**Chairmans Statement**

What makes a community to you?

How does a parish council work?

What part do you play in helping to make your community a better place to live in for yourself and for others?

What part are you playing in helping to make the planet a better place to live on?

Right now, the world is on a tipping point, you see it on the news on a daily basis.

The parish council took a unanimous decision to begin doing our part in redressing the biodiversity issues facing us.

I and indeed we, have listened. I have had both sides of the arguments. I have listened while being told ‘no one on Pine Walk wants it’. This is simply untrue. There are some that do, some that don’t and several who have told me that they’re not keen but they understand the reasons why. I had one resident telling me how it looked over grown and messy which I couldn’t walk past the pavement due to his own unkept garden.

I have had letters telling me about the dog mess problem in the verges, trust me I was one of the people cutting it down, I can hand on heart tell you I didn’t come across a single piece.

Before I go any further, I will again inform you of the position regarding the Geroge Weston Community Field. This land is leased from the Parish Council to the Weybourne Community Fund. It is the sole responsibility of the Community Fund to do with as they wish within the terms of their lease. There is no public right of way across this land and no commitment for them to keep it open for use by the general public. I am sure many of you have seen their plea for helpers. If the fund ceases so does the lease of the field and the parish would have to decide if it can find alternative funding or revert to leasing as agricultural land. The variety of plants found on this land while the WCF have been able to leave it uncut have brought enormous attention.

The cemetery also has wild and protected flowers growing within it. Legally we are obligated to protect them.

In recent years the World Health Organisation, environmental groups both national and local government have initiated programmes for the re-wilding of areas to protect plants, insects and birdlife. Since 1930 a staggering 98% of meadow land has been lost. That has an enormous impact on the biodiversity of our planet.

At present the County Council and the District Council are moving to a maximum of three cuts per year. In some places this is being reduced to two. We received a grant to cover just three cuts per annum.

As a parish council we have obligations that we are legally required to adhere to, these include environmental factors. Should we follow the example of the County and District Councils the verges will be reduced to three cuts per year. Instead of our plans for the future.

Prior to and subsequent to the last meeting I have been subject to verbal attacks and threats regarding the boycotting of my business. I was accused of not listening and taking no notice of the views of a few villagers that attended the meeting. Please be assured I listen to the views of all of you. However, the views of those against the project have so far been outnumbered by the views of those for the project or those who understand the reasons why. Including many on Pine Walk, some of whom are afraid to speak out due to the vocal and almost intimidating nature of those against the project.

On a personal note, when I became a councillor, I agreed that I would do my very best for the village. I also stated that should it affect my business I would stand down. To have residents saying they will now boycott my pub is completely up to them, however it’s not just me they are affecting. it’s the staff who work for me. The staff who have often gone out of their way for some of these residents. In the past 18 months I am proud of the community efforts our pub has made, during covid the meals we provided were, to many residents, a lifeline. We provided Christmas meals to the needy. We donated money for local school children to have meals during the school holidays.

On behalf of the parish council, and before any local government I set up a network for the vulnerable in our community, I took residents to hospital. Collected mail, prescription runs, (sometimes several a day), did shopping for those that couldn’t get out and again we donated food from the pub when essentials were in short supply. I delivered newspapers and took milk late at night.

I personally cleaned up human waste from the beach area. Litter picked. I responded to calls from worried residents regarding breaches of covid regulations sometimes putting myself at risk to deal with them. I cleared blocked drains, 2am and I’m out fixing a very scared ladies electrics.

I took calls from lonely residents and called people living alone to check they were ok weekly, some daily.

Christmas Day, I called many residents that I knew were on their own and feeling low and lonely.

I cleared snow for hours in the depth of Winter, call Highways and made them change plans when it looked like unnecessary road closures. Lobby for better buses. Lobby for affordable homes for local people. You think the fuel crisis is bad, its only just begun… there will be no one to do lower paid jobs left living here the way we are going.

Still think I don’t listen and that we don’t care?

In the time I’ve been Chair we’ve set proper budgets to allow for the village amenities to be upkept and replaced as necessary. Safety bollards, imitation pavements down the main roads for pedestrians. White lines on the corner of Church Street to alleviate some of the traffic issues. We have toilets at the beach.

I’m in regular dialogue with District and County Councillors. Our MP gets regular emails from me regarding our concerns.

The parish council is in constant dialogue regarding the windfarms. This never happened before. In fact, we weren’t even on the mailing list!!!

We are improving the playing field, the cemetery and other areas.

Our agenda is full. Ask other parish councils. We are not just active we are proactive.

Yet for some of you, uncut grass is enough for you to boycott my business and abuse me personally. Quite frankly some people have no idea of what we do. How much time is taken up and how personally upsetting this can be.

In March this year I sought help for my mental health due to the stress of the past 18 months. Still think I don’t listen. Still think causing harm to my business is a good idea?

This parish council is working harder than any of you know, we don’t get paid and we certainly don’t do it for our health.

The parish council is run by a set of guidelines, its standing orders. It is not a public forum; it is a meeting of councillors to which the public are invited to attend.

As Chair I allow public participation as I believe it is in all our interest to listen. However, we still have rules and guidelines that we are legally obliged to meet. We cannot for instance discuss matters that are not on the agenda. A full copy of the standing orders is available on our website or from the Clerk. Public participation is, under our standing orders, limited to two minutes on any subject. Any one topic should only have one spokesperson unless there is more information. Any person wishing to discuss agenda items should request this in advance of the meeting but should only be items on the agenda. All other matters should be in writing where the parish council can determine whether or not to add it to an agenda. However, as we demonstrated at the last meeting as Chair, I allow a far greater degree of public participation.

We don’t always agree in life, we all have different ideas of what we want or how to achieve things. That’s life.

If anyone wants to do it differently, please stand for election. You’d realise I am simply the Chair; the Council makes the decisions.