

## CRONTON PARISH COUNCIL

### CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

As the new financial year started the Parish Council was still meeting remotely. As more people became vaccinated the government took the decision to require all councils to return to face to face meetings.

These meetings were conducted using social distancing and all those attending were required to wear masks. This was not ideal but the council was able to conduct business in accordance with all guidance and still achieve its aims.

Restrictions created a few problems for the council. The Pasture Working Group was unable to physically meet at the Pasture but liaison with KMBC still continued. Working with KMBC the working group is seeking funding to improve the Pasture and is committed to producing a master plan which will protect and enhance the Pasture for years to come. My thanks go to all members of the working group for their hard work throughout the year.

A casual vacancy for a councillor arose and Lianne Terry was co-opted to join the council. I hope Lianne finds working with the Parish Council interesting and I wish her luck in her new role as a Parish Councillor.

The speed watch scheme stalled as the Covid-19 pandemic created resourcing issues within Merseyside Police . Three councillors have been trained in the use of the speed detecting device and it is hoped that speed monitoring can take place in the near future.

The Parish Council and Village website is monitored and updated on a regular basis with councillors receiving further training on managing the site.

The Parish Council decided to trial a Facebook page with the intention of using the platform to quickly provide information to residents. The trial has gone well with no significant problems and a decision will be taken in May about the continued use of Facebook.

The Parish Council continued to monitor planning applications paying particular attention to the Halton Local Plan and proposed works at the former Cronton Colliery. The council is awaiting the planning application for phase 8 of the proposed cycleway which is delayed due to major drainage problems in Cronton Road.

The Parish Council is working hard in its liaison with Merseyside Police. Whilst the level of crime in Cronton is relatively low compared to other areas of Knowsley, the Parish Council recognises that any crime or act of anti-social behaviour causes distress to residents. The council will continue in its attempt to improve policing in Cronton.

As Autumn approached there was a significant increase in Covid infections. For this reason the Parish Council took the difficult decision to cancel the formal remembrance service. I know that this decision upset and even angered a number of residents but the decision was taken in good faith. Residents were invited to lay tributes following all Covid guidelines and councillors placed wreaths on behalf of community groups.

The annual Christmas nativity service was also cancelled but the Christmas tree was still provided for residents to enjoy.

In the New Year councillors began preparing the budget for the financial year 2022/23. Councillors considered the problems in the country in terms of rising prices and inflation, in particular energy costs. After careful and considered discussion it was agreed to freeze the precept at last years level without any reduction to the level of service the Parish Council provides.

I thank all of my fellow councillors for their commitment and hard work they do on behalf of the Cronton community and for the support they have shown me as chair of the council.

My special thanks go to the Parish Clerk Vitti Osborne who has once again worked very hard on behalf of the council. I also place on record my personal thanks to Vitti for the support she has given me as chair of the council.

Shaun Cooper  
Chair 2021/22  
Cronton Parish Council