

Disley Parish Council Annual Report



Chairman's Review of Disley Parish Council's work for 2012-13

Chairman's Report given by Cllr. David Kidd at the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th April 2013

Election of Officers for the year 2012 /13

At the Parish Council Annual General Meeting held in May 2012, Cllr. David Kidd was elected Chairman, Cllr. Jackie Pattison was elected vice-chairman, Cllr. Paul Harris was elected Chairman of a newly formed Finance and General Purposes Committee (previously just Finance Committee) and Cllr. Gaynor Marshall was elected Chairman of Planning Committee for the year 2012/13.

A busy year - summary

2012/13 was a busy year for the Parish, taking on the ownership and management of a newly transferred asset, the Community Centre and delivering some services transferred from Cheshire East Council. The Parish Council also helped and supported a number of different events in our village community. The 2012/13 Parish precept was increased to accommodate the transfer of the asset and the loss of a double taxation payment previously paid by Cheshire East, which ceased as from April 2012.

Transfer of asset and services

In line with national and Cheshire East Council's policy for transferring assets and non-statutory services to local communities, Disley Community Centre was formerly transferred to Disley Parish Council in May. The Parish Council also took on responsibility for two non-statutory services, namely the provision of hanging baskets and Christmas seasonal decorations in the village. The Parish Council declined an additional proposal for the transfer of the automatic public toilet facility located in the village.

Since the transfer of the Community Centre, I am pleased to report that the Parish Council has delivered a first year plan to review the management costs and upgrade the building as follows.

- A full review of the Community Centres income and expenditure budget inherited from Cheshire East Council which was running at a loss was undertaken and significant adjustments applied to achieve improved cost efficiency within the first year.
- External improvements have been carried out including new guttering, removal of moss and debris from the roof tiles, external decoration, landscape improvements to the front entrance area and new signage for the building.
- Internal improvements have been carried out, including re-decoration throughout and renewal of the kitchen facility with new fixtures, fittings and equipment. New chairs have also been purchased for the community hall and new notice boards for the entrance foyer.
- The Centre has been licensed to serve alcohol and for entertainment as required.

The Centre has benefited from regular maintenance and cleaning regime. A Community Centre user forum event was held during the year to both celebrate the transfer and to consult users on developing a future improvement plan for the Centre. Feedback from this event was taken into account when setting the hire charges for 2013/14.

Proposals set out for year two in the Community Centre improvement plan also began with a view to achieving relocation of the Parish Council Office and extension of the building to accommodate increased and more flexible community use.

Staffing changes

During the year the Parish Council appointed a new caretaker for the Community Centre to fill a vacancy that arose at the time of the transfer from Cheshire East. An additional part time member of staff was also appointed in November in a new combined role to provide both caretaker (holiday and sickness) cover for the community centre and assistance and cover for the village handyman service.

Project work and improvements in the village

During the year the village handyman service has been able to focus on more proactive rather than reactive work improving the appearance of the village in a number of locations. The Parish Council continued to work in partnership with the Parish Plan Implementation Group delivering the Parish Plan through a joint Village Action Plan. The Parish Plan Group and volunteers are to be commended for their work in steering important projects from within the community to enhance our village. Canal towpath improvement work, developing new Heritage Trails and a Village Welcome pack and not least setting up a long awaited Friends of Disley Station group which is due to start some work in May this year. Individual Parish Councillors continued to lead on progressing a number of on-going projects, including securing improvements to the Newtown recreational area – football pitch used by Disley and Newtown Football Club; A multi-wheel activity park for young people and a Community Orchard.

Issues affecting the village during the year

During the year the Parish Council was consulted, as a statutory planning consultee, on a proposed change of use at the Moorside Grange from a Class I use (Hotel) to a Class 2 use (Residential Institution). The Parish Council made strong representations to Cheshire East Council, the Planning Authority, expressing concerns on the proposed change of use and to seek further clarifications with regard to the classification change. After a deferral to obtain further information, Cheshire East Strategic Planning Board eventually approved the change of use application. Following approval and to placate concerns expressed by a number of residents about the intended change of use, the Parish Council subsequently liaised with the prospective new owners, Wings. The Wings organisation runs special residential schools nationally for young people who have emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. Five Parish Councillors visited the Wings school in Cumbria and were highly impressed and assured with the high standards of management and educational facilities provided.

The Parish Council was also consulted on a planning application from United Utilities to carry out an extensive three year project needed to undertake essential repairs to the water supply reservoir on Jacksons Edge Road, commencing in 2014. A number of liaison meetings were held in advance of this application to ensure UU carried out community consultations and comprehensive impact assessments to inform the application on applying the best options to minimise negative impacts on the village. The owners of the Rams Head introduced a car parking charging policy on their car park. The Parish Council subsequently negotiated with management to ensure the new policy accommodated short stay parking for community use and also worked with Cheshire East Council to review parking restrictions and enforcement at the Community Centre to prevent relocation of any long stay parking.

The Parish Council has been actively involved in making representations into the SEMMMS consultation process launched during the year. This work will continue in further rounds of consultation to ensure the need for future A6 mitigation measures are adequately explored and addressed in any future proposals.

