

When I first started to write my Annual Report at the beginning of March for the annual Parish Meeting in May, COVID 19 was only beginning to creep into the North East. Within weeks everything had changed and our main concern became the safety and wellbeing of the residents in our villages and surrounding areas. The County Council had to continue to deliver services but in a new way. For those who were delivering front line services new working practices were brought in to ensure that they remained safe during their working day. However, the majority of the staff began to work from home almost immediately. They will probably work from home until the end of the year.

1. **Highways.**

- a. The work on the Spinney, together with the guardrail and cobbles on the road, are all being packaged up into one job number to be sent out for construction. I will let you know when I receive a starting date. The delays on the delivery of the Local Transport Plan programme have been an issue for a few years. Following a meeting I held with the Management of the Highways division at the end of last year, a further £500,000 has been invested in an attempt to get rid of the backlog.
- b. Pedestrian crossing. This is currently undergoing the Stage 2 road safety audit. The audit may result in a few changes to the design but these should be minor. The bill of quantities has also been submitted for estimating so that the final cost can be established. Once these are complete the scheme can be issued for construction.
- c. Signage in the village. I know that many of us agree that there are too many signs on the road through the village. Once all the County Council's work has finished then I will work with the PC and residents to remove any unwanted signage.

2. **Highways Maintenance and other highway issues.**

- a. Broomhaugh. A longstanding water leak at the bottom end of Broomhaugh has been repaired and the road has been resurfaced in that area.
- b. A695 blocked gullies. A main drain which runs through private land at Riding Farm has now been cleared. The drainage system on the A695 in this area should hopefully have no further problems.
- c. Slaley Road. Grips have been dug into the shoulder of the road. The issue of the road surface has also been taken up with the Council.
- d. Parking at Broomhaugh. Over the last few months three residents have contacted me raising concerns about the parking on the street which is causing problems with access. I will be working with the residents over the next few weeks to find a solution without the use of double yellow lines or traffic enforcement.
- e. Ragwort. The ragwort on the A695 has been bad this year, especially on the roundabout. The County Council has cleared it but more work will be required to eradicate it next year.
- f. Utilities. Over the next year more work is required to be undertaken by the utility companies on the A695 through the village. At the present time the Council has deferred this work because of the impact this would have during the construction work taking place on the A69 at Hexham.

3. **Meeting of the County Council.**

At the present time, many Council meetings have been cancelled and those that are taking place are televised on You Tube. The Area Council and the Area Planning Committee meetings were cancelled in March. The Strategic Planning Committee (the Council's central committee) is dealing with any planning applications which are contentious including those which would have previously been referred to the Tynedale Area Planning Committee.

4. **Local Plan.**

The County Council are consulting with the public about the issues that have been raised by the Local Plan Inspector during the Public Hearing. It is important that the Parish Council also responds to this especially since the recent change to Government planning policies.

5. **Other issues.** Over the year, residents contact me about many and varied concerns from potholes, planning matters, social services, flooding, trees and hedges, dog dirt, parking and the speed of traffic etc. I work closely with the County Council to ensure that every concern is taken up and dealt with as soon as possible according to the level of risk and priority. I continue to work with the Parish Council, the school and the Sports Club on their present projects.

6. **Thank you.** I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has continued to support those in need in the village during these changing times. I would also like to thank Andy Dunhill for all his hard work as Chair of the Parish Council over many years. Lots has been achieved under his Chairmanship and I have enjoyed working with him. I look forward to working with you all over the coming year and if you have any concerns or would like any further information do contact me on either 01434 673326 or by email Anne.Dale@northumberland.gov.uk