



**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF  
DENBY DALE PARISH COUNCIL**

**2011 - 2012**

**DENBY DALE PARISH COUNCIL****ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012****CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW**

As the end of the Civic Year approaches it falls to me as outgoing Chairman to look back on the year and to review the work that the council has been involved in.

May 2011 was the first occasion in many years in which the electorate in our area had the opportunity to actually elect the full Parish Council. This was because for the first time in a long while sufficient members of the local community put themselves forward for election. This meant that there was an election in each of the wards within the Parish. As a consequence of this there were a significant number of new councillors elected and I had the honour to be elected as the first Chairman of the newly elected Council.

As a Council we seek to offer training to our new councillors and one of the things that struck me most when I undertook my training, was the extent of the council's powers and its ability to take decisions and act for the benefit of the community it serves.

I was, however, concerned that the local community were not aware of the role and powers of the Parish Council and therefore during my time as Chairman I wanted to endeavour to raise the profile of the Council as much as possible. I think it is fair to say that this has been achieved to some extent because we seem to be experiencing an increase in the number of people attending the meetings of the council either to address the council or just observe.

I personally have received a significant amount of correspondence since the election and which relates to a variety of issues such as road safety, wind farms, dog fouling and so forth. Whilst we as a Parish Council are not always able to provide the answers or the solutions, I would encourage people to make contact with their ward councillors to raise any issues in the first instance. If the Council is to be effective in working for the people of the area then it also needs them to raise issues of concern with us.

The work of the council is varied and some examples or actions taken by the council include:

- Funding through the Small Grants Scheme for numerous projects for the benefit of all, or part of, our community. This has included grants for events specifically for the purpose of celebrating the Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.
- Small grants to all 12 schools in the parish
- Support for the development of Youth facilities in Emley
- Funding to support the employment of a Countryside Officer for the area.
- The acquisition and installation of new litter bins in village centres.
- Continued work through the Heritage Working Party whereby we have supported the retention of historic data of the parish and the publication of further books about the history of the local area. This activity is self-financing and therefore is at no cost to the Council.
- The Plans Scrutiny Committee considers all plans lodged within the parish and passes on its opinion to Kirklees Planning Department. This is of course in no way binding but at least does provide a limited opportunity for local input into the planning process, though I think it is fair to question the extent to which those views are regarded within that process. Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings and pass on their concerns or support for any planning application.

As Chairman of the Council, I have had the opportunity of meeting with members of other councils from the surrounding areas at a variety of events throughout the year. This is a valuable exercise because it provides an opportunity to exchange views and learn how other councils operate. Many of these events take the form of formal civic events and we have in turn reciprocated by holding a Civic Service at Birdsedge in April. The council has been represented at numerous events such as concerts by Scissett Youth Band, Emley Show and so forth and again these are all occasions when we are able to raise the profile of the Council within the local community.

I would like to think that the new Council has achieved much this year for the benefit of the community that we serve, but of course there is much more we can do. There are some significant issues that we will need to address in the future, as the powers of the Council develop under new legislation.

I would conclude by offering my thanks to Kelvyn Waites who has served as the Vice Chairman to the council this year and has done sterling work representing the Council when I have been unable to attend events or meetings. Thanks must go to Jess our clerk for the excellent support that she has given both myself and the Council as a whole.

I would wish my successor as Chairman the very best for the forthcoming year – there is much still to do. Finally I would reiterate my encouragement to the local community to engage with the Council and councillors. The Council, after all, is here to work for that community as best it can.

**Cllr Michael R Watson TD**  
**Chairman, Denby Dale Parish Council 2011 –2012**

**May 2012**

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### **Plans Scrutiny Committee**

Four remaining councillors were left from the previous council and these were joined by six newly elected members in May 2011.

There has been a meeting every month and the Council discusses approximately fifteen applications at each meeting.

There have been many meetings attended by members of the public who have had the opportunity at the beginning of each meeting to give their views about the applications.

The Committee does its best to consider the views of the public when making decisions and input from local residents is very much appreciated.

This council was one of the first to display application plans digitally during Council meetings and plans are now available to the public via the Kirklees Council website.

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### **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

There were six newly elected members on the F&G Committee this year and meetings were held quarterly throughout the year.

The Committee is responsible for routine and administrative matters of the Parish Council, in particular setting and monitoring of the budget and expenditure.

This year the Committee requested that the Council set aside £20,000 for a Community Grant Aid fund to help groups and organisations who may be effected by government cuts within the parish.

**SUMMARY OF COUNCIL MEETINGS MAY 2011 TO APRIL 2012****MAY 2011**

The Annual Council Meeting was held on 17 May 2011 and Cllr Michael Watson was elected as Chairman of the Council with Cllr Kelvyn Waites as Vice Chairman.

Members were appointed to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Plans Scrutiny Committee, the Staffing Committee, the Appeals Committee, the Working Party on Public Transport, the Business Plan Sub Group, and the Heritage Working Group and as representatives to a number of other outside organisations.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**JUNE 2011**

At this meeting, members voted to have a pitch at the Emley Show so the Parish Council could increase awareness of the work the Council does and have an opportunity to meet with local residents to discuss concerns and issues within the parish.

The Council discussed traffic issues in the parish, in particular an email received from a young girl in Birdsedge concerned about speeding through the village.

The Internal Audit Report, Annual Return, Statement of Internal Control and the Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control were all agreed by the Council.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications. One of the applications the Council objected to was an application for demolishing and rebuilding walls which were in the grounds of a listed building.

