

Annual Report 2015-2016: Cllr Andrew Pinnock

Introduction

I continue to be one of the 3 elected Liberal Democrat councillors for the Cleckheaton ward. As part of the councillor team, I am committed to doing my best to stand up for local people and the town so that we get a fair share of Kirklees Council services. This is a very rewarding position to hold

Council Meetings Attended:

I have attended all meetings of Full Council. I attended meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee; Planning SubCommittee (Heavy Woollen); Batley & Spen District Committee (including planning meetings preparing for the public meetings); Oakenshaw Forum (a joint meeting with Bradford City Council); Spen Valley Neighbourhood Management Group; Spen Valley Housing Forum; North Kirklees Countryside Forum until its end.

Participation on Outside Bodies:

I was previously a member of the West Yorkshire Transport Authority, which came to an end in mid2014. It was replaced then by a Transport Committee, which is a subcommittee of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It is a 15member body, and I am the only Liberal Democrat member, and one of four members from Kirklees. As part of my work there I am a member of the Bus Services Working Group. Generally the Committee meets about six times a year.

I continue to be a member of the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee. I am one of four members from Kirklees, and the only Liberal Democrat member of the committee. As part of my work there I continue to be a member of the Audit & Governance SubCommittee. I had previously been on the Selection Committee for the new Business Manager (Susan Betteridge), and have subsequently been involved with assessments of her work.

I am the Chair of the Kirklees Historic Buildings Trust, a body set up by Kirklees Council in the 1980s to attempt to bring back into use Listed Buildings at Risk. The membership includes Kirklees and Parish Councillors and others appointed who have an interest in the area's heritage. It would be fair to say that we have had a frustrating year as far as the redevelopment of a property in Mirfield is concerned.

I attend local Tenants and Residents Association meetings to support and provide help and advice on local housing matters. During the last year (and before) I attended meetings held to report on the progress of Europeanfunded insulation work on the Foldings estate in Scholes. I

was very pleased with the way that this was carried out, and in particular praised the work of the Officer in charge. Now that the work has been completed the tenants (and some residents there) have noticed a drop in their heating bills.

I support the Friends of Scholes Rec, whose members are taking a lead in the improvements to the Council's recreation ground in Scholes.

Ward Work and Achievements:

The Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat team keeps residents informed and involved all the year round. We produce and deliver a FOCUS news and campaigning leaflet which we deliver to the 8,000 homes in our ward at least 5 times during the year.

With my colleagues, I have campaigned on several major issues affecting local people which are a consequence of the significant reductions by Government in funding for local government:

Cleckheaton Library: all three Cleckheaton councillors, led by myself, have campaigned very hard to protect Cleckheaton Library and keep it in its current building. Labour announced that their initial plan was to retain only two libraries, at Huddersfield and Dewsbury. This was totally unacceptable to us and the 4,000 local people and 250 children who signed petitions to save Cleckheaton Library. The latest data shows that Cleckheaton Library is the second best used library in Kirklees and the case is very well made to keep this flourishing library serving our community. I work closely with the Friends of Cleckheaton Library to ensure that our facility is maintained and enhanced.

In another blow to local people, the Council has adamantly refused to replace the **Whitcliffe Mount Sports Centre**. The current building is being demolished in order for a new school building to be constructed on the site while the school remains fully working in the existing building. The new school build will have a single sports hall for school use, and community use after school hours. However, this is a big reduction on what is there, and very well used, at the moment. We have argued and campaigned for a second sports hall to be built at the same time as the school building. This suggestion has the agreement of the school, the builders, and the local community but, sadly, the Council has, so far, failed to agree.

Our **Save Spen Pool** campaign was organised and led by Ward colleagues Cllr John Lawson and myself, and with Spen Valley Liberal Democrats including Richard Farnhill. Spenborough Pool was opened in 1969 and is built of concrete and is coming to the end of its life due to the quality of concrete used at the time. The Pool is on the Council's risk register. There is an estimated need for between £8 million and £10 million to replace the pool with a modern facility. Over 4,500 people signed the petition which was submitted to the Council in July 2013.

The Liberal Democrats followed this up by proposing that £4.8m be set aside in the Council's capital plan to fund a replacement. This was successful and forced the Labourrun Council to make additional funding available so that a new Pool can be built.

I have supported the work Cllr Kath Pinnock has been doing with the local **Chamber of Trade** to get improvements to our town. The Chamber is a very active body, and have done a huge amount to promote our town. So it was great to be able to allocate funding to the Chamber for flower barrels which the Chamber then planted. The result is a fantastic flower display.

Westgate derelict site was cleared in 2012 and a planning application approved for 217 housing units. However, the manufacturing business in the centre of the site has to be relocated before development can start. There have been protracted negotiations about this but so far no solution. I have kept abreast of developments on this site, and hope that a solution will be found in the very near future.

Tesco announced in 2012 that they were not going ahead with the building of a new store for Cleckheaton. Obviously that left derelict buildings in Tesco's ownership on the site off Serpentine Road. As ward councillors we had a meeting with senior Tesco property managers along with an officer from the Council and the Chamber of Trade. We were unanimous in asking the Tesco representatives to get their site cleared and developed. Since then the derelict mills have been demolished and the site secured. The site is on the market for over £2m. My hope is that the site will be allocated for houses and some retail, which may then become a spur for the development of the other town centre derelict site off Horncastle Street;

With my ward colleagues we have prioritised the resurfacing of **Wyke Lane in Oakenshaw** which was in a poor state and identified by council officers as being one of the worst road surfaces in our ward. The work has been done and is a big improvement;

The lack of gulleys on part of **Bradford Road in Oakenshaw** has been a constant problem. Work has been done to improve the problem of standing water in wet weather but has not resolved it;

In **Hunsworth** large parts the Recreation Ground were permanently flooded and unusable. We worked with the Council to have new land drains installed. We have then worked with residents in Hunsworth to set up a Friends of Hunsworth Rec to get further improvements. We have held initial and enthusiastic meetings;

Friends of Scholes Rec.: plans for a major improvement to the Rec. Were agreed by the village. We have worked with the Friends to plant over 100 new trees and work will be starting soon to create a path around the whole site.

I have continued to campaign with local residents in relation to the plans by **Redrow** to build houses on virgin green fields round Lower Blacup farm which is one of the oldest buildings in Cleckheaton dating back to the early 16th century. All three ward councillors attended the planning appeal to make the case for residents. Unfortunately, the Planning Inspector has given Redrow permission to build. We will remain vigilant on this issue.

With my ward colleagues I have ensured that we tackle speeding traffic in **Oakenshaw and Moorside / Moorbottom, Rawfolds, and Hunsworth Lane** by the use of a Speed Indicator Device;

Mann Dam and the viaduct – with ward colleagues and the area committee we are pursuing an aim of creating a countryside park and restoration of the viaduct. As a small part of the project, a community artist was commissioned to engage with interested local people. The artist did so and has then created a leaf trail round town and leading to Mann Dam;

I have helped hundreds of local residents over the last year.

This is just a snap shot of the work Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat councillors have done over the past year. Please get in contact if you would like more information.

Surgeries:

Cleckheaton Ward councillors hold dropin surgeries at the Town Hall and Scholes Church Hall every Saturday morning; at Oakenshaw Church Hall once a month.

It is always good to meet residents of Cleckheaton and other wards who come seeking advice and support. We are always pleased to be of help.

Contact me:

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