

Chairman's Report – 2011/12

Good evening ladies and gentleman, and welcome to the 2012 Annual Groby Parish Meeting. There are several groups and organisations here tonight that contribute to the fabric of life in our village and will present to you details of their work this evening. Also, tonight you will hear brief reports from Committees of the Parish Council detailing the work of the Parish Council over the last year.

I was greatly honoured to be asked to take on the responsibilities of Chairman for 2011/12, and the past year has been challenging, exciting and at times frustrating. Twelve months as Chairman hasn't been an easy task when each Parish Councillor has had their own view on how to run a Council, and several unnecessary incidents have stopped my ideas from being expressed.

However, in saying that I am a fighting man and I am pleased to say that we have a very functioning and hard working Council that is coming together from all sides.

This still does not stop people, however, from having their own views and other people from saying, "I might not like the chap" coming up with ideas, but that they are adult enough to realise that another person's idea may be a good idea even though you don't particularly like that person.

To me this is the way forward in argument and debate which is perfectly legitimate in a Council Chamber, and will take the Parish Council through to the next year which again is going to be tough.

The Parish Council is committed to deliver a programme of improvements throughout the village and has been able to set aside investment for proposed community projects; it will continue to provide support to engage expertise in the perpetual fight against the Local Development Framework proposal, and will fund a new necessity of "Winter Maintenance" as a result of the deplorable weather

conditions in previous years, creating a stockpile of salt to be used on strategic areas within the village.

In consequence of this, the Parish Council has had to increase its Precept for the forthcoming year, and reflects a rise of £4.16 per year or an additional 8p per week. This decision was not taken lightly and the Council deliberated long and hard in its efforts to produce a realistic budget that would not only satisfy the internal auditor's requirements but ensure that there is no diminution of the services offered next year.

With improved financial control, your Parish Council has steadily continued to deliver a programme of improvements throughout the village and has been able to set aside substantial investment for proposed community projects, as well as providing funding to engage top planning lawyers in the fight against developer's proposals for yet more houses.

In 2009, your Parish Council successfully led a joint community effort with Ratby in opposition to the plans to build 130+ new homes in the Green Wedge between our 2 villages and once again Groby Parish Council is uniting with Ratby Parish Council to fight the same developer who has submitted a new proposal to build 91 houses in the Green Wedge.

The outcome of this process could have a huge negative impact on the future quality of life in and around our village and your Parish Council is fully committed to ensure that your views are fully represented in this process and with that view in mind, substantial funding has once again been allocated to continue to retain our current legal representation.

Finally, before I pass you over to the Chairs of the Parish Council committees to provide you with some details of the work and achievements of our Parish Council over the last year, may I say that the position of Chairman of the Parish Council is a huge challenge, but one that I have taken on and enjoyed, and I look forward to the possibility of returning as your Chairman for the next year.