

Clr Paul White – Chairman of Environmental, Planning and General Purposes Committee 2013 - 2014



It has been another busy and fulfilling year for the Council's Environmental, Planning and General Purposes Committee and yet again we have seen an increasing number of planning applications being considered. Many of these have been from Meltham residents and businesses seeking to improve and enlarge their properties. As a committee we have been pleased to see that many of these improvements enhance individual properties as well as

improve our Township.

Like much of the country we have started to see the impact of the increasing optimism in the housing market. Whilst this increase in activity may not have resulted in any significant increase in house prices or new housing sites started, particularly in the Township, there has been increased activity from house builders seeking both new and revised planning permissions. Of course this is a 'double edged sword' for us. Firstly the prospect of greater building activity may lead to sites such as Albion Mill and Brook Dyeing being finally developed, removing these current 'eyesores', with more choice of new housing and even possibly some 'affordable' housing, as well as more economic activity and employment for local people. However, secondly there has also been a number of planning applications on other more controversial sites, such as the 'Pink Link' site at Crosland Mills, fields at Colders Lane and Helme Lane. The Town Council has objected strongly to the development of all these sites on various grounds, including traffic management, overdevelopment, not enough affordable housing and the loss of valuable green space. However, this is likely to be a losing battle, as Kirklees Council's Planning Committee is minded to approve all of them, because they are sites that match current national planning policy. Regrettably if Kirklees doesn't approve them they will be heavily fined by Central Government!

The 'BIG ISSUE' for local residents and the Town Council is Central Government's current Planning Policy on house building. Your Town Councillors, like many of the town's residents, are increasingly frustrated that local voices are not heard in the planning process. This is because national government policy overrides local

concerns. In the last few years many residents took part in the public consultation for the strategic plan for the Kirklees area, the 'Local Development Framework', or LDF as it was called. This plan shockingly identified that a further 500 houses would have to be built in and around Meltham over the next 15 years. Kirklees Council approved this plan despite strong objections by both local residents and the Town Council on the grounds that the 500 figure is both excessive and in danger of totally changing the unique character of the Township. It is fair to say that all other similar communities in Kirklees were also required to have built similar numbers of houses. Incredible as it may seem, Central Government has rejected the Kirklees LDF on the grounds that not enough housing has been identified and the plan has been forced to go back to the drawing board. This means that there is a high risk that substantially more housing will be required to be built in Meltham, which can only be built on green fields, as there are no 'brown field' sites available. It is clear that National Planning policy is too heavily in favour of Westminster led views. This current government policy is an attempt to achieve a huge increase in house building in every town and village in the country, and takes little or no account of local demand or local environmental concerns. On this 'big issue' your Town Councillors will continue to vigorously object and fight for a change in planning policy so that communities, like ours, are protected from excessive over development. Some housing and in particular increasing numbers of affordable housing makes sense, but substantial increases to the size of townships, like Meltham, we believe makes no sense!

Finally, my fellow Councillors and I believe strongly in the openness of your Town Council. We positively welcome you to our meetings should you have either a concern with a planning application or a wider concern with the environment in the Township. Your views and concerns are an important part of shaping the committee's decisions.

Finally I wish to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee Councillors and especially the Town Clerk for their and her continued honesty, wisdom and fortitude during the past year.

Let us know
what you think



Meltham Town Council Annual Report 2013 - 2014



MELTHAM TOWN COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

Meltham Town Council's mission is to actively seek ways to improve the Township for the benefit of all its residents.

Clr Terry Lyons - Town Mayor of Meltham 2013 - 2014



It's been a truly eventful and positive year for Meltham. The Town Council has given considerable financial support to two of our schools, Meltham CE and Meltham Moor, St Bartholomew's Church Clock Tower Appeal, Meltham Bowling Club, Broadlands Skate Park, the exciting challenge of revitalising the Carlile Institute – ably assisted by Kirklees Council – as a Community Hub for community use, together with the incorporation of the Post Office.

There are impending discussions to be held around the possible relocation of the Library, also moving the Town Council and the taking up of rooms for offices/small businesses. We are at the cutting edge within Kirklees with this devolvement venture.

Two truly memorable occasions that were military connected here in Meltham was the creation and opening of the Tom Wroe Complex Care Facility at Helme Hall. This facility will give intense care to young people who are severely disabled with the aim of eventually enabling them to support themselves in the community and even find employment.

A Stone Plaque in memory of Tom. The unveiling was preceded by a march, from the Town Hall – in pouring rain – to the church for the service, followed by the unveiling of the plaque, on St Bartholomew's Church outside wall. A further special service took place and the unveiling of a plaque in memory and honour of the late Pte Roy Gibson, who was killed during the Korean War, 60 years ago. It was requested by his widow, Kathleen Cockroft a Meltham resident of many years. In this task I was well supported by Huddersfield Veterans and Meltham & Meltham Mills Band, who played and marched to the church, in Moldgreen, on Remembrance Sunday afternoon for this special service. Particular mention for Meltham resident, Stuart Ashby's assistance with the plaque and Meltham Royal British Legion for their financial assistance from their standard bearer and Mr Peter Foden being parade marshal.

My sincere thanks to our Clerk, Mrs Sarah Armitage for her invaluable support, throughout my year, with her diligence and particular attention to detail, being ever helpful when and wherever possible. Finally, I am more than proud of being the first Town Mayor of Meltham and thank my wife, Christine for her support as the first Mayoress.

