



COPPULL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

THE PARISH COUNCIL

In May 2017 Councillor Michael Atherton was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the fourth year and Councillor Nora Ball was re-elected as Vice-Chair. There were three vacancies on the Council from the previous year and a further vacancy due to the death of Councillor Stella Walsh on 18 April 2017. Four new members were co-opted onto the Parish Council in July to fill the vacancies – Councillors Neil Coggins, Jan Colecliffe, Matthew Crook and Paul Taylor. In January 2018, Councillor Simon Thomson resigned due to moving out of the area and interviews will be held shortly to fill this vacancy.

At the end of March 2018, the Parish Council consisted of the following Councillors and the Clerk:

Michael Atherton	- 07780 971364	Paul Eastham	- 01257 791713
Nora Ball	- 01257 792131	Steve Holgate	- 07876 844243
Pauline Cobham	- 01257 792443	Elaine Jones	- 01257 793056
Neil Coggins	- 01257 470609	Sheila Makin	- 01257 792896
David Cole	- 01257 483958	Marjorie Parkinson	- 01257 793566
Jan Colecliffe	- 01257 793069	Maggie Peel-Impey	- 01257 470465
Matthew Crook	- 01257 791036	Paul Taylor	- 07713 097432
Vacancy – West Ward		Sue Edwards – Parish Clerk	- 470120

ALLOTMENTS

The allotments behind St. Oswald's Church are now coming up to their fourth year and continue to be very popular. Eight additional allotments have been provided and there are still a few people on the waiting list. Cllr Holgate donated £20 received from a resident to the allotments plus a donation from County Council of £1,300 towards the provision of the new allotments, the main cost of which is the drainage. The allotment association received funding of £250 and the Parish Council provided the remaining money out of the income received from the allotment holders, with a portion of this payable to St. Oswald's Church for leasing the land.

CHORLEY COUNCIL

Designated Public Protection Order (DPPO): This is around the Leisure Centre, Library, Memorial Garden and a few roads around this area and has recently been renewed. This gives Chorley Council and the Police power to confiscate alcohol (no alcohol area) and to help combat anti-social behaviour.

Housing: Chorley Councillors continue to work with the Parish Council and Adactus Housing to make improvements to the housing estates within the village.

Adoption of Estates: Chorley Council has been working with Lancashire County Council to get new estates adopted quicker. The Grange Estate has now been adopted.

Neighbourhood Priorities: The Jubilee Garden received funding from Chorley Council towards improvements and these have started with the treatment of Knotweed by Chorley Council and the Parish Council has removed some trees which were dangerous or taking light from the garden. Further planting and improvements will take place in the spring/summer. The neighbourhood priorities proposed for the coming year have been the footpath on the corner of Clancutt Lane and a community garden on the Byron Crescent Estate.

COMMUNITY

Christmas lights: The lights have again received great reviews, providing lovely displays throughout the Christmas period. The uplighting of the soldier in the Memorial Garden will remain throughout the year, at the request of residents.

Defibrillators: The Leisure Centre holds an automatic defibrillator and the Conservative Club also has one that is available at all times for public use. A list of other defibrillators in Coppull can be found in the Parish Council newsletter.

Digital Inclusion: The Leisure Centre has played host to a number of free classes on laptop, computer and mobile phone use. It is hoped that this will be built on in the coming year.

Dog fouling: This is still a huge problem, especially during the winter months this year. Chorley Council's Dog Warden makes regular patrols around the village and can issue on the spot fines if someone is caught not cleaning up after their dog. A decision was made to name and shame anyone caught not cleaning up after their dog. A stencil has now been obtained to mark on the ground any areas of repeat offending, which is hoped will act as a deterrent to those people who do not clean up after their dog, and a trail of free dog bags in problem areas.

Grot Spots: Most grot spots in the village have now been dealt with and Councillors each have an area of responsibility in the village which they regularly check and report any concerns.

Noah's Ark: The Pre-school continues to run from the Village Hall and provides excellent care and education. There were numerous repairs to undertake this year and additional money has been put into the budget for next year.

Remembrance Day Parade: This is organised by the Royal British Legion and was again very well attended. The Parish Council contributes financially to the event and obtains and places a wreath down, together with a great number of other organisations. The motorcycle group attended again and followed the procession from the club to the church and back.

Youth Club: LCC decided to close the Youth Club towards the end of 2017 and a Fitness Group approached the Parish Council to take over the premises. A contract was drawn up and A1 Fitness opened up at the beginning of the New Year and appear to be doing very well.

