



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

Fake news travels fast

On Monday 10th August, the Parish Council had an extraordinary meeting. A thorough risk assessment for the meeting (under Covid Regulations 2020) was strictly adhered to. Right since the year 2000, we have never had an August meeting, we have always considered it our annual break before starting a new year in September just as the schools do. However, this extraordinary meeting was called to pass the Annual Accounts and Audit which by law had to be approved by the 31st August 2020. Ged Lawson of the Audit Service sent me a glowing letter to say how well Mandy, our Clerk and Financial Officer had presented all the documents and that “such dedication reflects that the Parish Council accounts are in ‘safe hands’”.

The other item on the extraordinary meeting agenda was to consider a Government Directive that came to us via the East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Our Clerk, read the complete instruction to consider a blanket leave of absence to all members who might be shielding because they were medically vulnerable or self-isolating on their doctor’s instruction guarding against catching the virus. No member would be penalized during the corona virus crisis should they be unwell and unable to attend a meeting. The government stated that any councillor in this category should be allowed leave of absence up to next May if needed and not struck off the Parish Council for missing meetings. (Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that if a Councillor fails to attend a meeting for a period of six months they cease to be a member of the authority, unless that failure was due to a reason approved by the authority). That to us seemed reasonable.

Our Clerk then received an email from a resident, who lived near a councillor, telling Mandy that it would be a dereliction of duty for the Council not to have meetings until next May. The next stage was a phone call from a Willerby Parish Councillor asking if it was true that Kirk Ella & West Ella Parish Council had closed until next May and then a phone call from a Ward Councillor asking me to enlighten him. He had been asked late on the Sunday night to attend our meeting on Monday. It seems the fake news has now travelled up into West Ella. I would like all of you to be assured that this information is NOT true in fact your Parish Councillors are continuing to work very hard despite Covid. We have received more government instructions about extra items which must appear on our website obviously causing greater cost. We continue to deal with planning applications, health and safety issues have arisen that we have contacted the ERYC about, we have had consultations with the Highways department and environment problems are being dealt with etc. etc. So just to clarify the Parish Council has NOT closed down until May. It is Fake News.

Councillor Margaret Raymond, Chairman Kirk Ella & West Ella Parish Council