Let us know
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Clr Jean Wrathall – Chairman of the Administration, Properties and Finance Committee 2013 - 2014



This is my first foray into Chairing the Finance Committee of Meltham Town Council over the last financial year having taken over from a very worthy Clr Holroyd-Doveton. Meltham Town Council has had to cope financially with the continuing budget cuts imposed firstly by the Government which have then impacted on Kirklees Council and then us. However, I feel that there will be still further cuts to come and the Committee for the forthcoming financial year will have some hard choices to make.

On the brighter side, the Robert Ashton Memorial Park, whilst still incurring the largest expenditure for the council, has seen the renovation of the pond completed and a new drainage system installed in the football pitch. Our current landscape gardener in the park has made a vast improvement to the planting and grass cutting and overall the look of the park for our residents to enjoy and we have also repaired the lights up the driveway.

The Holme Valley Mountain Rescue Team headquarters which were going to be situated in the park have now fallen through with the headquarters remaining at Marsden. However, one of our Councillors came up with the idea of moving the Scout & Guide Headquarters into the park on the HVMRT site with a new purpose built headquarters. The original scout hut would be sold off as building land to hopefully to create sufficient revenue to build the new headquarters with a surplus.

Grants
Total grants given to the community this year totalled £39,313. Beneficiaries were Meltham CE School £5,500 for an outdoor canopy, St Bartholomew’s Church £10,000 towards the clock tower fund, Meltham Bowling Club £6,500 towards new floodlights and some smaller grants were made to Meltham Churches Together and Wilshaw Village Hall. The most exciting venture this last year was setting up of the Meltham Carlile Community Interest Company to provide a new community Post Office in the village. They were given £10,000 towards immediate building repairs in the Carlile. A loan of £30,000 was granted (to be repaid over five years with a payment holiday in the first year) towards the start up costs incurred with Post Office Counters in starting up the business. Finally, I feel that we have had quite a sound financial year but prudence would be my watchword for the forthcoming year.

Summary Income and Expenditure Account

| | 2013 - 2014 | 2012 - 2013 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Income (revenue) | | |
| Precept and grant from Kirklees | £46,100 | £45,200 |
| Interest and dividends | £13,041 | £17,489 |
| Rental and miscellaneous | £1,095 | £856 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £60,236 | £63,545 |
| Expenditure (revenue) | | |
| Administration | £29,244 | £32,037 |
| Meltham Hall Estate | £26,303 | £25,458 |
| Services | £1,718 | £1,890 |
| Expenditure (capital) | £53,423 | £35,421 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | £110,688 | £94,806 |
| Cumulative Fund Balance | | |
| Balance brought forward 01/04/13 | £621,897 | £653,158 |
| Net movement in funds | -£50,452 | -£31,261 |
| Balance carried forward 31/03/14 | £571,445 | £621,897 |

Clr Kate Buchanan – Chairman of the Communications Committee 2013 - 2014



The Communications Committee’s main focus has been to prepare editions of the Meltham Mercury which are published in September, December and March each year. Starting this year, it has been agreed to provide a June issue and include the Meltham Town Council Annual Report as a separate document. We hope you will welcome this opportunity to be even more up-to-date about the news and developments which are happening in Meltham and supported by your Town Council. Over the past year, we have been pleased to report on the progress of the Clock Tower campaign, Carlile Institute, updates on grants awarded by Meltham Town Council including Meltham Moor Fun, Meltham Play-Group and improvements to drainage in the Robert Ashton Park. A complete list of grants is set out below. This year, we have included articles about the establishment of the Young People’s Working Group and its links to the

Skate Park, Meltham Sports and Community Centre anniversary, Meltham Memories: 1940s weekend, the Christmas Lights Switch-On, Tom Wroe Memorial Plaque as well as the importance of supporting our businesses by buying locally and the new Meltham Walkers are Welcome initiative. The Annual Report previously included information about the Pride of Meltham awards which will now feature in the June issue. The Communications Committee has also supported the development of various social media opportunities such as Twitter and Facebook. We have a Meltham Town Council Twitter feed @aroundmeltham and a number of Facebook sites including: Making Meltham Better. Do sign up for these so that you are kept informed about what’s going on in and around Meltham. We are always looking to improve the ways that Meltham Town Council communicates with its residents and businesses. If you have any suggestions, comments please do get in touch. All Council Meetings are open to the members of the public so why not come along to one – details of all meetings are posted on the Town Hall noticeboard on the Huddersfield Road (to the left of the Co-op.) and on the Council’s website: www.melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk Thanks to everyone for their contributions to the Meltham Mercury and to colleagues, residents and businesses who are using Twitter and Facebook to engage with all sectors of the community. A special thanks to Sarah Armitage, Town Clerk for her calm efficiency and for keeping us on the ‘right track’.

Breakdown of grant awards 2013 - 2014

- The following grant awards have been made:
- £5,500** towards to the provision of an early years outdoor canopy for Meltham CE School
 - £5,000** towards the purchase a new conservatory extension to Meltham Pre-school Group
 - £6,500** towards floodlighting at Meltham Bowling Club
 - £10,000** towards church clock tower repairs at St Bartholomew’s Church, Meltham
 - £763.44** for the **Over 70s Christmas Gift.**
 - £350** towards the Churches Together **Carols in the Park** celebrations.
 - £200** to **Meltham Environment Ltd** towards the upkeep of Hey Doorstep Green
 - £1,000** to Wilshaw Village Hall towards a new boiler
 - £10,000** to Meltham Carlile CIC towards building repairs and maintenance costs