

Annual Report: Cllr. Kath Pinnock 2012/13

Introduction

I continue to enjoy the privilege of being 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.

Participation at Council Meeting Committees

I have attended all meetings of Full Council.

I have also attended meetings of the:

- Personnel Committee;
- Budget Implementation Group;
- Leaders Group;
- Spen Valley Area Committee;
- Oakenshaw Forum;
- Neighbourhood Management Group;
- Spen Valley Housing Forum;
- North Kirklees Countryside Forum.

Participation on Outside Bodies

- I continue to be Chair of Governors at Whitcliffe Mount School. The school has recently received a letter placing the school in the top 20% of ALL schools nationally. It is very rewarding to be able to contribute to such a successful school which has served the local community for over 100 years.

- I am a trustee at the Scholes Village Shelter which has continued to improve the facilities and is attracting increasing numbers of users to this local community hall.

- I am Chair of the Cleckheaton First Community Trust which decides on applications to the Community First Fund. Cleckheaton Ward has around £7,000 for each of the next 3 years for local groups who want to improve local amenities or services to the community.

- I was elected to serve on the Local Government Association Children & Young People's Board where I have the opportunity to discuss national issues and challenge decision makers on policy.

Ward Work

Ward Work and Achievements:

- The Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat team keeps residents informed and involved all year round. We produce and deliver a FOCUS newsletter to the 8,000 homes in our ward on 5 occasions during the year.

- I use Twitter to advertise local events; to record some of the activities I undertake as a councillor; and to comment on some political decisions of local and national importance. You can follow me @kathpinnock and I use #cleckheaton for local issues and events.

- I have a blog at www.kathpinnock.org.uk which I have used to let residents know what is happening locally.

- With my colleagues, I have campaigned on several major issues affecting local people in the last year including:

- Save Spen Pool is a major campaign being organised and led by ward colleagues Cllr John Lawson, Cllr Andrew Pinnock and 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 was 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. We launched a petition to gauge local views on Spen Pool which can be signed online at www.SaveSpenPool.org.uk. Over 4,500 people signed the petition (thus far) which was submitted to the Council in July this year. At that meeting we secured £4.651m toward the cost of rebuilding the pool and got it moved from the Risk Register to the Council's Official Capital Investment Plan. While this was a major success we know there is a long way to go before Spen Pool is definitely safe.

- Proposals from the Mid Yorkshire Hospital Trust which envisage significant and serious dilution of services at Dewsbury Hospital. The cause of these changes is the rapacious need to fund the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) built hospitals at Pinderfields and Pontefract. It is outrageous that Dewsbury Hospital services for local residents should be cut back because the Trust cannot meet the financial demands of the PFI hospitals.

- I have led a strong campaign to ensure that the Council uses the office space in Cleckheaton Town Hall. Moving Adult Services staff from those offices to Dewsbury has caused a great deal of concern and anger in the town. The petition we launched has been signed by over 3,000 people. The Chamber of Trade supported the petition knowing that the loss of 30 employees from the town would have an impact on their businesses. This has had a very positive outcome with Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing staff moving into the offices in Cleckheaton Town Hall in May this 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.

- Westgate's derelict site was cleared in 2012 and a planning application approved for 217 housing units. However, the industrial unit in the centre of the site has to be re-located before development can start. There have been protracted negotiations about this and so far no solution found to which both parties can agree.

- We continue to try and find a way forward with Tesco who have pulled out of building the new store it has promised for a number of years. This has left Cleckheaton with large number of derelict buildings. As ward councillors we have met with senior officers of the Council to find ways that will get Tesco to demolish the derelict buildings.

- Ward councillors have also tried to find solutions to the derelict site on Northgate.

- I have continued to help the Scholes Village Shelter and Wobbly Tots to improve their facilities.

- 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 residents are delighted with the result.

- The work of my ward colleagues and residents in Oakenshaw has resulted in a new puffin crossing being installed in August outside St Andrew's Church. This will be an enormous improvement to road safety.
- The lack of gulleys on part of Bradford Road in Oakenshaw has been a constant problem. Finally this has been sorted with 2 new gulleys and a new drainage system being installed.
- In Hunsworth large parts the Recreation Ground were permanently flooded and unusable. So we worked with the Council to have new land drains installed.
- 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 Groundworks to draw up plans for a major improvement to the area. The initial response in the village has been overwhelmingly positive.
- I have campaigned with local residents against the plans submitted 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. I attended the Planning Committee and put the case on behalf of residents. The application was refused but Redrow will certainly appeal against the decision and the battle to retain a beautiful green hillside will go on.
- 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.
- I have continued to work with the Governors, staff and students at Whitcliffe Mount School to ensure that the very good work it does is not undermined by the creation of a superfluous school in Birkenshaw. I was pleased that the plans for a free school on the site of Birkenshaw Middle school failed.
- At 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.
- 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.

** NOTE: Kirklees council is not responsible for the content on external web sites / third party spaces

Members Surgeries

Cleckheaton Ward councillors hold drop-in surgeries at the Town Hall and Scholes Church Hall every Saturday morning; at Oakenshaw Church Hall once a month; and at Turnsteads Community Centre.

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; planning; communicating with residents.