

Pilsley

Parish Council

Another successful Christmas in Pilsley

Last year's annual Christmas concert on 11 December was, once again, a big success and was, as usual, very well attended.

The Shirland Brass Band was, as always, in great form and included some fine solo performances. It was also very pleasing to see so many young people in the band.

The well received refreshments were, once again, provided by Irene Lindley and Louise Bunting who always give their time free of charge. Where would Pilsley be without such people?

Once again our churches were active in providing the Village with

Christmas events which, as in the case of the Christmas concert, help to bring the community together.

On 22 December St. Mary's Church held a carol service in the Church and this was very much enjoyed by a good audience. Many thanks to Rev'd Lynn for organising it so well.

On 23 December St. Mary's Church and Pilsley Methodist Church held their annual outdoor carol singing event on Church Street car park. Attendance at this event continues to rise each year and it was a great night.

Many thanks to everyone who played their part helping to make Christmas in Pilsley so enjoyable.

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Parish Precept 2020/21

The Parish Council has agreed a 5% increase in its 2020/21 precept from £99,990 to £104,990.

The Council provisionally agreed this increase in December

2019 but decided firstly to test public opinion by publicising its intentions on its Facebook page and on its website. No adverse comments were received so the increase was confirmed at the January 2020 Council meeting. The increase will take the annual payment on a Band D property from £103.83 to £109.14, a yearly increase of £5.31 or 10p per week.

The Council has received a slight boost to its finances with the news that North East Derbyshire District Council has decided that its support grant to parish councils which was due to finish at the end of the current financial year shall be continued for a further year. We will receive the sum of £2,750.66.

No change of heart from Staffa on surgery closure proposal

The public outcry led by the Parish Council on Staffa Health's proposal to close Pilsley Surgery has failed to get the Practice to have a change of heart.

On 17 January Staffa Health published on its website, www.staffahealth.co.uk, an eighty-four page document on its consultation process which includes an analysis of the feedback from patients and stakeholders.

The document indicates that having considered all the responses, including letters of objection from our County Councillor and Parish Councillors and a petition signed by patients, and having taken into account a number of alternative suggestions which "either avoided closure or reduced the risks associated with it", Staffa has decided to proceed with its application to close the surgery twelve months from the approval date (if it gets it).

The document also suggests that Staffa believes that "continuing with four Surgeries will mean that the sustainability of its overall service would remain at risk".

Staffa claims that the twelve month period will allow it to "undertake some work at its premises to increase the number of clinical rooms at Tibshelf Surgery and to seek solutions to the lack of car parking".

During the twelve months notice period Pilsley Surgery will open for one and one half days per week or three half days.

Staffa's proposals are subject to approval by the Primary Care Commissioning Committee of the Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The Committee, whose headquarters are at the NHS Scarsdale complex

on Newbold Road, Chesterfield, met on 22 January but deferred a decision because it had had insufficient time to consider Staffa's document. It will now meet on 26 February.

At the February meeting of the Parish Council Staffa Health's proposal was discussed and the Parish Clerk was requested to forward a letter to Mr Shaw, the Chair of the Primary Care Commissioning Committee of Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The letter states as follows:

"I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Primary Care Commissioning Committee of Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Parish Council has asked me to make you aware of its ongoing concerns relating to the proposals for the closure of Pilsley Surgery by Staffa Health.

It now appears that the closure of the surgery is inevitable given that the PCCC gave 'in principle' agreement to the closure last year subject to a period of public consultation being undertaken. However, if you are now minded to give the final approval to the proposals the Parish Council, on behalf of local residents, would ask that the mitigation measures proposed by Staff Health are given more detailed consideration.

Firstly, the report of Staffa Health presented to you on 22nd January, which seeks to confirm the closure, contains an undertaking 'to postpone the overall closure for 1 year from the date agreement is given to allow us to undertake some work on our premises to increase the number of clinical rooms at Tibshelf and continue to seek solutions to the car parking issues.'

