

Annual Report: Cllr. Andrew Charles Pinnock 2013/14

Introduction

Thank you to the people of Cleckheaton Ward who have in the past three elections re-elected members of the Lib Dem team. As part of that team I am committed to do my best to stand up for local people and promote the well-being of all who live and work in the Ward.

Participation at Council Meeting Committees

I have attended all meetings of Full Council. I attended meetings of the Heavy Woollen Planning Sub-Committee (and took the Chair on one occasion when the regular Chair was ill); the Planning & Highways Committee; Spen Valley Area Committee; Oakenshaw Forum (jointly with Bradford Council); Neighbourhood Management Group for the Spen Valley; Spen Valley Housing Forum; North Kirklees Countryside Forum.

Participation on Outside Bodies

- I continued to be a member of the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (ITA). 2013-14 is the last year of this body: its functions have now been taken over by the Combined Authority. In the current year I have been nominated to serve on the Transport Committee (a constituent part of the Combined Authority). My role on the ITA included membership of the Scrutiny Committee for Bus Services and the Audit & Governance Committee. I was also an alternate member of the Executive Committee. One of the roles of a member has been to participate in the Passenger Consultative Committee for Kirklees, which also includes service users.
- I also continued to be a member of the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee. This rather bland title is the name of a body with responsibility, across West Yorkshire, for Trading Standards, Archives, Archaeology, Metrology and other scientific services. There, I am a member of the Audit & Governance Committee.
- I have for several years been chair of the Kirklees Historic Buildings Trust. This was set up originally to be the Council's agent for protecting and rehabilitating 'Buildings at Risk.' Currently the Trust is restoring a building at Wellhouse, Mirfield. In the past year the frustrations of dealing with a building in such a condition have preoccupied the members.

Ward Work

The Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat team keeps residents informed and involved all the year round. We produce and deliver a FOCUS news 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:

- Our Save Spen Pool campaign was organised and led by the Ward team (myself, Cllr Kath Pinnock, Cllr John Lawson), 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. So, currently, that sum is allocated for that purpose and will remain so unless the Council decides otherwise.

- I was involved in a strong campaign in early 2013 to ensure that the Council uses the office space in Cleckheaton Town Hall. This has had a very positive outcome with Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing staff moving into the offices in Cleckheaton Town Hall in May of that year. Virtually the whole office space is now in use which benefits both the future of the town and the future of our Town Hall.

- I have continued to work closely with the local Chamber of Trade to get improvements to our town. The Chamber are very active 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 re-located before development can start. I have been involved in detailed negotiations about this, but so far no solution has been found to which both parties can agree. However, I am hopeful of a positive outcome in the 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 for an early development on the site 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, I have helped residents in the Pyenot Hall Lane and Marsh area to find a solution to a difficult traffic problem. The work to prevent main road volumes of traffic using these narrow Victorian residential streets has been done and the overwhelming majority of residents are delighted with the result.

- With my ward colleagues we have prioritised the re-surfacing 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; local residents are delighted.

- 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.

- 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.

- We have initiated and then helped to form a Friends of Scholes Rec. Working with the residents, the Church, the school, and the TRA we have commissioned Groundwork to draw up plans for a major improvement to the area. The initial response in the village has been overwhelmingly positive. Over 100 new trees have been planted and plans submitted for the funding of a circular path.

- Cllr Kath Pinnock campaigned with local residents against the outline 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. The application was refused, but Redrow appealed; an appeal which was attended by all three ward councillors to make the case for residents. Unfortunately, the Planning Inspector has given Redrow permission to build. A detailed application is expected.
- With my ward colleagues I have ensured that we tackle speeding traffic in Oakenshaw and Moorside / Moorbottom 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.
- Currently, though not strictly in last year's activity, we are campaigning hard to keep our Library. So far we have had nearly 2,000 signatures on our petition within 3 weeks.
- 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.

Members Surgeries

Cleckheaton Ward councillors hold drop in surgeries at the Town Hall and Scholes Church Hall every Saturday morning; and 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.

Training and Development

On use of social media by councillors; planning; communicating with residents.