

SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Message from the Chair

I would like to start by saying that I hope everyone living in the parish, and all your families have stayed safe and well through what has been a difficult and challenging 2020. Nobody could have anticipated Covid and the devastating effect it has had on communities.

Throughout the pandemic the Parish Council has continued to work to meet the needs of residents and respond to local issues. Due to government restrictions during the pandemic the Parish Council were unable to meet physically and had to adapt quickly to meeting virtually via ZOOM. These virtual meetings have been successful and have allowed us to continue to work to support the community.

Over the last year the Parish Council has continued to work to meet the needs of the community by listening and responding to local issues. The Council works closely with the Police, Durham County Council, community groups and local organisations on matters which affect the parish area.

I would like to thank all Members of the Parish Council for their continued support during the previous year. Sadly, I would like to pay tribute to the late Councillor Sonia Haddick who passed away in 2020. Councillor Haddick was a valued member of the Parish Council who gave many years of dedicated service. I would also like to thank Councillor Alan Foots who has retired from the Parish Council after many years of service. I would also like to welcome Councillor Georgina Fuller to the Parish Council.

I would also like to thank County Councillors Sue Morrison and Geraldine Bleasdale for their support during the last year.

As restrictions are gradually lifted, please remember that we are approachable and ready to help. Let us all work together for the continued good of the community.

A Slater

Chair to Seaton with Slingley Parish Council

Clerk to the Council and Responsible Finance Officer

Joanne Thompson

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The Council has had another active and productive year. The annual report gives an indication of the Parish Council's activities over the past year.

1. Precept

The Council's budget for 2020/21 was set at £13,636.00.

The Parish Councils budget is financed by a Precept which is part of the Council Tax that is collected from local electors via their Council Tax payment. The Parish Council is also reliant upon Central Government grant support. The grant called the Council Tax Support Scheme is paid direct to Durham County Council who then redistribute the grant to parishes. The County Council is under no obligation to do this and since its introduction the grant the Parish receives has been reduced each year. Wherever possible the Parish Council uses reserves to keep the precept as low as possible for residents.

For the financial year 2020/21 Seaton with Slingley Parish Council received a Council Tax Support Scheme grant of £118.00.

The Parish Council required £13,636.00 for the 2020/2021 financial year. It used £1,493.00 of reserves to provide a precept of £12,025.00 which together with a grant of £118.00 gave a total of £12,143.

2. Finance

The Council remains in a healthy financial position.

3. Planning Applications

The Council is a statutory consultee on all planning applications submitted to Durham County Council. This means that the Council has the opportunity to comment, support or object on any application submitted from within the village.

4. Grounds Maintenance

During 2020/21 the Parish Council purchased its summer bedding from Shaw Trust.

Planting and maintenance on the flower beds was undertaken by Mr P Reay.

The Parish Council entered into a Service Level Agreement with Seaham Town Council for the watering of the flower beds.

Due to the escalating costs related to maintenance and watering it was decided to landscape the beds with low maintenance shrubs and bushes.

5. Grass Cutting

The Parish Council has a formal contract with Durham County Council to undertake grass cutting on behalf of the Parish Council during the summer season.

In 2020 the Parish Council purchased a green waste bin from Durham County Council, to be located at the Community Centre, for use by residents who assisted with grass cutting in the village during the growing season.

6. Section 137/133 Donations

All requests for financial assistance must be made in writing to the Council. Listed below are the payments made during 2020/21 in line with the budgeted allocation.

Section 137 Donations

Citizens Advice County Durham	50.00
Royal British Legion	34.00
Great North Air Ambulance	100.00
Durham Cathedral	100.00
Salvation Army	150.00
Total	434.00

Section 133 Donation

Seaton Community Association	1,000.00
Total	1,000.00

TOTAL 1,434.00

7. Litter/Dog Bins

The Parish Council has a contract with Durham County Council to empty litter and dog bins in the village on behalf of the Parish Council.

8. Royal Garden Party

The Parish Council was invited to send 2 representatives from the Parish Council to the Royal Garden Party to be held in May 2020. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus pandemic the Royal Garden Party was cancelled. The Parish Council is hopeful that when revised dates are issued the Parish Council will receive an invite.

9. Poppy Wreaths

The Parish Council purchases 2 poppy wreaths which are placed in the village on remembrance Sunday.

10. Community Defibrillator

The Parish Council was successful in being awarded grant funding from County Councillor S Morrison for the purchase of a community defibrillator. It is proposed to locate the defibrillator at the Seaton Lane Inn.

A defibrillator is a life saving device that can help save the life of someone experiencing a sudden cardiac arrest.

The external defibrillator will be installed in a locked cabinet on the outside wall of the Seaton Lane Inn. This defibrillator is available 24 hours a day to anyone who needs it and can be accessed by ringing 999/112 for the code.

11. Off-Road Bikes and Quads

The Parish Council continues to work closely with the Police and Durham County Council in relation to issues related to off-road bikes and quads causing a nuisance in the village and on the walkway.

12. Carols around the Christmas Tree

Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus pandemic the annual Carols around the Christmas Tree with the Salvation Army was cancelled. This annual event is popular with residents and well attended. It is hoped that the event will be held in December 2021.

For further details please visit our website www.seatonwithslingley.parish.durham.gov.uk

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