

ROSSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDING 31/3/2009

The past 12 months as was to be expected has been challenging which unavoidably created tensions which generally stimulated interest in the importance of the Parish Council.

Parish Poll

A request by electors for a poll of the public at last years A.G.M. seeking opinion in respect housing developments on greenfield sites around Rossington was agreed by the Council.

The subsequent poll took place on 24th. July, resulting in a vote of 19 to 1 against greenfield developments from almost 1,000 voters.

Eco-Town Proposals

Government proposals to build eco-towns have resulted in widespread opposition locally and nationally, which has been exposed as a charter for land and property developers, rather than a project for sustainable development. The mythology that housing developments create commercial and industrial jobs, rather than the other way round no longer stands up to scrutiny, particularly in the face of longer term job losses that are being forecast.

DMBC / Parish Council Joint Charter

The Parish Council responded to a request from the DMBC to sign up to a Joint Charter of co-operation on matters of mutual interest.

Our experiences, particularly in respect to planning applications have been far from satisfactory, and there is much room for improvement.

Decisions already determined for implementation are made known to us with no other consultation. Hopefully under the Joint Charter these situations will be overcome.

Closure of Rossington Hall Special Educational Needs School

It was with regret and dismay, taking into account growing concerns about weaknesses in the needs of children requiring special support that the school was closed on 23 December.

The closure followed 20 years of persistent activity by business interests to secure ownership of the premises from the DMBC. It seems that Special Needs like Care Services have become sacrificial lambs to assist bailing out the banks.

Good Neighbours

Due to staffing difficulties the Good Neighbours ceased their community meals services in March, after well over 40 years of dedicated service for

which they have our appreciation. However, investigations are being undertaken seeking options to restore those services if at all possible.

Allotments

Following the floods of 2007 the allotment holders bounced back in 2008 gaining recognition for their efforts from independent judges. There is it seems a "growing" interest in this productive and worthwhile activity.

Memorial Hall Refurbishment.

The upgrading of the hall is self evident. Compliments by the public, user groups and people conversant with building improvements have been overwhelming, and bodes well for the future.

Re-Naming the Hall

The name change to Rossington Parish Community Hall was approved to take account of a wider participation of the buildings extended facilities, in which the Memorial Hall remains an integral part.

Disqualification

Failure to attend Parish Council meetings for six consecutive months resulted in disqualification from office by a councillor and created a vacancy. At the December meeting of the Parish Council the vacant post was filled by Tom Jewsbury by co-option.

Resignations

At the March meeting of the Parish Council, Cllrs. Barry Johnson and Malcolm Clark tendered their resignations from the Parish Council. With no request for an election, co-option by the Parish Council from people interested can take place.

Council Clerk

In August it will be 10 years since Steve Merriman was appointed Clerk to the P.C. Throughout his period of office he has carried out his duties with commitment and professionalism, which has assisted the Council in being more focused and responsive to community expectations.

Parish Councils and Democracy

Parish and Town Councils are the basic interface between the elected representatives and the electorate, and it is crucial that they should play a more active role in the face of increased pressure from unelected and less accountable organisations with vested interests. In the current economic crisis community interests can find expression more readily available at Parish Council level than elsewhere.

Yours sincerely

Cllr. Terry Wilde