COPPULL IN BLOOM

The Parish Council agreed to mark the 100 years of the First World War by planting up the Memorial Garden in the colours and the logo. New metal barrels have been ordered to replace the wooden ones in front of shops/businesses along Spendmore Lane, which have all rotted. The metal barrels should have a much longer shelf life. Volunteers working alongside the gardener continue to keep the beds and gardens looking nice. Further volunteers are always welcome, even if it is only for an hour or so each week. Chorley Council is contracted to plant the hanging baskets and barrels throughout the village and the flower beds along Spendmore Lane. The mowing of all grassed areas continues to be undertaken by James Riding of JR Garden Services.

Chapel Lane – Old School: A volunteer looks after the small piece of land by the former old Parish School.

New Road Flower Beds and beds near Spendmore Lane Bridge: These are planted and maintained by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council, together with the planning of the hanging baskets and regular watering.

Wheatsheaf Island/Birkacre Brow: The gardener has taken over the planting and looking after the island, as one of the volunteers has now moved away, and The Wheatsheaf Hotel is sponsoring the island.

Seats/Flower Beds – A49 at both boundaries, Jolly Tar Lane and small bed near Police Station: These are also looked after by volunteers and the Parish Council gardener. Rivington View Nursery is to sponsor the bed previously sponsored by 101 Carnations and also a bed on the Berry Garden.

EMPLOYEES

The Parish Council continues to employ one full-time and two-part time Lengthsmen, a cleaner for the Parish Council offices, the Clerk and a gardener.

FINANCES

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): At the end of the last financial year there was £985.33 remaining. This amount has been used to pay for the new path at the Leisure Centre and the remaining money was put towards the allotments.

Financial Statement: This is subject to audit - an independent internal auditor audits the accounts twice per year and an external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission undertakes a final audit at the end of the financial year. There were no issues arising from the previous year. The Internal Audit will take shortly. The half-year internal audit stated:

“Completion of the half-year internal audit of the Parish Council accounts is by carrying out a selective assessment of compliance, with relevant procedures and controls being examined. The Parish Council operates a very effective accounting system which shows the Council’s control objectives are of an adequate standard to meet the needs of the Council”. There were no issues arising.

Precept: The precept was set at £96,140.00 for 2018/19 – this represents an increase of approximately 3.8% on last year’s precept.

GARDENS

Berry’s Garden (formerly Community Garden): The land has been donated to the Parish Council by Keith Berry and will always remain as a garden in memory of his wife, Kathleen. A plaque has been installed in memory of both Keith and Kathleen. A plaque has also been placed in the garden in memory of Councillor Ken Ball. Further improvements are to be made to this garden in the coming year.

Jubilee Garden (formerly Tanyard Garden): The Jubilee Garden continues to be kept in as natural a state as possible. Funding has been received from Chorley Council to enable the dead/diseased trees to be cut down, plants put in and seating, sculptures, etc. This has commenced and will continue throughout the Spring/Summer.

Memorial Garden: This garden continues to be maintained by the Parish Council’s previous gardener, Bill Bailey, on a voluntary basis. Planning will take place in the summer to commemorate 100 years of the RAF and funding to be sought to put up a permanent sculpture.

Springfield Leisure Park: The park is host to a number of flower beds, a natural area and a sensory raised bed, which has had a new wooden structure placed around it, to hold up the soil and also to enhance its appearance.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

A new law is coming into force in May 2018 which full details are not yet known. However, it would seem that a Data Protection Office and an Administrator will have to be

appointed, although the Clerk may be able to be one of these. Chorley Council has been asked to put on a training session so that further information can be sought and to see if councils can work together on this matter.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The County Council faced a severe reduction in their budget this year and last year and are under extreme financial restraints. A new administration took over, so this is in the early stages of change in all departments.

Bus Services: The bus service through the old parish from Chorley to Wigan has now ceased, due to lack of funding and lack of people actually using the service.

Chisnall Colliery Site – LCC undertook improvements over a five year period, but to due budget cuts it is unsure how long this will carry on. There is still some money left in the budget, so work continues.