It is noted that as of February 2020 Staffa Health have provided no supporting evidence to demonstrate that tangible proposals are in place either to increase the number of clinical rooms or to provide additional parking facilities at the Tibshelf site. This does not strike the Parish council as a true commitment to the 'sustainability of the overall service' which they claim in the report is so important to them.

The process of developing firm plans, the acquisition of the necessary land together with securing the appropriate planning permissions to deliver their ambitions at Tibshelf is likely to take in excess of two years rather than the one year suggested in the proposals. A more equitable and socially responsible organisation would undertake to ensure that works at the alternative premises in Tibshelf were fully available for use prior to any depletion of service provision in Pilsley.

It is suggested therefore, if the PCCC is minded to agree to the proposals of Staffa Health, that the closure of Pilsley Surgery be conditional upon the alternative facilities at Tibshelf Surgery being fully operational before such closure takes place - be this one year or three years.

The Staffa Health report contains a parallel proposal to reduce the number of opening sessions at Pilsley Surgery from the current six sessions over four days to three sessions over either two or three days during the proposed 'transition' period of one year. Again, if the PCCC is minded to agree to the proposals, it is suggested however long the transition period might be, that at least four sessions per week over four days should be retained throughout this period.

Secondly, a similar line of argument is valid in relation to the continuing provision of pharmacy services in Pilsley. The Staffa Health report contains a vague commitment to “work with the Pharmacy to look at ways we could provide some services to patients from the Pharmacy site” without providing any evidence to suggest that the Well Pharmacy is in any position to even consider this as a service development option.

Any approval granted by the PCCC for the closure of Pilsley Surgery should be conditional upon evidence being provided that the local pharmacy is both willing and able to take up some of the (unquantified) service provision that the Staffa Health report suggests.

One further question raised during the consultation process which appears not to have been answered in the Staffa Health report is whether an alternative GP practice is able to take over the operation of Pilsley Surgery. It is felt that the relevant bodies should at least explore this option before confirming the closure of the surgery.

Finally, the report makes recurring reference to the involvement of the Patient Participation Group in the process but fails to mention that both the Chair and Secretary of this Group have recently resigned over the lack of engagement with the Group over the specific issue of consultation on the proposals to close Pilsley Surgery. It may therefore be prudent for the PCCC to seek evidence-based reassurance that sufficient formal engagement has indeed been undertaken on this matter.

I look forward to receiving your comment on these matters.”

The fight goes on.

Parish Council Business Plan adopted

The Parish Council’s Business Plan for 2020/21 has recently been adopted.

The Plan is a statement of the Parish Council’s vision for the Village, its purposes, its objectives and its key priorities. It sets out what the Council is trying to achieve and what its spending priorities are. It also helps the

Council to forecast its budgets and to calculate its precept requirements for future years.

The Council invites residents to read and comment on the Business Plan. It can be seen on our website and hard copies can be obtained by contacting the Parish Clerk on 07565 158963 or clerk@pilsleyparishcouncil.org.

Speed signs blow to Pilsley

One regular complaint which the Parish Council receives from residents is about speeding traffic on roads through the Village.

Although we are not the Highway Authority we do our best to deal with the problem by regularly reporting incidences of speeding to the Police and by liaising with Derbyshire County Council, the Highway Authority, through our County Councillor Kevin Gillott. Also plans are now underway for the introduction by the Parish Council of regular “Speedwatch” sessions which aim to get motorists to be aware of the speed at which they are travelling.

In our Summer 2019 Newsletter we indicated that because of our concern about speeding in Pilsley we had discussed the possible introduction of vehicle activated signs (VAS) at the entrances to the Village i.e. the ones which light up and advise motorists of the speed at which they are travelling. We invited comments on this idea and the public reaction was favourable.

Unfortunately we have now been informed by the County Council that even though we were prepared to spend or own (i.e. your) money on the signs we cannot do this as none of our roads qualify for them under the County’s Speed Management Protocol. Apparently the accident statistics in Pilsley are too low for us to qualify.