**JULY 2011**

John Eccles from Skelmanthorpe United Junior Football Club attended the meeting to highlight the issues faced by the club not only just from a funding point of view but the availability of pitches within the area.

Michael Lee from Emley Village Youth and Community Centre spoke to the Council regarding the grant application to improve the facilities at the Emley Miners Recreation Ground.

Cllr Kelvyn Waites was reappointed as Governor to Scissett First School.

The Council received an update from Cllr Turner on the latest developments with the Churchfields allotment site.

A grant of £1,000 was awarded to Skelmanthorpe Utd JFC for the purchase of new equipment.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**AUGUST 2011**

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications. (No full council meetings are held in August)

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

The Council agreed to write to Kirklees Council Enforcement Officers regarding a planning application at High Flatts which involved a listed building which was of great significance to the history of the local area.

A grant for £9,750.00 was awarded to Emley Youth and Community Centre.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**OCTOBER 2011**

John Jordan a volunteer from Gilthwaites School attended to talk about the possibility of applying for a grant

for solar panels for the school.

The Council contacted Kirklees Council to complain about the 72 bags of garden waste which hadn't been collected from Smithy Lane.

Arrangements for the laying of wreaths on Remembrance Day were agreed.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

### **NOVEMBER 2011**

Gabriella Smith attended the meeting to ask the council if they would consider approaching Kirklees Council to install a panda crossing in Birdsedge and another resident requested a Christmas tree for the triangle in Skelmanthorpe.

Carl Tinson from Kirklees Council attended the meeting to talk about funding available to make improvements in Skelmanthorpe.

Neil Toothill from Kirklees Council attended the meeting to talk about the winter maintenance programme.

The restoration of two red telephone boxes was completed and keys handed over to two local groups.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

### **DECEMBER 2011**

Vanessa Marsden spoke on behalf of the Valley's Team grant application.

The new Police Inspector, Dave Barnett attended the meeting to introduce himself and to give an update on Police work within the Parish.

John Ritchie from Kirklees Council attended the meeting to update councillors on the latest developments with the Localism Bill and Neighbourhood Plans.

The Council agreed to purchase new litter bins for the four wards.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

A number of small grants were discussed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee including the repair of a church clock, a portable building for a community group and music sheets for a local choir.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications and objected to three applications including a work to a listed building and the extending of a graveyard.

### **JANUARY 2012**

Colin Hadfield spoke to the Council about concerns for road safety at Emley.

Simon Reevell MP attended the meeting and answered questions from the council.

The Council agreed to support Kirklees Council's proposals for Dog Control Orders.

The Council agreed to respond to Kirklees' consultation regarding early intervention centres and suggested another lead centre was needed within the Denby Dale Parish rather than the one proposed at Thornhill.

The Council agreed to start a grant scheme for the Diamond Jubilee year so local residents could hold events to celebrate the occasion.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended the precept be increased in line with the rate of inflation as measured by the CPI in January and agreed the appointment of the Internal Auditor.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**FEBRUARY 2012**

Christopher Ward from Parkgate Community Trust attended the meeting to speak about the plans to build a sport facility in Skelmanthorpe.

The Council agreed to write to the Area Committee to ask them to reconsider the timings of their meetings, so more people might be able to attend.

A grant for £2000 was awarded to Skelmanthorpe Male Voice Choir to purchase a new electronic piano.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**MARCH 2012**

The Headmaster from Cumberworth First School spoke regarding the school's grant application. The Council agreed to award the school £4,992.00 towards the new library.

A grant of £500 was awarded to Emley First School so that they could host a Diamond Jubilee celebration.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee agreed new guidelines and forms for the Parish Council grant schemes.

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**APRIL 2012**

The Council discussed local issues regarding dog fouling and street cleansing.

Diamond Jubilee Grants were awarded to the following groups and organisations:

- Scissett Middle School - £500.00
- The Valleys Team - £450.00
- Kayes First & Nursery School - £500.00
- Denby Dale Bowling Club - £210.00
- St Aidens First School - £500.00
- Emley Fundraisers - £50.00
- Cumberworth Community Association £500.00
- Emley Methodist Church - £100.00
- Denby Dale Centre - £242.00
- Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club - £500.00
- 5<sup>th</sup> Scout Group - £450.00

The Plans Scrutiny Committee discussed planning applications.

**SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 2009-2010**

- The Parish Council precepted the sum of £108,915.00
- As a co-funding partner, the Parish Council's contribution to the Denby Dale Parish Countryside Management Project was £25,000
- Just over £20,000 has been distributed or pledged in grant aid to organisations within the Parish.
- £3,000 was allocated to the Environment Trust for the environmental small grant scheme.
- The Parish Council has also supported, by grant aid, the Primary, Nursery, Special and Middle Schools within the Parish
- A donation was also made to the Royal British Legion

**Unaudited Balance Sheet**

	<b>£</b>
Receipts	120,208.47
Payments	<u>122,888.27</u>
Deficit	-2,679.80
Opening Balance 1.4.11	<u>107,207.64</u>
Balance as at 31.3.12	<b><u>104,527.84</u></b>
<b>Represented by</b>	
Earmarked grants	18,271.71
Election Fund	15,000.00
General Reserves	20,000.00
Reserves for Future Projects	<u>51,256.13</u>
	<b><u>104,527.84</u></b>



