

HOLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The Council was sorry to receive the resignation of Councillor Stevenson in October due to his leaving the parish.

Paul Roberts of Coxbench was welcomed as Councillor at the January meeting following co-option as no election had been called for.

PARISH WARDEN

A new Parish Warden was appointed in May 2013 and is working extremely well. The following is the text of a letter received from a parishioner to the Chairman:-

“I just wanted you and your fellow councillors to know how lovely it is to see the village looking so smart, neat and tidy! I do not know the name of the gentleman doing the fantastic job, but please forward my thanks and appreciation. I have spoken to a number of villagers and they all agree with me. We are all quick enough to grumble – I think “thank you” is just as important.”

FINANCE

PARISH PRECEPT 2014/15 - £23,895 which includes a Government Grant of £1,432, reduction of 4% on last year.

PARISH COUNCIL/ RBS CORRESPONDENCE:-

Over the last year the Holbrook Parish Council has had an outstanding problem regarding our arrangements with the Bank. This concerned accusations of malpractice in the administration of the Holbrook Parish Council and the totally separate Holbrook “300” Club accounts.

A letter to RBS dated 25 April 2012 appeared to come from the Holbrook Parish Council however it did not originate from the Parish Council. The letter from an ex Councillor that has been released to us by RBS claimed there had been ‘unlawful amendments of mandates’ and ‘collusion between the (RBS) Branch Manager and person or persons from the Holbrook Parish Council’.

In their letter of 5th September 2012 RBS confirmed that ‘due to an oversight on our (RBS’s) part the accounts were amended incorrectly’. RBS also confirmed in their letter ‘that Holbrook Parish Council and Holbrook 300 Club’ are separate entities and two separate mandates are required.’

Review of the full correspondence exchange exonerates the Clerk of the Holbrook Parish Council and those involved with the Holbrook 300 Club of any malpractice. As a result, at the meeting on 31 July 2013 the Chairman proposed that:-

1. This statement is included in the Minutes of this meeting as a public record.
2. That this Council takes no further action on this issue.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for persisting with this correspondence and asked that she formally recorded it in the Minutes.

The Council was advised to share this information with the parishioners and planned to include it in the regular report in the Holbrook Village Magazine but the Editorial Board declined to publish it.

ATTENDANCE OF PARISH COUNCILLORS FOR THE YEAR 2013 - 14

Maximum possible number of attendances for all Councillors is 11 except Councillor Stevenson (resigned in October) 7 and Councillor Roberts (appointed January 2014) 4 .

11	Councillor Biggin
10	Councillor Banks and Massey
9	Councillor Brocklehurst and Rhodes
8	Councillor Morral
6	Councillor Horrobin
5	Councillor Bull and Holden
4	Councillor Roberts and Stevenson

Is HS2 Coming through the Parish of Holbrook?

Well, as reported last year in the Derby Telegraph, it might if Derby City Council has its way.

The £43bn high speed rail link (HS2) from London to Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds is a hotly debated issue. There is still no certainty of it going ahead. An engineering options report by Arup, presented to the Government by HS2 Ltd at the end of March 2012, puts forward two locations for a station in the East Midlands: Toton Yard and Central Derby. The former is stated as being a better location for serving the East Midlands region. This is the option referred to on the HS2 website as the Initial Preferred Route.

However, Derby City Council is keen to maximise the perceived economic benefits by encouraging the station to be located in central Derby. The Arup report looks in some detail at the route for the Birmingham to Leeds phase of HS2 and the alternatives associated with the two most favoured station locations in the East Midlands. For the Derby station option, the proposed route runs through the Parish of Holbrook having exited a tunnel adjacent to the A38 at Little Eaton. It then proceeds over embankments, viaducts and cuttings, on the eastern side of the A38, on its way to Sheffield and Leeds.

While Derby is not presently the front runner for the location of a station in the East Midlands, if Derby City Council manages to get its way and the line came through the Parish, the blight to local buildings and countryside would be considerable. The noise and disruption during construction would also affect us all and could last several years. It is stated that up to 18 trains an hour, in each direction, could operate on HS2 Phase 2.

At the Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish of Holbrook, to be held in the "Arkwright" Parish Hall at 7:00 pm on 28 May 2014, copies of the alternative route map for HS2 in the local area will be on display.