

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO
UPPER POPPLETON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
14th MAY 2012**

This is the Annual Parish Meeting where electors in the parish of Upper Poppleton have the opportunity to ask questions or put forward proposals for the Parish Council to consider. I chair this meeting as the current Chairman of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk, James Mackman records the minutes but other parish councillors attend this meeting purely as residents and electors rather than as councillors.

Upper Poppleton Parish Council will be spending around £22,000 on behalf of residents of the parish in the financial year which began on 1st April. This money is raised through the Parish Precept which is part of the Council Tax paid by every household.

To give you some idea of how this money is spent, the main items break down as follows:-

The Council employs a very able Clerk and he is paid on a nationally agreed scale which is related to the number of residents in the parish.

In recent years, the Parish Council has responded to requests for funding from Poppleton Community Trust which is responsible for running this Community Centre. In the past 2 years, the Council has awarded a grant of £5,000 to the Trust and it has awarded the same amount in the current year. This amounts to around 10p per week per household but this funding is essential to enable the volunteer Trustees to manage the Centre effectively, to develop new facilities and to keep on top of the regular running costs and repairs which go with a building of this size and type.

As you will know, there is a special event coming up next month with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and this Parish Council and Nether Poppleton Parish Council put £2,000 into their budgets to ensure adequate funding for a series of events over the Jubilee weekend. The indications are that not all of this money will be required and so any money which remains unspent will be held in the Council's reserves.

The Parish Council is very aware of the need to provide facilities for the young people in our community and this is reflected in the grants provided to Poppleton Youth Action Group to assist with the cost of running the Youth Club. The Council has awarded £1,000 to the group in recent years and this has supplemented funding through the Ward Committee and some direct funding from City of York Council. However, it is worth pointing out that the Ward Committee budget has been cut from £33,000 to £4,000 as part of the City's budget cuts and there is no certainty of continuing direct funding from the City so the Youth Club may become even more dependent on funding from local residents through the Parish Council in future years.

The Council also responded to a request for funding from Poppleton Community Railway Nursery for £750 towards computer equipment to assist in managing their stocks and producing pricing labels and made an award of £300 to All Saints Church towards the maintenance of the churchyard.

The remainder of the £22,000 in the budget is made up of amounts of regular expenditure with the main ones being:-

Insurance at £820

Subscriptions at £610

Newsletters £540

Repairs and Renewals £500

Seats refurbishment £400

Stationery Post & Phones £400

Audit fees £365

Parish Councils have a long history of looking after the interests of residents in rural communities and that is exactly what Upper Poppleton Parish Council does.

Although many of the things which affect our daily lives have gradually become the responsibility of larger authorities such as City of York Council, your parish council still has an important part to play in maintaining the village environment which makes Poppleton such a great place to live in and in making representations to City of York Council on issues which that council has responsibility for.

On Highways, your parish council has always resisted proposals by City of York Council to introduce waiting restrictions and yellow lines in the parish

On Planning, your parish council is a statutory consultee and considers all applications relating to properties in the parish

On Education, your parish council has representation on the Governing Body of Poppleton Ousebank School

In addition, your parish council maintains the Maypole Green and Chantry Green as well as land on Hodgson Lane and Main Street and your parish councillors also take an interest in the general environment by maintaining seats in the parish, providing notice boards, ensuring street nameboards are repaired promptly when they get damaged and carrying out a variety of other activities which are sometimes taken for granted.

This year also saw the parishes of Upper and Nether Poppleton come together to enter the Yorkshire in Bloom Competition in order to foster even greater pride in our local environment.

We are currently looking to co-opt two additional parish councillors so if you are interested in shaping the future of Upper Poppleton, please speak to myself or our Clerk, James Mackman