Highways:

- Pot holes are prolific throughout the village and Lancashire County Council have been given additional money in their budget to implement repairs in the coming year.
- Repairs to Chapel Lane and Jolly Tar Lane's road surface (2016/17 budget) and also parts of Spendmore Lane were completed as promised.
- Work to improve the mini roundabout at the junction of Spendmore Lane and the A49 (2016/17 budget) was implemented and will hopefully reduce noise disturbance to residents.
- Work to improve the mini roundabout at the junction of Spendmore Lane and Clancutt Lane – this appears to be ongoing.
- Parking – this is causing a great deal of concern throughout the village, with vehicles being parked right up to junctions and blocking pavements. Police and highways have been notified.

Library and Children's Centre: The campaign to save Coppull Library was successful and the new administration at Lancashire County Council kept the Library open.

Public Rights of Way Scheme: The Parish Council continues with this scheme and with the strimming of the ginnels.

NATURE RESERVES

Blainscough Nature Reserve: This is looked after by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council and provides a relaxing place for people to walk and take their dogs. It is hoped to work with Chorley Council in the future to plant a wood of Oak trees saplings which are currently being cultivated.

Hic-Bibi Nature Reserve: This is also looked after by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council and is kept in a very natural state, with wild ponies being kept on for part of the year to help control the vegetation. There are numerous sightings of deer in this area, together with foxes, hares, rabbits, plenty of bird life, fauna and flora.

Yarrow Valley Park Nature Reserve: Chorley Council have complete control over the park and is very successful in making improvements and winning awards. This park is used by many people from Coppull, but also from out of the area. There is an award winning play area and a café which is going from strength to strength. The Friends of Yarrow Valley Park undertake many tasks and put on events for adults and children. The Park has an abundance of wildlife both on the lakes and the surrounding grounds and is very popular with photographers.

NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter continues to be very popular with residents and is still being issued four times a year – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Local and other information is included together with adverts from local businesses. A photographic competition was held by Home Truths Estate Agents and the newsletter published the entries and then the winners.

PLANNING

Development in the village is still taking place. Seddon Homes on Chapel Lane has now been completed and a development behind Coppull Mill (Enterprise Centre) is to begin shortly. A few low cost houses/bungalows have been built on the Byron Crescent Estate. Work has commenced on the development at Burgh Lane, Chorley, part of which is over the Coppull boundary. The proposed development of the former Camelot Theme Park has again been refused, but if this gets approval in the future, it will have an impact on traffic coming through Coppull. The Parish Council will continue to fight to keep the green belt surrounding the village.

PLAY AREAS

Byron Crescent Play Area: Continues to be well used by local residents.

Springfield Leisure Park: There had been problems with the zip wire and the company who provided it came back to make the necessary repairs.

Tansley Avenue Play Area: The new play area has been installed, funded through CIL funding. It has been well received by residents.

All the Parish Council owned play areas in the village are now of a good standard and will continue to be maintained in the future.

POLICE

The Police Service has also had budget cuts and the local PCSO is finding it increasingly difficult to attend Parish Council meetings. However, a written report is now sent if an officer cannot attend.

SPRINGFIELD PARK LEISURE CENTRE

The Springfield Centre continues its success and is managed by a number of Trustees, staff and volunteers. Activities available are Climbing Wall, Trampolining and Free Running, to name a few. Local groups can hire the meeting room at very reasonable cost and also hire out the hall. At the moment, the Friendship Group is held twice per month in the meeting room and various schools hire out the hall for trampolining activities, including a number of disabled schools.

The Café is doing very well and hosts children's parties with an activity at very reasonable rates.

WEBSITE / FACEBOOK

The website is now up and running: www.coppullpc.co.uk. This will be updated on a regular basis and added to when possible and an independent Facebook page is being looked into.

THE FUTURE (2018/19):

- To continue to maintain all the gardens, barrels and beds throughout the village and maintain the children's play areas owned by the Parish Council – Springfield Park, Byron Crescent and Tansley Avenue and to make improvements throughout the village.
- To install further Christmas lighting in the village.
- To continue to consult with Chorley Council on the upkeep and maintenance of the Blainscough Wood Nature Reserve and Hic-Bibi Nature Reserve.
- To work with Lancashire County Council on the development of a wood at Chisnall.
- To consider a future plan for the village, to include the following:
 - Footpath at the end of Clancutt Lane, in conjunction with Chorley Council and Lancashire County Council.
 - Heritage Signs throughout the village.
 - To look into obtaining funding to provide a new village hall.
 - Consultation – Continuing to ascertain from the residents of Coppull what improvements they would like to see in their village (through the newsletter).
 - Leisure Centre – (in conjunction with the Trustees) to assist in any way to help increase the usage in the centre during the day time and to continue to build on the activities on offer.