A year of celebrations

I am pleased to report the Parish Council supported an excellent Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration event in the village organised by a Jubilee Committee from community volunteers. A second successful Well Dressing Event was also supported again, which will now hopefully be an annual event bringing new visitors into our village. The Parish Council was also more than pleased to celebrate the outstanding Gold Medal achievements of Sarah and Barney Storey in the 2012 Paralympics. A well-attended "Welcome Home" village celebration organised by the Parish and Cheshire East Councils, took place in Disley Primary School. It is also proposed to have a special sculpture located in the village as a future legacy to recognise their achievements.

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Awards

Disley Parish Council's Civic Awards were given to Dame Sarah and Barney Storey for their gold medal achievements; Ron Bosanko for his work steering the Well Dressing event; David Blythe for his work steering the Queen's Jubilee village event; Marie Glennon for her long standing work as coordinator in the Disley and Newtown Good Neighbours scheme; Neil and Norma Raynor for their work running the popular weekly Cuppa and a Chat activity.

Disley was also awarded joint runner up in Cheshire Community Action "Community Spirit" award scheme.

General

Parish Councillors were greatly saddened to learn of Margaret Duddy's death in February this year. Margaret had been an active and influential member of the Disley Community for many years and had given long standing service in local government as a Councillor representing Disley Parish and Macclesfield Borough as leader of the Borough Council for 18 years. Her funeral service was held at St Mary's Parish Church.

Finally I would like to thank all the Parish staff and fellow Councillors for their help and support and hard work during my year as Chairman

Finance Report 2012 – 2013 by Councillor Paul Harris, Chairman of Disley Parish Council Finance Committee.

The balance sheet for Disley Parish Council for 2012/13 (subject to audit) is presented. All income and expenditure has been accounted for and the accounts show a surplus of £1,067 in income over expenditure. This reflects prudent budget setting and budget control for the year.

Major Income Items:

- £3,589 Non-specific grant from CEC - Cheshire East Council paid a one-off non-specific grant as a means to compensate parished areas for services provided in the unparished areas of Macclesfield & Crewe.
- £10,000 transitional funding from CEC for the Community Centre
- £4,952 Recharge to CEC for Library Utility Costs
- £9,338 Rental Income
- £110,500 Precept
- £7,410 Land Rental

On 1st May 2012, Cheshire East Council transferred ownership of Disley Community Centre to the Parish Council for the nominal amount of £1. The asset was valued at £249,000. However, historical accounts for the facility from Cheshire East and Macclesfield Borough Councils showed an operating loss of approx. **£11,000** per annum.

Cheshire East Council withdrew their non-statutory service to supply Hanging Baskets and Christmas Trees in 2012/13 and Disley Parish council elected to take over the provision of these services. The costs of these, **£2,200 and £3,000** respectively, were added to the precept request.

In addition, Cheshire East Council also withdrew the Double Taxation Rebate to Town & Parish Councils in 2012/13 which in the case of Disley Parish Council amounted to **£14,289** in 2011/12. Disley Parish Council had traditionally used this rebate to reduce the amount of precept requested.

This equated to an additional payment of 36p per week for a band D property for 2012/2013.

Major Expenditure Items:

- £1,000 Grants to Well Dressing Committee
- £1,000 Grant to Diamond Jubilee Committee
- £1,400 Grant to St. Mary's – Burial Grounds upkeep
- £2,797 Provision of Christmas Trees and Village Decorations
- £2,663 Provision of Hanging Baskets
- £10,079 Community Centre Revenue Costs
- £21,647 Community Centre Refurbishment / Maintenance Programme
- £23,600 Parish Council contribution to the PSCO service
- £8,650 Essential tree maintenance work
- £3,000 Newsletter production and distribution
- £2,390 DPC Office – new boiler and kitchen repairs

I am pleased to announce that through careful management over 2012/2013 we have successfully clawed back a large revenue deficit and nearly achieved a breakeven.

Finally I would like to thank Mary Webb our Clerk for her professional accounting skills and excellent work in managing the budget.

Looking forward to 2013/2014

Every year the Parish Council raises a precept in order to pay for the range of services it provides.

As a result of careful scrutiny of the budget and making savings wherever it was deemed possible, there will be no increase in this year's precept which will remain at £56.91 per year for a Band D property. This is despite increasing pressures resulting from the transfer of services from Cheshire East Council.

The Parish Council was recently informed that PCSO Chris Jackson would be transferring to Poynton in April this year.

Councillors met with senior officers from Cheshire Constabulary who advised that the levels of anti-social behaviour in Disley were running at a very low level and in their opinion one permanent full time PCSO for Disley would be sufficient at the present time.

The Parish Council has therefore decided not to request a replacement for PCSO Jackson and it is this saving which has enabled the Parish Council to achieve a neutral budget.

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2013

	31/03/12	31/03/13
	£	£
Long Term Assets		
Investment Account	72,151	70,000
Current Assets		
Debtors		1,923
VAT Recoverable	1,130	1,491
Payment in Advance	1,060	151
Cash at Bank	71,932	54,689
	<u>74,122</u>	<u>58,254</u>
Total Assets	146,273	128,254
Less current liabilities		
Loans		
Receipts in Advance	2,443	507
Creditors	17,150	
	<u>19,593</u>	<u>507</u>
Represented by:		
Opening Balance	125,898	126,680
Fund Surplus	782	1,067
Balance carried forward	<u>126,680</u>	<u>127,747</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the Council as at 31st March 2013 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year. The statement has not been subject to external audit.