We are greatly disappointed at the County Council’s decision because all we wanted to do was to protect people from harm.

We have asked the County Council to review its Protocol but the feedback that we have received to date does not make us hopeful of a change of heart.

On a more positive note, Pilsley’s Speedwatch initiative under which volunteers monitor vehicle speeds in areas of concern to the public, is up and running again with a number of new volunteers.

The first session will take place in March and it is hoped that this can be followed by monthly sessions.

Delay in quality award decision

In our Spring 2019 Newsletter we reported that following its success in obtaining The Foundation Award, the Parish Council had resolved to proceed further on the road to achieving quality status by going for the next level which was The Local Council Award.

We indicated that we were now putting the final touches to our application which would be submitted shortly afterwards.

The application was submitted in June 2019 but unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, we are still awaiting a decision.

Our application was due to be judged by the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) but after a few months when we contacted them to ask why we had heard nothing from them, we found that due to staffing difficulties they had been unable to process our application.

It would have been appreciated if they had advised us earlier of their difficulties but by then our only option was to refer the matter to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

Fortunately, NALC has now established a team to determine quality applications from parish/town councils and Pilsley's is the first one which the team will judge.

NALC has promised us a decision by early 2020 which we hope will be soon.

St. Mary's Church

St. Mary's Church welcomes everyone!

Totstop

Carers and Toddler Group every Tuesday morning in term-time only, 9am - 10.30am in St. Mary's Centre for playtime, crafts, story, singing and refreshments. We are a small, friendly group who would be delighted to welcome newcomers.

Pop-In

Every Thursday 8.30am - 11am in St. Mary's Centre for refreshments and second hand stalls. Come and grab a bacon butty and a cuppa and meet new and old friends.

Sunday Services

1st Sunday of Month

8.30am - Short said Holy Communion Service.

10am - All-age informal Service (50 mins).

2nd Sunday of Month

10am - Holy communion Service with Junior Church.

3rd Sunday of Month

8.30am - Short said Holy Communion Service.

10am - Morning Worship with Junior Church.

4pm - Families@4: An informal short service for families followed by a shared tea together.

4th Sunday of Month

10am - Holy Communion Service with Junior Church.

Special Events

Mother's Day Service

(Sunday 22 March - 10am) - Come and celebrate Mums at our all age informal service.

Good Friday - 10 April

10am - 12pm - Family Activity morning. Easter crafts and activities for all the family.

2pm - 3pm - A quiet, reflective service.

Easter Day - 12 April

10am - Easter Day Holy Communion Service - an All-Age Celebration! Come and join us celebrating the risen Jesus!

For further information, please check the Church noticeboard.

Pilsley Village Fete Group

The PVFG will again be holding a Race Night on 25 April; updates to follow via Parish Council notice boards and on the Facebook page. We will also be hosting our annual tea party on 9 May to coincide with VE day; again updates to follow via Parish Council notice boards and on the Facebook page.

County Councillor Kevin Gillott writes

It's that time of the year again when the controlling Conservative administration and their financial experts at Matlock look at the figures and come up with their element of your council tax bill. It's made up of two parts, the main Derbyshire County Council bit of the bill and the adult social care element.

Derbyshire County Council's share is the largest because it provides complex services for the whole county, with the exception of Derby.

This year, though, I'd really hoped I'd be able to give you some good news.

This was based on the fact that, for the past two years, leading councillors on the Cabinet had been telling us they won't need to put up bills, backed by figures confirming this.

It seems, though, the figures no longer add up so the social care element of your bill is set to go up by 2%, and while the intention is to spend it on these services, the rise isn't enough to stop plans to close some county council older people's homes, including the one just up the road in Tibshelf.

The increase will only be spent on social care. So rather than put up bills by another 50p per week, some other services will be reduced as well. They include £850,000 on public transport and the countryside service.

I know many of you who rely on subsidised bus services to get to work, college, medical

appointments and leisure activities have asked me if there is a chance of getting a better bus service in the Village, this reduction makes it even less likely that will happen.

