

ANNUAL REPORT : YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2012

STATEMENT OF AIMS :

"Heptonstall Parish Council exists to serve and support the community of Heptonstall Parish, specifically :

- 1.) To protect and conserve what is of merit in the heritage of the Parish, whether this be the green or the built environment, objects or features within them, or organisations, activities and facilities operating within the Parish.*
- 2.) To promote and support new developments in the Parish which will contribute to the wellbeing of the Community whilst not detracting from that which is worth preserving.*
- 3.) To prevent new developments which will impact adversely on the heritage of the Parish, or on the wellbeing of the Community.*
- 4.) To consult members of the Community on all matters which potentially may have a major impact on the Community before arriving at a decision on action.*
- 5.) To maintain awareness of the needs and wants of parishioners so that these can inform the prosecution of the Council's aims.*
- 6.) To keep parishioners informed of Council business in hand and of decisions made.*
- 7.) To respond courteously and constructively to parishioners' complaints and concerns of whatever nature and, where justified, to endeavour to the best of the Council's abilities to bring about a fair and reasonable outcome to these.*
- 8.) To secure the involvement and support of Ward Councillors – and through them the Principal Local Authority – in seeking to achieve the Council's aims.*
- 9.) To establish and maintain links with, and where required gain the involvement and support of, other people and bodies in achieving the Council's aims eg the local MP, other Parish & Town Councils, NALC, National Trust, Rambler's Association, etc."*

GENERAL

1. Administrative :

- All Council members are signed up to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct
- The Parish Council has revised its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations following a comprehensive review in line with national recommendations : effective from 1 November 2010
- Terms of Reference for each of the Council's four Committees are reviewed annually
- Ten Policies are in place and cover the following topics : Staff Recruitment, Staff Appraisal, Discipline & Grievance Procedures, Bullying & Harassment, Equality & Diversity, Members' Allowances, Handling Complaints, Dealing with the Press, Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme. (*Document availability and cost*)

is displayed in the Parish Council noticeboards).

- Councillors' Allowances (*Decision NOT to pay Allowances to members – as has previously been the case. Public notice given*)
- Public Participation : encouraged, and incorporated as a dedicated and minuted as part of each Council meeting.
- A Risk Assessment regime is operated

2. Personnel :

- Nine members of Council. Date of next elections : May 2015.
- Addresses of all members and The Clerk (with contact details) are permanently displayed in both Council noticeboards, and are annexed to this document.

3. Venue of Meetings : The Council meetings have been held at the Slack Top Centre until November 2011, and thereafter at the Council Chamber at Hebden Bridge Town Hall (following temporary unavailability of The Slack Top Centre).
The venue and time of each meeting is displayed in each Council Noticeboard.
Eight additional meetings have been held during the year, as well as seven further informal meetings with Calderdale officers etc.

4. Publicity :

- Noticeboards at Heptonstall and Colden (car park at May's Farm Shop) for Council and Community notices.
- Quarterly summary of Council activity in Parish Newsletter – published by Heptonstall Forward and funded by the Parish Council.
- Use of local press for articles/advertisements when relevant.
- Decision taken not to have separate Council website, but contribute to others.
- Publicity Officer = Councillor M V Edwards.

A. SPECIFIC

a. Environmental Issues :

- Skiphire provision for garden & household refuse in 2 locations
- Provision of 'white bags' for disposal of garden refuse where transport to transfer station is unavailable
- Joint meetings with National Trust re Gibson Mill/Hardcastle Crags
- Maintenance of picnic area in The Pinfold. Addressed Risk Assessment issues of the surrounding trees and walls.
- Pursuing issues regarding unkempt properties and dumped domestic items.
- Addressing the problem of unsightly properties, and responsibilities in respect of Listed Building/property in Conservation Area
- Further attempts to tackle the ongoing problem of dog fouling (including provision of additional bins and notices),

b. Planning, Compliance and Enforcement influence with Principal Authority.

