

STANTON AND THORNTON PARISH COUNCIL,
CHAIRS REPORT 2020-2021.

This last year has been a challenge for everyone as the global pandemic that is Covid-19 has taken its toll on virtually all aspects of normal life. Lock-down has resulted in the seven parish council meetings held during this year to be conducted online via the remote platform Zoom and because of restrictions, there was no Parish Assembly meeting, a joint meeting between the parish and community councils. The seven council meetings had an attendance rate of 94% by councillors and a total of 10 residents joined one or more of the meetings to comment on agenda items.

The Parish Council were able to keep the precept contribution per household at £9.31 and because of lockdown, savings have been achieved by not being able to hold meetings in public resulting in a nil expenditure in Hall Hire costs, saving £408 from the previous year. Printing cost are also down on the previous year as no quarterly newsletter has been printed and circulated because of covid restrictions. The Parish Council continue to financially support The Friends of Stainton and Thornton Green Spaces with a contribution of £200 towards their running costs and a contribution of £500 for the upkeep of village assets such as notice boards, seats etc. The Coronavirus Pandemic throughout the year has impacted on the proposed expenditure by the Parish Council with several activities/projects being unable to be undertaken. Reduced spending by the Environment Committee on plants and materials also contributed to the overall underspend. The total spend was under budget by £1831.77, leaving the overall finances in a healthy state to implement some of those projects put on hold.

The development at Hemlington Grange continues to grow and is now over a third built with over 400 houses of the projected 1400+ built and occupied. Trying to integrate the development, part of the parish, into our community and parish remains a challenge.

The Neighbourhood Plan pre-submission draft has been circulated to all concerned and the Neighbourhood Plan group are collating the responses from residents and statutory consultees and hope to have the final plan ready for submission to MBC sometime in May.

Dog fouling issues, speeding and anti-social behaviour are still prevalent through the village but the major issue that has dominated proceedings in recent months is the closure of Kell Gate Green due to a pollution problem in the beck. Raw/foul effluent has been discharging into the beck in Kell Gate Green from package treatment plants from the two new properties within the grounds of Stainton House. The properties were given planning approval by MBC to install this type of system rather than connection to the main sewer. After much discussion and pressure being brought by parish councillors, all of which appear in the minutes of the parish council meetings to take the problem seriously, the parish council, MBC, the Environment Agency, and the residents are exploring ways of solving the issue. Because of this willingness to resolve the issue by MBC, it is hoped that KGG will be able to re-open sometime in May, once appropriate signage has been put in place and funded by MBC. MBC have also agreed to fund further sampling and testing of the discharge and water in the beck throughout the summer should it become necessary.

The authority to hold parish council meetings remotely, via Zoom in our case, had a "sunset clause of 6th May and as a consequence, because there are no parish council elections this year, it has been agreed to hold our AGM via Zoom on the 6th May. Normal face to face meetings will resume in June and we can look forward to putting some of the projects that have been put on hold because of the pandemic into action.

It has been a very strange and unprecedented year, but thankfully things seem to be getting better, so hopefully by the summertime things should be getting back to some semblance of normality. I would like to thank all Parish Councillors for their help and support throughout the year and to Jim Holmes our Parish Clerk for hosting the meetings and ensuring we did not fall foul of any legal technicalities whilst we tried to carry out parish council business through the year.

Alan Liddle – Chair.

Stainton and Thornton Parish Council.

May 2021.