And I fear that the planned cuts to countryside services will affect local public rights of way which I know are well used.

Savings are also coming from budgets aimed at keeping children safe, to protect them from being exploited, neglected or abused. I've been quite vocal about this in the past as the facts tell us that more children are being brought into the council's care and it makes sense to fund services to try and prevent this in the first place.

Space here prevents me from delving too deeply into the complex business of council finances, but anyone interested in knowing more can go to the authority's website and find further information: www.derbyshire.gov.uk.

Meanwhile I'll be urging the authority to lobby Government to give Derbyshire a fairer slice of public funds, so our communities no longer have to live under the long shadow of austerity.

Finally, if you need my help with any issue involving the County Council, please do get in touch. My details are contained elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is an enduring covenant between the people of the United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government and all those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown and their families.

The Parish Council has committed itself to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and to support the Armed Forces Community. To this end the Parish Council will endeavour in its business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are

* no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and

commercial services compared to any other citizen

* in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

The Parish Council has asked Cllr Geoff McNeice to be the Pilsley Armed Forces Champion to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and signpost the Armed Forces community when needing advice and guidance.

The full details of the Armed Forces Covenant can be seen on the Parish website.

SCHOOL NOTES

Pilsley Primary School

It has been such a busy time for us at Pilsley Primary over the past four months. Sometimes it is good to catch your breath and look back at how much the children have done.

Our Christmas performances were again a real pleasure to put on with the children enthusiastic and determined to enjoy themselves. We once again held separate performances for our Foundation and Key Stage 1 Nativity Plays at St. Mary's Church. Our children from Nursery and Reception were brilliant and as usual tugged more than a few heartstrings on the way. It is so hard to perform in front of so many parents at such a young age but they excelled themselves. Similarly, the Year 1 and 2 Nativity came together so well and it was lovely to see the community come together to celebrate Christmas over the whole week.

The Key Stage 2 production of 'Treasure Island' was one of our very best. The story really held well throughout with some superb performances from all of KS2 from engaging dances to superb singing. The acting was also of high quality throughout.

Our Christmas Jumper Day saw a wide (and weird) variety of designs throughout the school. We managed to raise nearly £220 towards the Save the Children Charity and we would like to pass on our thanks to all our Families for their donations. We also managed to raise nearly £450 towards our new reading scheme through raffles and sales of calendars.

Unfortunately this year we could not fit in our Traditional Christmas Singalong due to the time constraints and timings of the plays. It was a shame to miss out on such a brilliant community event that represents a real warmth and spirit of celebrating Christmas together and next year it will definitely happen!

Our school teams have also been busy over the past few months although the football team has been struggling for games due to the weather. They did take part in the local schools tournament in September, remaining unbeaten throughout. Fingers crossed when the season picks up in April we can play some league and cup games.

Our Cross Country Cluster competition was early this year. We had some great individual success with one girl placing 2nd in the Year5/6 category and both our Boys and Girls teams enjoyed the muddy run!

Our sports Hall Athletics team saw some great performances from some first time competitors. It was brilliant to hear about their determination and the surprising amount of fun they had. We placed sixth overall, but we are so proud of how many did their absolute best.

Our Tag Rugby team thoroughly enjoyed their tournament and though we came last overall the team spirit was excellent throughout and a credit to the school.

Our two basketball teams enjoyed the local cluster competition with one of our teams winning the whole event. Fingers crossed for the District Final, which should have been played by the time you read this.

We are looking forward to more school competitions later in the summer as well as the Y2 and Y5 mini Olympic events.

We have had coaching support paid for through the School Sports

Premium for basketball with Years 5 and 6 this term and it is clear the impact on our children has been really beneficial. In addition, we have had coaches supporting our Y1 and Y2 pupils with football and Years 3-6 have had badminton sessions last term. The Sports Premium funding from the Government enables us to raise the skills of our pupils as well as enabling teachers to build on their own understanding of sports development. In addition, our Year 6 pupils have completed their Bikeability training to support their road safety.