Planning Applications are considered and comment passed to the Planning Authority.
Enforcement issues are also addressed. Planning Appeals to the Secretary of State are also addressed, and representations made to a Public Enquiry when required.
40 Planning Applications have been considered during the year.

c. The Community-led Plan :

Heptonstall Forward published a new Community Plan with Parish Council support (representational and financial). Several Working Groups have sprung from this initiative with welcome support from within the community.

d. Highways : addressing safety issues, condition of walls, drains, road markings, damage to property by HGV vehicles, impeded sightlines, overhanging vegetation, verges, signage,

public parking, parking impeding bus service, and speed of traffic (implementation of 20 mph Speed of Traffic Order), winter gritting & salt bins, the closure of Widdop Road by Yorkshire Water.

Also rights of way including impeded access to paths, footpath diversion, rights of access, condition of paths and paved paths and width of stiles.

The Traffic, Parking & Road Safety Working Group is already active looking at the obstruction of the bus service and emergency vehicles at the top of Southfield as well as speed limits throughout the Parish and parking issues.

Other :

- Bus Service – addressing specific service problems and cost of fares
- Hebden Bridge Town Hall – the Council is a member of the Friends of Hebden Bridge Town Hall and participate in User Group meetings as its future use evolves
- Face to face discussions with Ward Councillors, Principal Conservation Officer and other Calderdale MBC officers as well as wider liaison arrangements
- Asset Transfer : making an application to transfer a parcel of land from Calderdale Council.
- Signage to and from Heptonstall

C. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Provision of Financial Support to a range of organisations :

- Public Parking
- Supporting Heptonstall Forward for administration, Community-led Plan and Parish Newsletter costs
- Pennine Spring Music to support participation by young people
- Charitable activities
- Grant to Heptonstall Social & Bowling Club to assist continuance as a Community Venue
- Support to Hebden Bridge Bowling Club
- Support to Heptonstall Allotment Gardens Society
- Educational Charities
- Assistance for the provision of Christmas Lights at Heptonstall and Colden

D. REPRESENTATIONAL

Council members and The Clerk jointly provide a high level of influence locally and nationally on a wide range of bodies :

LOCAL

- School Governors
- Charities
- Rural Transport Partnership
- Local Partnership
- Heptonstall Forward
- Heritage Partnership
- Hebden Bridge Town Hall User Group
- Parish & Town Council Liaison

- Upper Valley Councils Cluster

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Public Rights of Way
- Popples Common
- Protection of Rural England
- Open Spaces
- National Trust
- Countryside Access Liaison Group

EXECUTIVE

- Standards Committee
- Local Councils Associations : County and National
- Local Council Clerks : County and National
- Institute of Local Council Management : National Board
- Training Standards : Local, County and National
- Development of Parish & Town Councils : National
- Regional Governance

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councillor B Adrian Baldwin 46 Longfield, Heptonstall HX7 7LR

Councillor Mrs Jean Crowther (Chairman 2011/12) Green Slack, Slack Bottom HX7 7EZ

Councillor Dr John R Dunford 13 Smithwell Lane, Heptonstall HX7 7NX

Councillor Michael Edwards 12 Smithwell Lane, Heptonstall HX7 7NX

Councillor Nicholas G H James Old Edge, Edge Lane, Colden HX7 7PG

Councillor Mrs Mary Livesey 26 Hepton Drive, Heptonstall HX7 7LU

Councillor Keith Roberts 4 Deercroft Drive, Salendine Nook HD3 3SQ

Councillor John Scarborough 9 Becketts Close, Heptonstall HX7 7LJ

Councillor Brian Stott 7 Silver Street, Heptonstall HX7 7PA

CONTACT

Roger M Greenwood

The Clerk

Heptonstall Parish Council

The Mallards

Underbank

HEBDEN BRIDGE

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RMG 03/2012