

Lanchester Parish Council

Annual Report 2020 /21

Councillor Keith Harrison, Chair of Lanchester Parish Council 2020/21

Lanchester Parish Council's Annual Report provides me with an opportunity to inform the community of the work of the Parish Council between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.

What a difficult year this has been for everyone. In March 2020 the pandemic arrived and the community went into lockdown. Under Government advice the Parish Council office was shut along with our outside play areas. The Parish Council gave some financial support to Lanchester Partnership who did a wonderful job in supporting the community through the pandemic. The Parish Council continued to maintain the grassed areas. We re-opened the play areas in July when it was allowed and provided the hanging baskets to brighten the village. Face to face meetings stopped but the Parish Council was able to manage its business through remote meetings. Restrictions remained in place for the whole of the financial year.

There has been great news on the Lanchester Neighbourhood Plan. In March/April 2020 the Neighbourhood Plan was examined by an independent examiner and subject to some minor changes the plan was approved to progress to referendum. The Parish would now vote on whether the plan should be adopted. Unfortunately the pandemic also meant that referendums and elections would all be delayed until May 2021. However as this report is being prepared I am delighted to say that the referendum on the Lanchester Neighbourhood Plan took place on May 6 2021. An overwhelming 89% voted YES for the Neighbourhood Plan, a great endorsement from the community. The Parish Council would wish to pass on a huge thanks to the working group of volunteers who have worked tirelessly over a number of years to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan.

Work continued through the year to develop a new play area to replace the old and inaccessible play area at Manor Grange. In December 2020, schoolchildren from the two primary schools in the village gave feedback on their preferences for which types of equipment should be included. A lease for the land has been obtained from Durham County Council and funding has been secured including grants and a financial contribution from the Parish Council. The play area will go out to tender in summer 2021 with the works commencing in the Autumn. We look forward to children and their families enjoying a new and exciting play facility.

The Parish Council were delighted to receive a Remembrance seat from the Consett and District Royal British Legion. This beautiful seat was installed in front of the War Memorial on the Village Green in time for the Remembrance Service in November 2020.

With Covid restrictions in place the much loved Christmas Light Switch On event could not take place in its usual form. However the lights were switched on on Saturday 28 November. The event was live streamed by Lanchester Partnership and many thousands of people, some from around the world joined in. The Parish Council took the decision to extend the Christmas lights, turning them on in the morning and extending them to come on throughout the whole of January. This provided much needed cheer for everyone.

The Lanchester Community Emergency Plan was reviewed, updated and approved in March 2021. The plan includes actions to inform key groups and organisations in the parish in the event of an emergency, the use of equipment from the emergency sheds and opening of a number of safe rest centres.

In 2021 the Parish Council sought a comprehensive report on the trees at Kitswell Park and on the Village Green which identified necessary maintenance works to the trees in these areas. The Parish Council appointed a local company who undertook the tree work ensuring that the trees are maintained and managed to an appropriate standard.

Receipts and Payment Account

Year ended 31 March 2021

Payments

General Admin	£37,228.11
Donations / Grants	£1,000.00
Rec. / Envir. Facilities	£14,740.48
Leisure Amenities	£384.00
Development Projects	£410.00
Contingencies	£1,204.00
VAT	£3,133.59

Receipts

Council Tax Support Grant	£964.00
Precept	£65,329.87
Interest Received	£100.69
Garage Rent	£200.00
Bus Shelter Maintenance	£0
Sundries	£1,131.58
Wayleaves	£16.37
Grants & Donations	£10,200.00
VAT	£3,042.02
Total	£80,984.53

£58,100.18

The balance figure includes monies identified for specific works.

Balance at 1 April	£91,576.52
Add Total Income	£80,984.53
	£172,561.05
Less Total Expenditure	£58,100.18
Balance at 31 March	£114,460.87

This statement represents fairly the financial position of the Council at 31 March 2021 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Schedule of Meetings

Lanchester Parish Council has 15 elected members who meet in full session 11 times a year.

During 2020/21 the Council met remotely via Zoom. Members of the public were welcome to attend.

Notice of all meetings can be found on the Parish Council notice board on the Village Green and on the Parish Council website. The Parish Council have in place a Public Participation Policy. Public and press attendance & participation is welcome at all meetings.

Grants / Donations

The Parish Council has the powers to give financial support to local clubs and organisations. During 2020/21 the Parish Council awarded the following grants / donations:

DH7 Community Events	£150
Royal British Legion	£100
Lanchester All Saints Parish Centre	£300
Lanchester Parochial Church Council	£300
Great North Air Ambulance	£150

Requests for grants / donations are normally considered by the Parish Council in March.

Lanchester Parish Council

Comprises of 15 elected councillors, a Lead Officer / Clerk and a Handyperson

Please note that the following Councillors sat on the Parish Council between April 2020 and March 2021. Local elections in May 2021 have resulted in some Councillor changes.

Lanchester Parish Councillors for 2020/21:

Jude Considine
Ann Cook
David Friesner
Alison Gray
Bill Gray
Margaret Gray
Keith Harrison
Paul Jackson

Ossie Johnson
Trevor Jones
Kevin Leary
Lorraine Montgomery
David Smith
Ian Tute
Stuart Walker



Staff	Lead Officer / Clerk	Sally Laverick	520146
	Handyperson	David Maddox	

Councillors do not receive any payment or allowance for attending meetings or for carrying out Council business.

Services and Activities

Lanchester Parish Council currently provides and maintains the following services within the Parish:

- Play Areas
- Bike Track
- Allotments
- Village Green
- Xmas Lights
- Hanging Baskets
- Grass Cutting (some)
- Tree Maintenance
- Bus Shelters (some)
- Public Seating (some)
- General upkeep
- Partnership working
- Project Working

