Department to replace rotted sections of the railings and to repaint them.

Street Name Signs – Although the Parish Council is not directly responsible for street name signs, the Clerk and councillors monitor any which are damaged or other wise in need of replacement and report this to the City Council Highways Department.

Other – Your Parish Council also deals with Easements where residents require access across land owned by the Parish Council for vehicular access or underground services. In some cases, residents are required to pay a one-off fee and in other cases residents are required to pay an annual fee.

Your Parish Council issues two or three Newsletters each year in order to keep residents informed of any issues in the parish and actions taken by the Parish Council.

Your Parish Council sends representatives to various bodies to ensure that residents' views are represented. These include:-

Poppleton Community Trust

Poppleton Youth Action Group

The Ward Committee Planning Team which considers the allocation of the Ward Committee budget

The Parish Council is also represented on the Board of Governors for Poppleton Ousebank School where Councillor Hawkins is a Community Governor

Who the Parish Council Gives Money To

The Parish Council is uniquely placed to provide grants to various organisations on behalf of residents. The council takes this responsibility very seriously and looks to limit funding to organisations which are felt to be providing facilities which are of general benefit to residents. During the past year, your Parish Council has given grants to the following organisations:-

Grant to the maintenance All Saints Church Yard - £150

Grant to the refurbishment of All Saints Church Hall - £1,000

Grant to Poppleton Community Trust - £5,000

Grant to Poppleton Junior Football Club towards the creation of the Community Sports Pavilion at the Millfield Lane sports ground - £5,000

Grant to Poppleton Youth Action Group which manages the Youth Club - £1,000

Grant to Millennium Green Trust - £500

Grant to Poppleton Luncheon Club - £60

The Parish Council also reviewed its policy in relation to applications for substantial grants and now requires organisations to provide full details of their constitution and current finances with any application for funding. Applications have to be submitted before 1st November and decisions on funding are then taken at the January meeting of the Parish Council prior to setting the budget for the year which will begin in the subsequent April.

Issues dealt with by the Parish Council on behalf of residents in the past year

A variety of issues come to the attention of the Parish Council in a given year and the following issues have been dealt with during the past year.

Youth Shelter – The Parish Council was involved in an attempt to establish a Youth Shelter where the young people of the village could meet. A grant application to Yorventure to cover the cost was approved but it proved impossible to find a suitable location.

Park and Ride – The Parish Council took a keen interest in the proposal to site a new Park & Ride facility at Northfield Lane. The council issued a special newsletter to enable residents to express their views on this project and there was considerable opposition to the scheme. In particular, residents felt it would increase congestion on the A59 and lead to more vehicles using Poppleton as a short cut through to the eastbound A1237. The Parish Council made representations to City of York Council objecting to the scheme but planning consent was given. The scheme is currently in abeyance due to lack of central government funding.

Low Poppleton Lane Bollards – The Parish Council asked City of York Council to consider opening up the access to Millfield Lane from Low Poppleton Lane to allow residents to access the village more easily but the City Council was opposed to such a change.

Blairgowrie – The Parish Council has continued to keep a watchful eye on the Blairgowrie site adjacent to Chantry Green. It has also had to arrange for dangerous and fallen branches to be removed and has sought to recover the cost of doing this from the owner but the owner refuses to acknowledge any correspondence from the Parish Council and the cost of legal action to enforce payment would be prohibitive.

Cycle Rack at the Coop – The Parish Council considered the possibility of creating a cycle rack near the Coop but found it difficult to identify a suitable site for a cycle rack.

NEDL Sub-Station – The Parish Council was approached by a resident whose house is adjacent to the Sub-Station on Dikelands Lane because the site had been left in an untidy state following modifications and NEDL were refusing to do anything about it. The Parish Council wrote to NEDL expressing its concerns and the site was subsequently tidied up and new gates were fitted.

Parking on footpaths – The Parish Council is opposed to parking on footpaths in general believing it to be unnecessary. It was also approached by a resident with concerns about cars parking on the footpath outside the Coop. City of York Council were asked to consider installing bollards at his location to prevent vehicles mounting the footpath but the City Council declined to install bollards.

Anti-Social Behaviour near the Bus Shelter on the Green – During the course of last year there were a number of incidents of anti-social behaviour in this area and in one case nearby residents had windows broken. City of York Council Officers and the Police recommended the removal of the seat around the adjacent tree and the modification of the bus shelter to remove the side panels but the Parish Council resisted these suggestions. The Council also featured this issue in a recent newsletter and invited residents to register their views via a telephone poll. The result was that no-one registered support for modifications to the shelter.

Fish and Chip Van – A Fish and Chip retailer, Hooked ‘n’ Cooked, sought to establish a fortnightly visit to Poppleton with a mobile shop. This was curtailed when City of York Council became aware that the operator did not have a licence to trade in the area. Such a licence costs £1,400 a year and so the operator is currently considering the viability of obtaining a licence.

Overview of How Money Has Been Spent on behalf of residents in the Past Year

The Parish Council set a precept of £19,380 for the year April 2010 to March 2011 which was a 2% increase on the previous year. The council also received £135.00 in Allotment Rents but paid £56.47 for water consumption leaving a balance of £78.53.

The money raised through the precept is used to cover a variety of costs and is also used to provide the grants to local organisations as detailed previously in this report.

A summary of Expenses is as follows:-

Clerk's Salary & Employer's N/I	£7,038.48
Insurance	£804.31
Subscriptions	£559.83
Newsletter	£540.00
Seat Refurbishment	£460.00
Chantry Green Work	£365.00
Audit Fees	£365.00
Stationery/Post/Phones	£322.73
Repairs & Renewals	£320.07
War Memorial Inscription	£279.00
Room Hire	£173.00
Councillor Courses	£170.00
Clerk's Training	£92.50
Mole Removal	£60.00
Meeting Expenses	£36.00
Travel Expenses	£26.88
Chairman's Expenses	£16.50