**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED**

**THURSDAY 31st MARCH 2023**

**MEMBERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

**2022/2023**

**Councillors**

Peter Rhodes – Chairman

Neil Hobbs– Vice-Chairman

David Griffith

Steve Ashton – Until January 2023

Clare Cornmell

Peter Shervington

Carol Stevens

**Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer**

David Cornmell

**Foreword**

I have the pleasure in presenting this, my latest and final, annual report covering the work of the parish council over the past 12 months.

I have served as a parish councillor for a long number of years, and having had the honour to act as Chairman of the Council for so many of those years, I have decided that the time is right for me to step aside and allow others to take up the challenge of serving and representing the parishioners of East Cottingwith and Storwood.

It has been a real privilege to have worked with so many of my fellow parish councillors, both past and present, and those who have taken on the duties of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: I thank them all.

Also, I have got to know so many of my fellow parishioners during this time and learned such a lot about the various issues that are important to them.

**Steve Ashton**

But first, before touching upon this year’s work, I must refer to the sad passing of Steve Ashton. Steve was a well-known, well-liked and respected member of our local community. A much loved and dedicated family man, he served with distinction as a member of both the parochial church council as well as the parish council. Those who attended his funeral service, which were many in number, and who came from both far and near, learned so much about his past life; his professional accomplishments and the dedication which he showed to the various organisations and individuals with whom he was associated with. Steve will be so sadly missed by all of us who came to know him.

**The Year’s Work**

**HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

After 70 years of dedicated public service, 2022 saw the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It was a great pleasure to see our local community come together to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee in June, with lighting of the beacon and various events held in St Marys and the Village Hall.

**HM KING CHARLES III**

Once again, parishioners came together last week to witness and celebrate the Coronation of HM King Charles. I am particularly grateful to those members of the local community who drew up plans to commemorate the event. The Council was successful in obtaining a grant, which enabled the purchase of commemorative mugs, distributed to the younger members of the parish.

**ELECTIONS**

Ward and parish elections took place on 4th May. Five of my fellow parish councillors decided to stand again for re-election. I was pleased to see that the two remaining vacancies have been filled by Dayalan Parapen and Simon Jones, resulting in an un-contested election. A warm welcome is extended to both of them.

**PLANNING**

A considerable amount of the Council’s time has been taken up this year in dealing with matters relating to planning. In addition to the normal scheduled meetings, it has been necessary to convene a number of additional meetings to consider outstanding planning applications.

The Council was asked to comment upon sixteen new applications during the course of the year, including notifications seeking permission for tree work in the Conservation Area.

Whilst the majority of these applications were supported, three in particular gave cause for concern and resulted in an objection being lodged with East Riding of Yorkshire Council, these were:-

**Land East of the Old Ship Cottage, Church Lane – Erection of a dwelling and garage**

The site occupies a prominent position within East Cottingwith’s Conservation Area. The Old Ship Cottage is a Grade II listed building and there are a number of other listed buildings in close proximity to it, including St Marys Church. Objections were raised to the initial application and the revised plans which were submitted. The application was considered by the Western Area Planning Committee where permission was refused.

**Land South of Sycamore Bungalow, Main Street – Erection of a detached dwelling and garage (revised plans)**

Despite an earlier objection to any development on this site, the County Council agreed to grant planning permission for a single-storey, cottage style, property, in keeping with others situated nearby. Two revised applications were subsequently submitted for a much larger, two-storey property, which was to be constructed in materials not in keeping with those specified in East Cottingwith’s Conservation Area Appraisal. A decision on this matter has yet to be made.

**Hall Garth Farm, Church Lane – Erection of a two-storey extension to the rear**

Whilst having no objection, in principle, to the proposed extension, concerns were raised about the proposed conversion of an adjoining barn into offices, a gymnasium and a garage. The County Council has seen fit to grant permission for the extension and it is understood that a fresh application is to be made in respect of the barn.

Some other planning applications, considered in previous years, and worthy of note are:

**Forest Farm, Langrickgate Lane – Conversion of former pigeon lofts to storage and workshop space**

The County Council has still not made a decision on this application.

**Wold View, Langrickgate Lane – Conversion of former garage to dormitory style holiday accommodation and change of use of land to dog walking area**

Permission has now been granted, with a number of conditions being imposed.

**Land North East of Paradise Lodges, Ballhall Lane – Change of use of land for the siting of a converted HGV trailer for use as holiday accommodation**

An appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, against an earlier refusal, was unsuccessful.

**BROADBAND**

KCOM’S fast-fibre broadband scheme was finally completed in September. As part of the scheme, the company agreed to install broadband in the Village Hall. My thanks are extended to Neil Hobbs, who has been instrumental in bringing this about.

**BLOCKED DRAINS AND POTHOLES**

Of particular concern is the repeated flooding of the footpaths and roadway near to The Elms, as a result of blocked drains. Following representations, Ward Councillor Leo Hammond has taken the issue up with the County Council and it is hoped that the matter is resolved in the near future. His attempts to have potholes repaired have been parcially successful.

**FINANCE**

It is a legal requirement of the parish council to determine the local precept – the money required to meet parish expenditure and to maintain a reserve. This levy is included in the annual council tax bill. The precept was increased to £8,800 for the 2021/2022 financial period and was kept the same in 2022/2023. I am pleased to say that, despite the ravages of inflation and the high cost of energy, by careful budgeting, it has been possible to maintain the precept at its current level.

The major items of expenditure continue to be the cost of grass-cutting; the Clerk’s salary; the donation made to the Village Hall Committee and the cost of electricity.

New procedures were introduced in 2015, requiring the parish council to publish details, on its website, of all expenditure over £100 and other financial information. In addition, a more stringent internal audit regime came into effect at the same time. The Council continues to embrace those procedures and is particularly grateful to a local parishioner who has freely given of his time, over a number of years, to carry out the annual audit of the Council’s accounts.

**Conclusion**

Another busy year and my last as Chairman. I wish the new Council well for the future.

Peter Rhodes

Chairman

11th May 2023