

# **FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

## **124th Annual Assembly – Thursday May 16th 2019**

### **Introduction & Acknowledgements**

Before reviewing the key issues that the Parish Council has dealt with during the period, I would like to thank all Parish Councillors for their diligence in dealing with the many issues brought before them, and those Members who have represented the Parish Council and specifically Councillors who have headed up various projects we have delivered during the year.

Councillors contribute their own personal time without remuneration, often receiving complaints about decisions taken, or their failure to resolve problems outside their control. The latter often reflects problems which are the responsibility of other organisations such as District and County Councils, who themselves often lack funds and have to prioritise requests for funding across the whole County.

Fenstanton like most other villages has historically had difficulty in filling Council vacancies and there hasn't been a need for an election for the last 14 years. During previous years we have been fortunate to have successfully co-opted the services of Councillors to maintain a full Parish Council. However, during the current period we have lost the services of Councillors Steve Dartford, Gill Dartford, Sally Lee, Martyn Crawshaw Jim Buchanan and David Pask through resignations and Councillor Peter West, who after many years of service on the Parish Council, sadly passed away. He will be missed within the Parish Council and across the Fenstanton Community.

Following this year's successful recruitment exercise, we have been fortunate to secure the services of 6 new Cllr's, Nigel Ferrier (Vice Chairman), Cllr Kevin Forbes-Mitchell, Cllr Peter Hayes, Cllr Roy McGee, Cllr Christine Morris, Cllr Jackie Turner, which brings us up to a compliment of 12 Parish Councillors, with one remains vacancy in respect of which we already have an existing applicant, required for a full Council.

My thanks also go to the following, who have laboured on behalf of the Parish:

- Councillor Ian Bates for providing support and representing our views with County Council
- Councillor David Mead (Fenstanton South) for providing support and representing our views with District Council.
- Councillor Angie Dickinson (Fenstanton North) for providing support and representing our views with District Council.
- Cllr John Davies (Fenstanton North) for providing support and representing our views with District Council.
- Sally Lee for agreeing to act as Lay Chair of the Burial Board.
- Martin Haywood– all his work in the village and in the office. Martin was awarded the PC grass cutting contract and the PC has invested in the correct mower for the grave and church yards.
- Mrs Donna Butcher for looking after the flower bed in the Village at her own expense.

- Mrs Susan Atwood for planting the borders near the Rookery Place garages.
- Mr Nigel Tilbury for maintaining the Village website.
- All Parish Councillors and those Members who have represented the Parish Council.

### **Parish Local Matters & Projects Delivered & Initiated**

As a backdrop to the period HDC has continued to face budget constrictions and as a consequence more work has filtered down to local Parish Councils.

During the period the Parish Council has delivered a significant number of additional new amenities through seed funding out of available Parish CIL and Grants received from The Mick George Community Fund.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Mick George Community Fund for their valuable contribution of funds towards many of the following projects delivered and in progress.

#### ***Projects Delivered***

1. Pitfield Close Children's Play Area (CIL Funds & MG Grant).
2. Adult Outdoor Gym at Cranesbrook field (CIL Funds & MG Grant).
3. Chequer Street Children's Play Area upgrade (CIL Funds & MG Grant).
4. Pond and Clock Tower surrounds refurbishment (CIL Funds)
5. Repairs to kerbs and drains surrounding Honey Hill and Chequer Street Greens (CIL Funds).

#### ***Projects in Feasibility & Progress***

1. Multi Use Games Area on the school field - Feasibility Study has begun in consultation with the School and CCC. Initial concepts will be made available to residents (CIL Funds & Grants).
2. Fen Cycleway (proposed) - Feasibility Study has begun in consultation with Fen residents (CIL Funds & CCC Grant).
3. Pond repairs to stop water leakage and upgrade (CIL Funds & MG Grant).
4. The village Whipping Post refurbished for siting at the Clock Tower along with a history board.

#### ***Parish Matters***

The Parish Council addressed ongoing concern about the reduction in our bus services through the instigation of a Parish bus survey in liaison with St Ives Town Council which many other PCs took up and used themselves. Subsequently the Mayor and Council County Council recognised our concerns and encouraged CCC to extend the bus service by a further 12 months by continuing the service contract with DEWS. This is an ongoing situation.

Highways England A14 Liaison attended a Parish Council meeting with Mr Mike Evans in attendance to give the Parish Council an update on progress and to discuss issues of concern.

There has been no further progress on the proposed Mick George Hemingford Abbots planning application for a waste disposal site located 4.5 miles from Fenstanton Village at Hemingford Abbots 9 Hole Golf Course. Cambridge County Council has however indicated that their strategy does not include additional Waste Disposal facilities.

HGV parking on the A14 slip road has been a continuing issue, much to the concern of the Parish Council. Oakland's Residents have been encouraged to continue registering

complaints with the police to ensure they give this issue the necessary priority and take action. Commencement of The Park Development by Kier Living and Dairy Crest by Morris Homes has had a slightly beneficial effect on this matter. However, completion of both housing development sites during 2019, introduction of a 30mph speed limit and Pedestrian Crossing on the A14 Sliproad, together with opening the new A14, will discourage and should remove HGV parking during the next period.

The number of litter bins, benches and picnic tables have been increased throughout the village through the investment of CIL monies made available.

The proposed sale and closure of the King Bill Pub for conversion into a residence was raised by residents. Action was taken by the Parish Council to submit an application to HDC to register the King Bill as an Asset of Community Value. The Parish Council is facilitating a group of villagers who are currently leading the fund raising exercise with a view to purchase and re-establishment of the King Bill as a village pub.

