

ULNES WALTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006

INTRODUCTION

The past twelve months has been a period of notable achievement for the Parish Council with a number of new initiatives being embarked upon and continued success in addressing residents concerns. The report that follows is a brief summary of the main activities undertaken by the Parish Council during 2005/2006.

MEMBERSHIP

There have been no changes during the year, Cllr Derek Ormerod was re-elected as Chairman at the Annual meeting in May.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

During the year traffic calming measures have been introduced along Southport Road, this followed on from discussions with the Traffic and Road Safety Unit; Traffic Police Officers and representatives of the Parish Council, feed back is welcomed on the impact these measures have had.

The County Council has also approved additions to the signage at the junction of Moss Lane with Ulnes Walton Lane and signs to warn drivers of the presence of horses/pedestrians along Ulnes Walton Lane.

A number of accidents have occurred along Leyland Lane and the Parish Council with assistance from residents have requested the County Council address this concern.

ULNES WALTON ROAD SAFETY GROUP

It was clear from letters; emails and representation at Parish Council meetings that there was definite concern about road safety along Ulnes Walton Lane. Lancashire County Council now operates a policy whereby they no longer deal with items relating to road safety on a one off basis, Parish Councils must prioritise areas of concern and put them forward for consideration for inclusion in the County Councils Business Plan. To this end it was decided to try and establish a Working Group to look at the problems and collect the required evidence. Enough residents came forward to volunteer and as a result the Ulnes Walton Road Safety Group has been established. The Group needs to be expanded to cover the whole parish, so if you have concerns please join the group so that positive action can be taken.

WYMOTT PARK

A working Group has been established to explore with Officers from Chorley Borough the possibility of developing the play facilities using grant aid. It is not too late to become involved with this project just contact the Parish Council Clerk; again little can be done without the support of the community.

PARISH COHESION

It was clear from talking to neighbouring parishes that they have similar problems and goals as Ulnes Walton, such as traffic issues; litter etc. It was felt that presenting a united front may prove beneficial in lobbying for change, to this end and on the initiative of Ulnes Walton Parish Council a Parish Cohesion Group has been formed made up of Councillors and Clerks from Ulnes Walton; Bretherton and Croston. The inaugural meeting was hosted by Ulnes Walton and it is clear that there will be some benefit to be gained for all concerned.

PRECEPT

Through prudent use of balances and as far as possible accessing external grant aid, the Parish Council has managed to maintain a very low level of precept for a considerable number of years. However, rising insurance costs, audit fees and the introduction of new initiatives such as working groups and parish cohesion has put pressure on the annual running costs. The Council needs to retain a reasonable amount in balances in case the need arises to meet election costs (the current fee charged by the Borough Council is a minimum of £700).

In order to maintain prudent financial stability, the annual precept has reluctantly been increased by £1000 for 2006/07 to £4000 in total. For a Band D property this only equates to an ANNUAL increase of £3.70 which amounts to 7 pence per week.

The Ulnes Walton precept remains one of the lowest amongst the Chorley Parishes and in the view of the Council represents extremely good value for money. Wherever possible other sources of funding are sought and it is worthwhile nothing that over the last three years £16,500 has been raised as a direct benefit to the Parish. This does not include other funding that has been obtained through the production of the Parish Plan.

PRISON ISSUES

Successful dialogue has continued with the Prison Authorities, notable achievements include the planting of screening and the agreement that lorries accessing the building site should use Ridley Lane rather than Ulnes Walton Lane.

QUALITY PARISH STATUS

Following attainment of the Quality Parish Status positive benefits have been slow to emerge. It will take time for Principal Authorities (in our case Chorley Borough and Lancashire County Council) to produce Charters which address the details of the new relationship. We intend that this issue will be raised when Parish Councillors meet with the new Chief Executive of Chorley Borough, Donna Hall.

CHORLEY BOROUGH AREA FORUM

The Parish Council was invited by Chorley Borough to take part in a pilot scheme for Lostock Ward, the aim of the Area Forums is to allow the Borough Council and partner organisations such as the appropriate Parish Councils, Police, Primary Care Trust, and voluntary and community groups, to get together with people to discuss any issues that directly affect the community. The first meeting took place on the 23 March 2006 with further meetings planned for July and September.

PARISH PLAN

The Parish Plan is proving it worth and has helped in particular Action for Ulnes Walton secure funding for proposals it contained. The newly established Road Safety Group will be able to use the document as an aid to lobbying the County Council for the introduction of road safety measures. There is much work to be done in the Plan and residents support is needed to carry the proposals through, please join in the events; activities and working groups and make a real difference. The Council has it in mind to up-date the plan by seeing residents views on current issues.

WEBSITE

During the year Cllr David Williams has continued to work on developing and expanding our website, the latest information on what's happening with the Council can be obtained at – www.ulneswaltonpc.co.uk.

OTHER INVOLVEMENT

Parish Councillors and the Clerk have attended a number of meetings and events during the year including – Lancashire County Council Conference; LAPTIC Conference; Parish/Borough Liaison Meetings; Laying of Foundation Stone for the Housing Development at Glover Close; Liaison Meetings with the Home Office; workshops on Renewable Energy; Liaison meeting with Lindsay Hoyle MP to name but a few. This demonstrates that we are a small but active Parish Council working for the good of the whole community.

AND FINALLY

There are lots of people to thank for their help here are just a few – the team of trusty volunteers who assist in delivering the newsletters; Dominic Rigby the LCC Countryside Officer and the committee members of all the community groups and working groups with whom we have worked, these people have assisted in helping the Parish Council achieve some of its goals.

SUMMARY

The Parish Council has had another successful year with some notable achievements and is looking forward to moving ahead with other plans and grant opportunities. In order for the Council to be successful it needs the support of the public if you have any issues of concern please contact one of the Members, the Clerk or make your views known at a Parish Council meeting as part of the Residents Surgery.

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