

## **Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting on 2nd May 2018**

Good Evening everyone and welcome to the 2018 Annual Parish meeting and thank you for coming.

As always I would to thank the councillors for all their support during the year and Marian for all her dedication and hard work as clerk..

### **Precept**

Firstly, I am pleased to say that we have been able to keep the parish precept at last year's level, which is good news.

### **Projects**

During the year, we have undertaken various projects. New dog bins have been bought, one has been placed at the top of Hill Farm Road and the one outside the village hall has been replaced with a larger one. There has been some problem with the lid on this bin not closing properly, but Marian has been in contact with Norse and they are monitoring the situation, at the moment the fault has been diagnosed as misplacement of the liner.

We have put a new bench along Hill Farm Road just after the entrance to the footpath to Little Bealings, dedicated to Charles Lofts and a plaque bearing his name has been fixed to it. I would like to thank Tom Lofts, Mr Rice and Geoff Dunnett for preparing the site and fixing the bench for us.

We have also purchased a defibrillator, which is at the moment stored in our dining room, but will be fitted on the 23rd of this month. The cabinet will be fitted to the wall on the right hand side of the entrance porch. The electrician needs to connect it to the mains as the cabinet has to be kept warm. The Parish Council have arranged with the village hall committee that the village hall will pay for the electricity which should be minimal. Part of the purchase price includes training for 12 people so shortly we will be arranging a training afternoon for anyone who would like to know how and when to use the defibrillator..

All of these projects would not have happened if it were not for the grants made available to us by Robert Whiting our district councillor and Robin Vickery, our County Councillor. So thanks very much to them for all their help and support.

One project which seems to have stalled is the speed watch VAS system. Marian is in regular contact with the clerk at Rushmere and she is confident that Rushmere will advise any progress but nothing has happened yet. This is mainly due to the model originally ordered not being available and maybe some bad communications. We have money in the account which would pay for the positioning of the support posts but nothing has happened for over 6 months.

### **Grass Cutting**

Norse are continuing to cut the grass and doing it well. In the autumn last year purchase £50 of daffodil bulbs and several of us including Keith's immediate family planted them along the verges near the hall and despite the winter and tractors running over them they have for the first year done rather well.

### **Highways**

As always we have had further deterioration of the verges around the village and this year's wet, cold winter has not really helped. The highways department are going to find it difficult financially to manage to repair the main roads let alone the minor roads but we will continue to complain to the highways department. However, when one of the councillors complained about the verge erosion in the centre of the village he received a reply saying that it is now Highways' policy not to repair such ruts as "they will only reappear".

In February Sam Webber kindly offered his fast Rapid Response Team to renovate the verges in the centre of the village. Together with Keith who drew up a list of locations, they spent a Saturday repairing the verges and placing posts at the end of Church Lane and on the triangle at the end of Hill Farm Road. These seem to have been quite effective in keeping vehicles off the edges and perhaps we might extend the scheme to other needy parts of the village. I would like to propose a vote of thanks to Sam and his team for their hard work on what was not a very pleasant day .

## **Data Protection**

The new data protection act comes into force later this month and the Parish Council has implemented any changes which were required in its handling of personal data, it has appointed a data protection officer and continues to be registered with the ICO. There are two documents relating to privacy of personal data on the website which lays out how we as a Parish Council deal with any personal data we handle.

## **Footpaths**

Late last year the Parish Council met with Debbie Adams, the rights of way officer, Elizabeth Mansfield and Ralph Hardy, from Kiln Farm to establish the correct route for FP20, which is the footpath which leads to the Alder Carr along the south side of the Fynn. A discrepancy of the route between the Definitive Map and the Footpath Statement at several points along the route had been found and could not easily be resolved. So we thought that if all parties met we could make a decision which would satisfy both landowners and users of the footpath. After much debate we agreed that the path should take the route of the Definitive Map, but this was on condition that both FP1, the path going to Tuddenham on the north side of the Fynn and FP3 which is the path from Brook Lane to Bransons, were levelled by the landowners and cleared of overhanging and intrusive vegetation and the footpaths were widened in places as the electric fence was too close to the path.

The present situation is that a statutory declaration for rerouting FP20 has been signed and it is intended to keep both routes open for the time being until walkers have got used to using the new route. Elizabeth Mansfield has admitted that there was bad communication when they started the work last year but has promised to keep the PC up to date and give plenty of warning before the former route is blocked off. Work on the bridge into the Alder Carr should start in the next few weeks.

Some work has been done on FP1 to level it and cut back the vegetation and the levelling will continue when weather improves. FP3 still needs levelling and although the vegetation has died down it will be growing again now the weather has warmed up. Please can we ask walkers to report to Marian any difficulties with any of these three footpaths as we want to monitor the work closely.

## **Fibre Broadband**

As I understand it, the fibre installation into the village was paid for by Better Broadband Suffolk, because the download speeds were so slow. However, I have discovered that around a third of the village does not have fibre enabled. This is very random, for instance out of the seven houses on Brook Lane, five can order fibre, two can't and in Church Lane next door neighbours can and can't. I have after trying for several weeks managed to communicate with Open Reach and I have been told and I quote '[Your exchange is fibre enabled and we have put up a new cabinet - 27 which is also fibre enabled. We're moving people from cabinet 20 to 27 at the moment. I'm looking into how long it will take for the remaining properties](#)' I have also had a follow up email yesterday again I quote '[Following on from my colleague's email, our Open Reach Fibre team have looked in to your enquiry. They are going to arrange for engineers to attend sometime this week to assess the situation. They are then going to provide me with feedback on Friday. I will update you on the outcome of the engineers assessment of Friday](#)' Any information I receive will be sent out via [bealingandplayford news](#).

## **Neighbourhood Plan**

Keith Carson now has a small team of helpers to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan. They have set up a dedicated website and have published a questionnaire which can be completed on line. They have also sent round hard copies of the questionnaire, for those who have not seen the link in the Fynn Lark News or received the email. Keith will give you a quick update on the NP's progress after this report.

A copy of my report will be published on the Playford website along with draft minutes of this meeting.

That concludes my report, are there any questions?

Thank you