

CLLR KATH PINNOCK ANNUAL REPORT 2015 -16

Liberal Democrat for Cleckheaton Ward

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.

In May 2016, I was very pleased to be re-elected to serve the Cleckheaton ward with 56% of the vote cast. This is some indication of the trust that local people have in me and my fellow ward Councillors, John Lawson and Andrew Pinnock.

Council Meetings Attended:

I have attended meetings of Full Council. I have served on the Corporate Audit & Governance Committee; Kirklees Health & Well Being Board; Child Sexual Exploitation Panel; the Batley & Spen District Committee; Oakenshaw Forum; and the Spen Valley Neighbourhood Management Group.

Participation on Outside Bodies:

Since 2014, I have been a member of the House of Lords as a Life Peer. This has given me a wonderful opportunity of raising issues affecting local people in Parliament. I have spoken about the Government's plans to create a new "council" for West Yorkshire possibly with an elected Mayor. I have spoken extensively about child care, planning, housing, Local Government finance, and education.

I continue to be a Governor at Whitcliffe Mount School. I have been closely involved with the planning for a new school building on the site. The school continues to provide very good outcomes for all students and 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 number of users to this local community hall.

I support the Friends of Scholes Rec and the Friends of West End Park and the Friends of Cleckheaton Library, all of which are doing great work in sustaining and improving Council owned facilities.

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.

I use **Twitter and Facebook** to advertise local events, record some of the activities undertaken and comment on some political decisions of local and national importance. You can follow me on Twitter @kathpinnock and I use #Cleckheaton for local issues and events. My Facebook page is at Cllr Kath Pinnock. 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 which are a consequence of the significant reductions by Government funding for local government:

Cleckheaton Library: all three Cleckheaton councillors, led by Cllr Andrew Pinnock, and working with the Friends of Cleckheaton Library, have campaigned very hard to protect Cleckheaton Library and keep it in its current building. Fortunately, the campaign was successful and the Library will remain open and run by the Council though on much reduced opening hours and relying on volunteers. 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.

In another blow to local people, the Council has adamantly refused to replace the **Whitcliffe Mount Sports Centre**. The current building has been 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 was there, and was very well used. 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 failed to agree.

Our **Save Spen Pool** campaign was organised and led by Ward colleagues Cllr John Lawson and Cllr Andrew Pinnock. Spensborough 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. As a result of our strong campaign, the Council has agreed to build a replacement pool on the same site.

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.

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. There have been protracted negotiations about this but so far no solution.

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. These have now been cleared but remain on the market.

Netto built and opened a new store on the derelict land on Horncastle Street. The store opened at the end of May and is to close in August! I have written to Sainsbury's who are co-owners of the store and am anticipating a meeting with a senior manager to discuss the situation.

Local Plan: the Council published their draft proposals for a new Local Plan which allocates land to be developed over the next 15 years for housing and business. There are a very large number of sites allocated in our ward. We ensured that all residents directly affected by the plan had a letter which provided information about the proposals and how to send in comments. We also distributed a FOCUS giving the information as it affects the whole ward to every household – 8,000. We also held a public meeting in **Hunsworth** and supported residents in publicity about their objections.

The Council is expected to report back on the consultation in the autumn.

The lack of gulleys on part of **Bradford Road in Oakenshaw** has been a constant problem. Work has now been done to put in new surface water drains which should prevent the road from subsiding further. Following our constant complaints, the road will be re-surfaced from the church towards Chain Bar.

Friends of Scholes Rec.: plans for a major improvement to the Rec. were agreed by the village. Further improvements have been made including a new play area with equipment agreed in consultation with the Friends.

I have continued to campaign with local residents against 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. Despite winning the planning appeal, Redrow have not made a start on building. 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.

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 drop-in 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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