

Annual Parish Meeting Chair's Report



Introduction

Welcome to the **Parish Council's Annual Meeting**, thank you for your attendance this evening. I hope you find the meeting useful and informative. The aim of the meeting, is to bring together the various organisations within the community to share information and ask questions and gain an increased understanding of the future direction of these organisations and find out about their successes and the challenges they may face in the coming year.

Firstly, I am sure you would agree, that we are extremely fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the country, situated on the edge of the Lincolnshire Worlds and in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, a place is not defined not only by its surroundings, but also by the people who live there. The communities of Partney and Dalby are welcoming and close-knit, with a strong sense of community spirit, mutual support, and a genuine willingness to help each other. This is very apparent at the Friday Coffee Morning. I would particularly like to thank Ann and Mick Lovelock and their team for their very impressive fund raising over the nine years they have been running. The Coffee morning is a life line for many people. The Victory Hall Committee have also provided events and activities to promote social interaction, including the Winter Warmers Lunch Club. These events provide significant benefits for residents.

Volunteers remain vital to the strength and well being of the parish. However, one of the challenges the Parish Council faces, alongside other organisations is engaging and retaining a team of willing individuals to continue the support of the community. Whilst there is a strong sense of community spirit, modern lifestyles, work commitments and other responsibilities mean that people's time is a precious commodity. The Parish Council remains committed to continue to work in partnership with other organisations, including the church, the Victory Hall, and Partney School to address local priorities, improve facilities to ensure Partney and Dalby remain safe and welcoming place. I would like to thank residents and councillors who recently joined in with the village Tidy Up morning – their time and effort is much appreciated

The Parish Councillors

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the councillors of Partney and Dalby for their commitment, time and contributions over the past year. Councillors who represent Partney and Dalby have a diverse range of expertise, include finance, local government, compliance and education. As well as councillors with years of experience of representing their community – more of that later!

A particular thank you to Councillor Mick Lovelock as Vice Chair for his on-going support, his expert local knowledge, as well as an encyclopaedic knowledge of how to set a parish precept! Councillor Sue Sargeant for her work on the risk assessments at the cemetery and her all-round support. Councillor Emma Middleton for her financial guidance. Councillor Andy Ratcliffe for his expertise with highway issues. The council is pleased to be joined by Councillor Jude

Hunton as a councillor for Partney and we very much look forward to working alongside him in the future. We currently have two vacancies on the Parish Council, and if anyone is interested please contact the Parish Clerk, Jane Slaymaker.

I am sure all councillors and residents will join me in offering their sincere thanks to Jane in her role as Partney and Dalby's Parish Clerk. It is a very responsible position, advising the council on legal matters and implementing the council's decisions as well as financial responsibilities. Jane is literally the face of the Parish Council on a day to day basis. Jane conducts her role with professionalism and knowledge. She plays a central role in the smooth running of the council, keeping the councillors on track and more importantly lawful. She is a huge asset to the council. At a number of meetings, we have been joined by County Councillor Danny Brookes and District Councillor Will Grover. This has been useful as we continue to pursue the many highway concerns we have in the villages, including the deteriorating footways, littering, speeding in Partney and Dalby and the poor condition of the highways. Residents can support the council by continuing to report these issues via the fixmystreet app. Councillors have conducted training to support them in their role, including Councillor Refresher Training and training by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership. We aim to commence speed checks in Partney once the sites have been verified by the Road Safety Partnership.

Finances

Over the past year the Parish Council has managed Council's money closely against the budget. The Parish Council publishes an annual budget and reviews expenditure against the budget on a quarterly basis. Currently the council has an appropriate amount of reserves to enable it to meet the needs of the community, this includes the maintenance of the cemetery, grass-cutting around the village and responsibility for the village defibrillator. Last financial year the income of the council was £18,843 with £6253 being the precept (this is the amount of money the Parish Council requests from ELDC to fund its activities). The expenditure was £15,702. The purchase of the new bus shelter and replacement defibrillator have been two large acquisitions for the council. Both have been possible by a grant fund from Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council. Last year a District Councillor Community grant of £300 funded the printing of the Navigator magazine. The council is extremely grateful for these grants.

Communication

The parish Council continues to communicate with residents through a variety of channels. Key information is routinely displayed on the noticeboard and the council maintains a website where all policies, meeting minutes and agenda are readily accessible.

In addition, the council produces a quarterly magazine, The Navigator, which coordinates updates from a variety of organisations. The council is very grateful for their contributions. The council engages directly with residents at the drop-in sessions held at the Friday coffee morning – these take place the Friday before the council's full meeting and information is displayed on the noticeboard.

A major achievement this year has been the construction of the bus shelter outside the Red Lion in Partney. We have received many positive comments. The acquisition of the bus shelter was first mentioned in minutes 50 years ago!

The council has identified a number of priorities for 26/27 and will update their action plan when time allows. The council will continue to represent residents and speak on behalf of the community to higher authorities, including the District and the County Council.

Finally, I wish to hand over to Ex- Chairman of the Council, James Boullton who would like to say a few words about Councillor Beth Dawson as we mark her 50 years on the Parish Council. A major achievement !