

6 parishioners, Parish Council members, the Parish Clerk and Caretaker in attendance

Also in attendance Cllr Katherine Henig, Paul Rutherford, Neighbourhood Warden and Dennis Coates Accreditation Panel

1. **Apologies for Absence:**

Parish Councillors McDonnell, Dawson and Harris

2. **Welcome:**

Cllr Foster (Chairman Waldrige Parish Council) welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending, she introduced the Parish Councillors and the Clerk.

3. **Minutes from previous years Annual Parish Meeting - 28 April 2015**

These were agreed as a true record and signed by the Parish Council Chairman

4. **Local Council Award Scheme:**

Dennis Coates, chairman of the Accreditation Panel attended and congratulated the Council for their work in achieving the award. He presented them with their certificate.

5. **Chairman's Report:**

Cllr Kathleen Foster presided. The written report from the meeting is appended in full to these minutes. She noted if anyone wished a copy of the annual report to see the Clerk or visit the website

6. **County Councillors report:**

Cllr Henig gave her report, mentioning road safety, local environment, parking scheme, and project funding. The report is appended in full to these minutes. She stated she is looking forward to continuing her work in the coming year.

7. **Neighbourhood Warden report:**

Paul Rutherford gave a report on fly tipping and distributed flyers on the work the Neighbourhood Wardens do.

8. **Parishioners questions:**

- Concern over parked cars on the corner of Poplar Street. Letters from the police have been distributed to each household.
- Bins left out after collections all week
- Abandoned vehicles on the hammerhead
- Gun shots at Congburn woods - the residents are very happy with the police presence since the last parish meeting.

All concerns and questions were answered by the Neighbourhood warden.

Comments to be passed to the police re the gun shots.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

This will take place on 11 April 2017 - to commence at 6.00pm before Full Parish Council meeting.

Chairman's report – Annual Parish Meeting 2015

I would like to welcome everyone and thank you for attending this evening.

This meeting is held in addition to the normal Parish meetings which are held every month, except August, making 12 in total. Before each meeting the Council holds a surgery at 6.30pm for anyone wanting to attend, all we ask that prior notice is given to ensure Councillors will be in attendance.

I would also like to introduce our team for the year ahead Our Parish Clerk- Angela Foster Councillors Julie McDonnell, Carol Harris, Geoff Cork, Melanie Howie, Chris Moody, Ian Cooper, Howell Davies and Kirsteen Vaughan and Brian Laidler our caretaker.

All our contact details are available on our website at www.waldridgeparish.co.uk, and in our Clippings newsletter, which is personally delivered by the Councillors to all residents 4 times per year.

The Parish are always happy to have parishioners attend our meetings, raising local issues and concerns, requesting assistance and information. We can't promise to achieve what everyone wants, but we can promise that we will do everything in our power to act on your behalf.

The Council is here to serve everyone in the area, so if you have any views or ideas to help improve the work of the Parish Council, please let us know as we are interested to hear them.

Throughout the year we have organised and held many events which will be discussed in our Annual Report. We review these activities constantly; hoping to make everything we are involved in even more successful than in previous years. The aim of these events is to provide a community based event where families can spend valuable, fun filled time together without needing to spend a lot of money. The events were a great success. When the Annual Report is issued, you will see just how much has been organised for the Parish, by the Parish, in the last year.

The Parish would like to invite all residents to take an active role in these events and also our environment by joining one of the many working parties that are organised. Even if you were to just pop along and give 15 minutes once a year to help us pitch an event tent or just set up a table, this would be a most welcome contribution. You'll be made very welcome.

Over the last few months regular coffee mornings have been held in the Parish Rooms and more are planned, our thanks go to Brenda Wright who has organised and planned these. All funds raised are being donated to the Northumbria in Bloom fund, enabling us to purchase additional plants, tubs and anything else we need to improve the Parish and of course help improve our chances of more success the NIB competition

Moving onto Northumbria in Bloom, the working group has, thanks to the hard work of Councillor Cork and Brian our Caretaker, has developed and grown beyond expectations once again. We have sponsored flower beds and as always, the parish looks in great shape with the addition of more flower beds.

It has been raised by our local police force in the past, that maintaining local amenities to the high standard that we do, actively discourages crime.

We are very lucky to not only live in this environment, but also one where the crime rate is low. Whilst we all recognise that there is a minority of people who behave in an inappropriate manner; it is important that you continue report incidents to the Police so that suitable measures can be taken to minimise the effect of undesirable behaviour.

We have actively pushed for speed checks in the parish to raise people's awareness of the need for caution in our built up areas when driving. We have attended several of these speed checks at all hours of the day. As a result of these speed checks new lower speed restriction will come into force soon on the estates. We will continue to ask for these checks to be carried out.

Moving on, as with all Councils our financial records are available to be viewed, upon request, by residents of the Parish and our draft financial report for the year will be enclosed in the annual report once issued.

When we distribute copies of our annual report can we ask if anyone has any questions to raise them with us? If you do have any specific parish based queries, please do not hesitate to approach one of your councillors tonight and any questions not able to be answered tonight will be looked into and we will get back to you.

I would like to thank the members of our Parish Council, our County Councillors Katherine and Keith, Mark the Fell Ranger who, unfortunately, has now left the position and also Durham Constabulary for the time and effort throughout the year they have provided within our community and their attendance at our Parish meetings.

I would also like to specifically thank Angela, the Clerk of the Parish, and Brian, our Parish Caretaker, for all their unseen hard work throughout the year. We wouldn't survive without their support.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank any of the public that have been involved in helping us this year, including everyone who comes along to the coffee mornings as we now have a few regulars, also all Parish Councillors for their time and energy. We are all volunteers and give up our time to help our Parishioners as best we can and also to continue keeping our Parish 'looking good'.

I look forward to seeing you again at our Parish meetings.

Many thanks again for giving your time to attend this meeting