Our Science Fairs for Years 1 through to Year 6 will take place in the first week of March this year. The Foundation children will also have a Science themed day the same week. Our theme this year is around inventions so the science experiments should be very interesting this year.

Once again we have teaching students in school. This year we are supporting a student from the Alfreton Teaching School Alliance through the Schools Direct Scheme as well as a student from Derby University. Once again they will be developing their skills and knowledge alongside our staff. We have always been keen to support those locally who wish to develop their education and currently we also have students from Chesterfield College as well as volunteers looking to gain experience towards starting a career in education in the future.

The staff at Pilsley Primary are always determined to develop their skills and pupil experiences. This year the key focus for school development has been around our development of pupils' Phonics Skills in Foundation and Key Stage 1 as well as Word Power (Vocabulary) across the school. The Phonics drive is aimed at raising the immediate reading

ability of our children in the early stages of their reading journey and is being supported by a completely new reading scheme. The initial signs are very promising.

The development of Word Power is based on research studies that show the greater the words children hear, experience and use within their everyday lives the more they are able to understand what they read, discuss and their writing becomes richer in content. In these days of computer games, tablets and phones, two way conversation and oral exploration of the world has become much less. We assume that pupils absorb learning by 'watching' but without that interactive discussion about what things mean little of this learning is recalled properly.

Finally we would like to thank one of our parents, Rosanna Coll, for producing a super set of Wall Art to brighten our quiet area.

It is always busy (and rarely quiet) at Pilsley Primary and Nursery School!

Park House Primary School

At Park House we have been enjoying a variety of sporting events. Some of our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils took part in a cross fit event against our local cluster schools in January. The event was really tough and our pupils worked so hard, we are very proud of how they did.

Our Year 1 class has been to a gymnastic event at Graves Health and Sports Centre near Sheffield. They had an amazing time with the gymnastic coaches, trying

lots of different equipment such as the trampolines, beam and rings.

Our Year 3 class are taking part in a forthcoming dance festival and will be performing at the Winding Wheel in Chesterfield.

As part of our space topic in Year 1 and Year 5, we had a visit from the Wonderdome. This is a mobile inflatable planetarium. The pupils had a lovely time inside the dome with the 360-degree experience.

Year 2 have had a visit from Warburton's to look at how bread is made, they have a trip coming up to Clumber Park.

Years 4, 5 and 6 will be learning about cyberbullying when we come back after half term and will take part in some workshops run by the 'Digital' PCSO Sarah Dufton.

We have a number of exciting music events coming up this year. We have secured places for our Year 5 class to perform using their ukuleles with the Halle Orchestra and our Year 3 and Year 4 classes will be performing an Easter Concert at Clay Cross Methodist Church.

Our pupils took part in a 'Travel Smart' poster competition set up by PCSO Kate Hodnett and our school council. A winner was chosen from each class from Year 1 to Year 6. These have been made into posters and put outside school. PCSO Kate Hodnett arranged for the winners to visit the camera van, based in Lower Pilsley recently. The pupils really enjoyed seeing how the camera worked and witnessed how they catch drivers who are speeding, not wearing seat belts or are using their mobile phones.

We are so grateful to the Parish Council who help us to provide a school crossing patrol. Without this generous donation, we would not be able to keep our families as safe as they travel to and from school.

Council to play its part in Climate Change Movement

Climate change is said to be the most important issue facing the world today and although Pilsley is, by world standards, a very minor player, nevertheless the Parish Council considers that it should do everything it can to contribute to the climate change movement.

North East Derbyshire District Council has recently adopted a climate change charter and is presently preparing a climate change pack to be presented to parish/town councils. When we receive it we hope that it will contain useful advice on how we can assist the movement.

We had hoped to kick off our involvement by introducing a tree planting initiative in Pilsley. Unfortunately however due to heavy demand the Woodland Trust, which supplies trees free of charge, has exhausted its stocks so that we will have to wait until next year to obtain some.

Your Councillors

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Ask for MP by name.

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If you wish to contact the Council, the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer is:

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