

## Over Alderley Annual Parish meeting - 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015

### Chairman's report to the meeting

As in previous years, I am very pleased to give my Annual Report about events in Over Alderley Parish Council's year, now closing.

In April, the Parish Council considered the Parish accounts. All conditions were fully met throughout the formal, highly conscripted audit and review process and as a result, Over Alderley once again received a "clean" report from the external auditor in the summer. The Annual Assessment of Risk, Internal Audit procedures and internal financial control was reviewed with the accounts at the July meeting. All arrangements were considered to be appropriate and watertight.

In May, as expected, Cheshire East Council apportioned a Non Specific Parish Grant for 2014/15 of £92. This is to compensate the Parish Council for services provided in then unparished areas of Crewe and Macclesfield. The Parish Precept has once more been retained at £2000 for 2015/6.

There were no Parish elections in 2014, but these will occur in 2015, with notices being posted by Cheshire East on March 20<sup>th</sup>, with nomination forms available from 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Unfortunately, the Parish Council did lose the services of Martin Ostick as Parish Clerk, after many years of excellent advice and guidance. He is much missed, but having confirmed there is no conflict of interest if unpaid, Sue Clarke has now stepped into the role.

On the highways front, the long term issue of improving the road layout and signage at the junction of Prestbury Road and School Road was finally, and satisfactorily, completed. Good discussions are now taking place with highways and the police to evaluate and potentially address speed limits on both Macclesfield Road and Birtles Lane, so the Parish Council remain hopeful of soon seeing a reduction in the sad numbers of deaths, accident and near misses for these stretches of road.

Cheshire east Council passed over control and operations for the allotments, and the first annual fees are currently being collected. The impact on future precepts has yet to be assessed, as we have not yet seen water bills for the summer season. However, the savings on Clerks' fees are hoped to be contingency against the costs arising in the first year of allotment operations.

The Reading Room committee again applied for a grant towards general maintenance and upkeep for 2015/16. The Parish Council were pleased to make a grant of £1,000, on similar terms as in previous years. As the only "public" building in the Parish, the Parish Council feel that maximum local support should be given to the Reading Room.

Various planning applications have been received via the Planning Authority. None has been particularly controversial but the Parish Council is mindful that any objections on their part need to highlight specific

reasons which the Planning Authority can recognise, bearing in mind the current climate which increasingly favours developers.

As referred to earlier, the transfer of the allotments at Ashbrook Road to the Parish Council has concluded. The Councils' insurers have been notified and we can now confirm that the public liability insurance premium suitability and cost have been unaffected. Mr Donald Hobson has been instrumental in facilitating the smooth handover from Cheshire East Council, and maintaining communications links with the allotment tenants throughout the process, for which we thank him.

The Parish Council is in continued consultation with Cheshire Peaks and Plains Housing Trust during this pre-submission, outline planning stage. Several concerns have been raised during those discussions, and we thank the Housing trust for their continued dialogue and attempts to address those concerns through updates to draft plans.

There has been little progress, if any, towards resolution of the problem of the former Over Alderley County primary School. Cheshire East legal team are still attempting to put together a mutually agreeable package to sell the building. In the meantime, the state of the building continues to deteriorate.

In conclusion, I offer my thanks to all fellow members of the Parish Council, our Ward Councillor, Paul Findlow and parishioners, in acknowledgement of their various efforts, support and advice regarding matters in the parish of Over Alderley during the past year.

## **Annual update to Parish meeting – Over Alderley Primary School Charity**

**David Burns, 16<sup>th</sup> March**

**As in previous years, there is still no positive conclusion as to the sale, of the former Over Alderley Primary School.**

**As a charity, we can only look forward to the time when some funds may be available to put to the benefit if the young people within the Parish.**

**Until that time, we can only remain hopeful.**