The Parish Council has now commenced listing all Assets which it considers as a Community Asset e.g. Clock Tower, Allotments, Fenstanton football pitch etc, and will register these with HDC.

### **Parish Grants Awarded**

1. Fenstanton Friendship Group.
2. Fenstanton Village Sports Committee
3. Rainbow Guiding Group.
4. Fenstanton Youth Football Club.

### **Parish Community, Communications & Consultation**

During the period we have recognised that there is a greater need for consultation with residents of the Parish and have introduced the following initiatives:

1. Survey Monkey is now being used to gather residents opinions on CIL investment in projects.
2. First Parish Council information leaflet has been issued to all households.
3. Three stands were taken at Village functions to promote the work of the Parish Council and discuss CIL investment preferences with residents.
4. Investment in Spectrum to secure its future as a communication tool for the village.
5. Several Focus Group workshops have been held with a cross section of residents, to gather perceptions of Parish Council and preferences for CIL investment. Issues raised will be incorporated into future approach, plans and investment.
6. The PC Community Award was presented to **Ray Whitby** by Cllr Henderson at the Village Sports Day on 7 July.

### **Parish Planning Matters**

The Review of Planning Applications has continued uninterrupted throughout the period. A total of 27 Planning Applications (47 at previous Assembly), were reviewed by the Parish Council, the majority of which were conservatories and extensions, which caused some controversy, that needed to be addressed under our capacity of consultation.

During the period planned housing development work commenced and continues on both the Dairy Crest (Morris Homes) and The Park (Kier Living) developments. The Parish Council

continues to work with Kier Living, CCC and HDC to ensure the A14 Dairy Crest Slip Road is designed to be a safe residential access road and to discourage HGV overnight parking through the introduction of a cycle way, a 30 mph speed limit, road narrowing through a central hashed reservation, double yellow lines and a pedestrian crossing. Discussions are continuing with Kier Living and will be picked up with Morris Homes for their Section on the A14 Slip Road.

The Parish Council has objected to the HDC 2036 Plan, concerning the proposal to build homes on the current Allotment space. The Parish Council have lodged objections with HDC who have discounted our objections and opinions. We have raised objections with the independent Planning Inspectorate and have engaged with the Diocese of Ely who are the owners of the Allotment space.

There has and still is controversy over the removal of trees adjoining Conington Road and the Dairy Crest Development site. The Parish Council has intervened with representations to Morris Homes via CCC & HDC to resolve these issues on behalf of residents and will continue to do so vigorously.

Drainage in Conington Road adjoining Morris Homes residential development site has been controversial with the Parish Council intervening with representations to Morris Homes, CCC & HDC to resolve this issue on behalf of residents, several site visits have been made and CCC Highways have been out to assess the potential for flooding in the road. To date CCC Highways have advised the excess water does not conform to their intervention criteria. The Parish Council will continue to progress this issue vigorously on behalf of residents.

### **Office Matters**

Historic Parish Council records continue to be evaluated and a large amount of files have been sent away for secure shredding in accordance with the new Document Retention Policy.

### **Burial Board Matters**

Responsibility for the closed graveyard was Gazetted and transferred to the Parish Council based on an Order in Council dated 28.1.1958. The Parish Council has now taken over full responsibility for the Closed Graveyard.

Following a full Investigation into the lack of burial space in the graveyard, the Parish Council completed works on removing the footpath and trimming a boundary hedge to free up space for 17 additional burial spaces to meet future needs.

Work has been completed on all tombs which required repairs.

Work was completed on the Memorial Garden at the Cemetery, in honour of this year's centenary of the First World War. The Parish Council arranged with Martin Haywood for the complete refurbishment of the small memorial garden, carrying out repairs where necessary to the surround and replacing the shrubs with flowering bedding plants. The area around the War Memorial was also be tidied up.

### **Policing Matters**

Police represented by Sgt. Alice Draper attended a Parish Council meeting following an increase in Antisocial Behaviour and Criminal activity in the village, which included burning down the Cricket Pavilion.

Cllr's Kent, Bates and Mead wrote to the Chief Constable to secure his support in controlling this criminal activity and a period of Police high visibility was implemented in Fenstanton to quell the increase in the general crime level, which appears to have been lowered significantly.

There have been the usual concerns raised over inconsiderate parking in the Village, which was raised with Sgt. Alice Draper and the police have agreed to place ad hoc notices on incorrectly parked vehicles in the village when notified. However, the Parish Council has produced parking notices which are to be placed on the windscreens of vehicles where it is deemed to be inconsiderate. Additionally, a parking review of key areas has commenced to identify main areas of concern and implement solutions wherever legally and financially viable.

### **Precept & Funding**

In order to maintain the excellent level of service provided and achieve a balanced budget in the coming financial year 2019/20, the Parish Council has unanimously voted to increase the Parish Council contribution per household by just 10 pence per week. This equates to an **annual increase of £5.34** for an average property\* in the village.

### **Matters for Consideration 2019/20**

- Formation of elected Parish Council.
- Increased liaison, support & communications with village community groups.
- Review of vehicle parking and lack of parking spaces.
- Speedwatch Group facilitated to address concerns over speeding in the village.
- Village meeting promoted by Parish Council.
- CIL Planning for monies to be invested.
- 1A bus service continuation.
- Dairy Crest & The Park Developments completion.
- A14 Dairy Crest Slip road improvements.
- New A14 road development completion.
- Multi Use Games Area on the school field.
- Proposed Fen Cycleway, depending upon feasibility.
- Restoration and repair of the Pond and surrounds.
- Installation of the historic Whipping Post at the Clock Tower along with a history board.
- Upgrade of Junior Football Pitch Area and fencing.

Best Regards  
Paul