



**PREESALL TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021**

Mayor's Report

How do you sum up the last year, a year that most of us would care to forget?

Clearly my first words should be to list and thank all those in the community and beyond who have helped the rest of us get through the last year, but whatever list I write I will inevitably miss someone out. The memories of every selfless deed by the many and the going the extra mile by others is already starting to fade from one's memory. You all know who they were (and some still are) and on behalf of the community I thank you all. This year should see the first presentation of our Annual Star Award given to a volunteer individual or group who has gone the extra mile.

As far as the Town Council is concerned it has been a strange, different, difficult, and frustrating year. Strange and different because all our meetings have been held remotely using the medium of Zoom and we are grateful to the clerk for organising and facilitating this. Difficult because so much of what we have been trying to do has been hampered by the Covid situation, which has distracted the two higher authorities' officers' attention, frustrating projects from advancing and interrupting normal information and communication pathways. In addition, we have had difficulty in recruiting a lengthsman or finding local trades people willing and able to carry out tasks. However, as the pandemic slowly comes to an end, normal service hopefully resumes and the recruitment of a new lengthsman is successfully completed we look forward to a good new civic year and the starting and completion of several projects.

The council's increased public bench provision continues with three more being installed during the year, this time on the sea wall. Some older deteriorating benches have also been replaced and the Fordstone area project was completed. Progress on the CCTV system stalled due to inaction at a higher level, but rest assured a system has been purchased and is awaiting installation in the Barton Square area and funds are ringfenced for a second camera in another area once the first has been shown to work. Refurbishment of the clock in Barton Square has started and should be completed shortly. Despite the pandemic we were able to mark, albeit in a very low key and distanced manner, Remembrance Sunday and Day, VJ Day and Commonwealth flag raising. To cheer our spirits, we were still able to put on a Christmas lights display, in fact increasing our display to further reaches of our patch. We held competitions for shop and domestic festive displays and our friends on the Christmas events group staged a superb Santa's sleigh ride round the villages and we thank them and Santa and Mrs Claus for that.

The council continues to keep a watching brief on the activities of the gas storage company, contributes to planning issues, flooding, highways and housing problems and will keep up the pressure on the police to keep up their presence in our villages. On behalf of the council I would like to thank HM Coastguard Knott End and Lancashire Fire and Rescue for helping to keep residents and visitors alike safe, for all the volunteers in all shapes and sizes from bloomers to litter pickers - they all contribute to making our community so special.

In conclusion, we have been very lucky over the last year despite everything to have virtually 100% retail and hospitality occupancy and many of these businesses have bent over backwards to help the community during the dark days of lockdown. Please remember this when life returns to normal and shop, eat and socialise locally. There is very little one has to leave the villages for and why would you want to?

Finance

The Town Council is responsible for proper accounting records, safeguarding the assets and taking steps to prevent fraud and other irregularities and a prudent level of reserves. There are accounting policies and procedures in place to mitigate exposure to major risk, which are reviewed annually. Councillors believe they make reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates. The accounts are a matter of public information and can be viewed at any time.

Receipts and Payments Account for Preesall Town Council

Receipts	2020 to	2021	Payments
Balances brought forward (including reserves)	£112790	£35192	Staff costs
Precept	£97230	£2891	Governance
Grants/donations	£4196	£11772	Community Expenditure
VAT Refund	£2924	£154	Training
Recharges	£25	£527	Parish maintenance
Other	£2045	£307	Events
Civic	£0	£1185	Office costs
Interest	£659	£133	Mayor/Civic
In Bloom	£95	£95	In Bloom
		£10050	Grants/Donations
		£3260	Sundry (inc £3105 VAT)
	219964	£65566	

Balance to carry forward as at 31st March 2021 - £154398

The Town Council accounts were audited in April 2021.

The Parish Precept

The Parish Precept is the amount of money which the Town Council receives from Wyre Council to pay for the services it provides. This amount is raised by Wyre Council as that part of your Council Tax relating directly to the Town Council area. In other words, Wyre Council collects this on our behalf.

The way we calculate the precept is as follows:

Each year, just before Christmas, the Town Council produces an estimate of its likely **expenditure** for the forthcoming year (eg. staff costs, parish maintenance, community projects). This will also include an amount to cover the costs of any urgent projects that may be required in the area.

We also estimate our likely **income** for the same period (eg the VAT refund, Festive Lighting Grant). The difference between the two figures forms the basis of our precept calculation, which we submit to Wyre Council. In 2020/21 our precept was £97230.

Alison May

Responsible Financial Officer

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