

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Dixon Chairman (2018-2019)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Members of the Public

## 1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is my third annual report to the Parish Council. How times fly when you are enjoying yourself!

I think it right that I should start with my profound thanks to Alan Gardiner, who is retiring after eight years as a Councillor for Styal. The Gardiner family have been tenants at Oak Farm since the mid 1880s, initially of the Greg family until the farm was handed to The National Trust in 1939. For many years Alan supported a whole variety of village related activities, including the Runway 2 Action Committee and the Village Association, until he became a founder member of the Council upon its inception eight years ago. You are probably aware that he is leaving the village and moving to Wilmslow later this year. I have greatly valued his insight and depth of knowledge about the village. Rest assured, we will not forget Alan's contribution. Our very best wishes go with him as he embarks on the next phase of his life.

It is right too that I should mention Andrew Hewitt at this stage. He, also, has now completed eight years as Councillor and his lifelong knowledge of the village is invaluable. Thank you for staying with us for a bit longer as we see in the next phase of development of the Council.

Since our last Annual meeting we have met 8 times as a Council and discussed a wide range of issues which I will now attempt to summarise.

### PEOPLE

During the course of the year Debbie Busby resigned and moved out of the village, but we were able to recruit Sarah Parker to the team; a very welcome addition to the team, especially as she brought cakes! As well as Alan resigning at the end of the year, Simon Tugby also tendered his resignation. However for the start of this new period of office we have been joined by Craig Buckley, one of the Rangers at Quarry Bank, and Peter Highfield, a fellow Hollin Lane resident. So we remain at full strength

### RELATIONSHIPS

#### • Quarry Bank

We continue to meet regularly with senior colleagues from Quarry Bank in separate meetings and get updates from their team at our regular Council meetings. During the course of this last year this was particularly useful when plans for the permanent replacement of the Upper Garden cafe were presented to us in a special on site meeting. We have noticed the considerable increase in the number of visitors to the site, which will need careful managing over the years so that the unique nature of the offer is not diminished. Of particular interest currently are the revised plans for parking in the village, which we hope will lead to less congestion along Altrincham Road.

#### • Manchester Airport

Councillor Novak attends MAG Committee meetings on our behalf with me as the alternate. I believe that the airport shares our concerns about off airport parking in the village and are supportive of actions to manage this. Our regular attendance at meetings with the Airport is vital to our work in the village.

#### • Styal Village Association

Your Chairman attends Village Association committee meetings whenever possible, which provides a useful way link with this organisation. During the course of last year we agreed that the village planters would be maintained by the Village Association as this was a more effective approach

#### • Cheshire East

Councillor Stockton has attended our meetings when able. However his illness meant that this was less often than in previous years. I believe that this adversely affected some of our work with Cheshire East, particularly in relation to parking and speeding, although from what Councillor Stockton said at our last meeting I am hopeful that we will see some developments in the next 12 months, subject to funding being available. We continue to comment, as appropriate, on planning applications that are relevant to the village, of which more later in this report.

- **Police**

It has been good to welcome PCSO Kerry Hancock to many of our meetings during the year, and even when operational issues prevented her attendance she provided a written report. We are grateful for this support. Kerry has now moved on and our new PCSO, Lisa Gamble, has already visited Earlams on several occasions. (Her details are available in the shop.)

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.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

For a variety of reasons I must report that we have made no progress on this during the year. We could do with some help from residents who are not members of the Council, so if anyone is interested please have a word with any of your Councillors after the meeting. I want to stress that it is helpful if a Neighbourhood Plan is in place, particularly when considering planning applications. It can mean also more funds being made available to the Council when there are larger developments

## **PLANNING**

During the last 12 months 41 applications appeared on the Cheshire East Planning weekly lists for the parish of Styal. In addition there were several that appeared under our banner that were in Poynton and linked to the Manchester Airport Relief Road. We did not comment on all of these, as some came under the category of permitted development and so were beyond our remit, even though in some cases we felt that we should have been allowed to comment. Looking at the decisions that were made, it appears that even though all of Styal is in the Green Belt and some is a designated conservation area, most of the individual applications for small scale extensions were approved, albeit some needed to have several attempts before the planners were satisfied.

One major development that is now back is the proposal for up to 250 houses on the Clay Lane/Sagars Road triangle. Jones Homes were given outline planning permission for this, with access from Handforth via Meriton Road. Jones Homes pulled out of this but Anwyl Homes has taken over the development. We shall watch this carefully for any implications for the village. Two of our colleagues attended a meeting recently with Anwyl Homes and it looks as though any developments will be phased in over a three years period, once it has full planning permission.

## **VILLAGE MATTERS**

As usual a wide range of issues were raised during the public participation slots of our meetings. Several were recurring issues. These included parking on Altrincham Road, speeding in many parts of the village, the impact of off airport parking on the village, the loss of the bus service, particularly for its impact on elderly residents.

Other issues included: litter and dog fouling around the village; parents dropping off and collecting children from the school; cars waiting at the North end of the village; road signs that needed updating to take account of the Airport Relief road; the development at Little Stanneylands and its impact on traffic flow; pavements along Altrincham Road and outside the Sports Club on Styal Road that were overgrown; the closed end of Altrincham Road. All these were raised by members of the public.

During the course of the year the Council made a donation to HMP Styal and arranged for hedge cutting along Hollin Lane where there is multiple ownership. The Council again supported the Christmas tree lighting by the war memorial.

We have yet to make decisions about the installation of Speed Indicator Devices and await further advice on this matter

## **FINALLY**

I want to thank my fellow Councillors for their work and Sue for all her work, especially behind the scenes between meetings. Thanks also go to Earlams for allowing us to use this building. I think we all agree that this is a much better venue for our work, and it is good to have some refreshments available. I want to thank especially our residents who turn up regularly to hold our feet to the fire, in the nicest possible way, to ensure that we continue to do our best for the village.

Thank you for your attention. If you have any comments or questions now is the time to raise them, before we adjourn to the cafe for refreshments provided by Earlams.

## 2 VIEWS AND COMMENTS FROM ELECTORS

- Parking along Altrincham Road IS very bad at weekends although since Halo has gone and no longer park along the road it has helped a little
- Inconsiderate parking by parents dropping off and picking up children is still a significant problem
- The new planter at the entrance to The Ship Inn car park could prove to be dangerous. It is very large but also dark so not easy for car drivers to see;
- The Quarry Bank website makes no reference to parking being free at their main car park.

*The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting*