

**PRESENT:**

Councillor R Dixon	Chairman
Councillor C Novak	Vice Chairman
Councillor D Busby	Councillor A Davies
Councillor A Gardiner	Councillor A Hewitt
Councillor S Tugby	

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Members of the Public

## 1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I want to start by paying tribute to our two previous Chairmen, John Swinbourne and Mac Fox, both of whom sadly passed away in 2018. They were both founder members of the Council and contributed in many significant ways to the development of the Council, so that it is now an established part of the community of Styal.

They are missed. Our thoughts go out to their families.

## PLANNING

During the previous 12 months the Council has considered 23 applications for planning, an increase of almost 50% on the previous year. 4 of these were from Quarry Bank, all of which were approved with conditions, mainly connected with listed buildings status. Several, as in previous years, were for modest changes to residential buildings. The big one was the proposal to build 250 houses on land between Clay Lane and Sagars Road on what was, until the Cheshire East Local Plan was approved in 2017, Green Belt land. I attended a meeting at Macclesfield Town Hall to express our concerns but it was given outline planning permission. My understanding is that proposals for full planning will be submitted shortly and we shall monitor this development very carefully. Vehicular access will be via Meriton Road into Handforth centre, which is a concern for Handforth residents. Clay Lane and Sagars Road will remain accessible for pedestrians and cyclists into Styal village.

The council has maintained its stance of opposing development in the Green Belt, unless there are exceptional reasons to allow the development, as was the case with planning approval for a derelict barn to be converted into two houses. As it happens much of Styal is within the green belt, and we also have a significant conservation area, centred on Quarry Bank Mill. These should give us some protection against unwanted development.

## RELATIONSHIPS

### • Quarry Bank

We continue to meet on a regular basis with senior colleagues from Quarry Bank, now in the new Welcome building by the Apprentice House. Representatives from Quarry Bank also attend our Council meetings, giving us updates on the Quarry Bank project and answering any questions we may have for them. We believe that maintaining this contact is important for both for the Council and the National Trust, particularly now as much of the village is even more integrated into the overall Quarry Bank experience with the opening of the village hub, 13 Oak Cottages, and the improved accessibility of Chapel Woods. We will continue to monitor developments at Quarry Bank.

It helps that two of our Councillors are tenants and that I volunteer with Quarry Bank in the gardens and Quarry Bank House.

### • Manchester Airport

Councillors attend the regular meetings at the airport held by the Community Outreach team and report back to the Council. We raised with the airport on a regular basis the problems associated with off airport parking, particularly that which is unauthorised. This is also an issue which we raise regularly with Cheshire East, seemingly to little effect, although we recognise the difficulties.

### • Cheshire East

Councillor Stockton continues to attend our meetings whenever possible, thus maintaining our link with the Local Authority, although once again I have to declare my frustration over the seeming lack of action by Cheshire East. I thought we had reached some sort of understanding over parking restrictions along Altrincham Road some months ago. We even had sight of a draft plan. But nothing has happened. We will continue to press, but we, unfortunately, do not make these decisions.

We do, of course, comment on all planning applications that come our way and, as appropriate, attend relevant meetings connected with planning.

- **Electricity North West**

It is right that I register in this report the frustrations caused by the work undertaken by ENW to improve their electricity cabling along Styal Road and Hollin Lane as part of a wider scheme to upgrade the cabling between Moss Nook and Wilmslow.

Representatives did attend a council meeting but this did little to allay concerns of residents about the poor communications and changes of plan which greatly affected the lives of our residents while the work continued.

### **COUNCILLOR SURGERY**

Once again we ran a series of surgeries at Earlams, sometimes with the PCSO, but I have to report that these have not been well attended, despite being advertised on the website and the Notice Boards. I am happy for these to continue and would encourage residents to attend these informal sessions.

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Sadly I have to report no progress this year. We seem to have dropped off the radar of the Cheshire East NP team, on whom we were relying for support. We will need to make a decision about continuing with the good work that we started or abandoning it, especially now that the Cheshire East Local Plan has been approved.

### **VILLAGE MATTERS**

We discussed a wide range of issues relating to the village in general and tried to respond to questions raised in public participation sessions.

We again supported the Christmas tree lighting, Styal in Bloom, and hedge cutting along Hollin Lane where there is multiple ownership. (We now have a list of owners of the 88 plots, which may be useful in the future.)

We expressed concerns over the escape of horses on to Altrincham Road, Hollin Lane and Holly Lane; although this issue has been resolved by the horses being moved out of the area.

Last year I raised the issue of SEMMS or A6MARR, in particular the junction at Styal Road with the new road. The problems are all too clear at the moment, not helped by the varying timescales that were displayed at the road works and the unconvincing explanations given to justify the changes. Clearly we still have some months to go before this is over. I wish we could do more to help our residents trying to get in and out of the village.

At least we still, for the moment, have an hourly bus service, the 130 provided by D and G, between the airport, Wilmslow and beyond to Macclesfield. However this is not a subsidised service, despite our lobbying, and therefore could be withdrawn if insufficient use is made of it. From this month, also, there should be more regular trains stopping at Styal Station in both directions.

### **FINALLY**

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their work during the previous year, and our Clerk, Sue, for all she does both during meetings and behind the scenes between meetings. I want, also to thank Dorothy Oldham from the Methodist Church who has facilitated our use of the Church for meetings since the Council came into existence. As you can see, we are now in new premises, which I hope you find welcoming and appropriate.

Thank you to those residents who attend our meetings for your continued interest in and support of this very special village. As Councillors we are here to represent your views and interests. Your support is vital to our work. Thank you.

## **2 VIEWS AND COMMENTS FROM ELECTORS**

No comments or issues were raised

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting