

Chairman's Report for Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Good evening and welcome to the Burnham Market Annual Parish Meeting for 2021.

This year's meeting will be under a very different format than usual due to the ongoing restrictions of the pandemic.

My name is Paul Woodhouse, for those that don't me and I am the chairman of the parish council.

This year's report will be much shorter than usual because of the restricted activity of the previous 12 months, but I will start with the council itself.

We said goodbye to Maxine Hayes our Clerk after several years, her position was taken on by a locum, Sarah Hunt until we found a permanent replacement. I would like to this opportunity to thank both Maxine and Sarah for the time and dedication to the parish council during their time with us. This brings me to welcome Lolly Dawson as our new clerk and we very much look forward to working with her. Lolly's contact details are available through the website, Facebook and the parish magazine.

The body of councillors has also seen many faces come and go over the past 12 months, again I would like to thank those no longer serving on the council for their time and dedication and welcome on-board new faces with ideas for future projects. A full list of councillors is on the website.

Despite all the challenges we have been working together, socially distanced and mostly on zoom, to keep up to date with the running of the village.

I would like, on behalf of the parish council to thank everyone in the community who has been selfless and dedicated to helping the more at need and vulnerable members of community during what has been the most unprecedented year. The volunteering to help with shopping, cooking of meals, making sure prescriptions have been be dispensed and countless other tasks to keep, as much as possible the welfare of our residents looked after. The Community support group among others have been a vital life line, so much praise and many thanks to all involved.

The village bin scheme has been such a success that the administration has had to be given up by the council and passed to a community company to keep it going, thank you to all involved with making this project happen, it really has helped to keep pavements and roadways clear of bins for the benefit of all!

The allotment committee have introduced new paperwork for the smooth running of the administration of the leases and land uses, many previously unused plots have been cleaned up and put back into use and we still have some plots available should anyone be interested. Again, information for this can be found via the website and the Clerk.

During the pandemic, regulations have changed rapidly and we have had to respond according especially with regards to the playground which has spent time closed completely. The annual safety inspection has been carried out to make sure all is well and good, as a result of this we had to replace the side in June, this was the original one which was not replaced in the major redevelopment project. We will continue to maintain and keep the outside spaces safe for people to use.

Our ongoing street light project has seen further exchanges from old lanterns to new efficient LED ones and these upgrades and investments have resulted in the electricity running cost now being nearly a quarter of what it was a year ago! This is really progress and we will continue with rollout program as the we move through the year. We now have regular monthly inspections for the streetlights carried out by councillors with all information recorded within the updated administration journal.

During the past year we have also investigated other projects such as the possibility of having entrance gates put up on the entrance road into the village on Creake road but this was deemed unfeasible due to the narrow size of the road side verges.

The neighbourhood development plan is again in motion after being postponed due to Covid - 19. The first action for this is create a community steering group to manage the process. Should anyone in the parish wish to join this group please do contact us through the clerk.

During the end of 2020 and into the early months of 2021 we have experienced the most rainfall in a century. This has led to complications with our waterways and overwhelmed our infrastructure. We have worked alongside and closely with Highways, the Borough Council and surrounding parishes to deal with the flooding. There is still a pump at barrow pit but the pump from the village centre had been removed and highways have repaired the and cleaned the roads and removed traffic restrictions.

Our social media has been improved and updated along with the website so a lot of the information available to councillors and parishioner alike can be accessed from these platforms along with contact details for the parish council.

Thank you for your time.

Paul Woodhouse.