

Annual Report of Astley Village Parish Council

Year April 2015 to March 2016

The Council

During the year ending March 2016 the Parish Council worked hard to maintain and improve the village for its residents.

Councillors

During the period the Council was chaired by Councillor Laura Lennox with Councillor Keith Robinson as the Vice Chairman.

In this reported year the Council was subject to an election, which was returned uncontested with five elected Councillors, being Cllrs Rod Frazer, Chris Lennox, Laura Lennox, Matthew Lynch and Keith Robinson.

The remaining five seats were filled by co-option at the first meeting following, which was in May, then the Council was joined by Councillors Tim Almond, Allan Bridge, Ian Handley, Douglas Hope and John McAndrew.

In this year we also lost two former Councillors. In February 2016, former Councillor Eric Williams died, he had been a councillor from 2013 to May 2015. Dennis Swards died in December 2015. Dennis was one of the founder members of the residents group set up some ten years or so before the village was given permission to have a Parish Council in 1991. Village members set up the group which campaigned and ran events for some 10 years before the official Parish Council arrived. He served 20 years on the Parish Council until retiring in 2011.

Astley Village Newsletter

The new format of the newsletter was well received and given praise by residents. It is published twice a year covering all aspects of the Council's work and will be distributed to every household.

Website

The website, was given consideration this year and due to new legislation and requirements to publish additional information the Council was able to apply for a grant to aid it in satisfying the new rules. It applied for a Government Transparency grant of just over £900 to enable it to have a new website built and buy a lap top computer. The lap top has now been purchased and the new website is currently being built and will be on line in April.

Council Employees

The two village caretakers, Ronnie and Jamie, contribute so much to the excellent condition of our village, litter picking, tidying and doing other tasks such as putting up the Speed Indicator Device, planting up the flower beds and more. Debra Platt, the Clerk, also continued her good work for the Council identifying and pursuing aids such as the transparency grant.

Village Plan

The Council reviewed the village plan during the year, which was published in the newsletter. The plan informed the budget setting which was carried out in January

for the new year beginning the 1st April. Some of the projects will be worked on with Chorley Council whilst others the parish council will look to aid or develop itself.

Value for Money

The Council spends the money it collects from residents wisely and for the benefit of Astley Village residents. Based on a band D council tax property in the village, the approximate cost is 40p per week for the Parish Council's services during the year. This is collected by Chorley Council and costs a total of £21.16 for the year. We hope you agree this is very good value for money.

Summary

The Council is looking forward to the coming year and plans to consider at future meetings improved communication methods, such as maybe using Facebook or Twitter, or both, to further build on its new website capabilities.

**Laura Lennox
Chairman
April 2016**