

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017-18

Welcome everyone to this year's Annual Parish Meeting.

I would like to start by thanking my fellow Councillors for their time and work over the past year.

This year we have Parish elections throughout all of South Cambridgeshire, on 3rd May.

Nominations for the 11 seats on Swavesey Parish Council closed on Friday 6th April.

(Only 11 nominations were received, from the existing 11 Cllrs, therefore there will not be an election for the Parish Council as all seats will have been filled)

This year has been yet another very busy year, every year seems to bring more and more projects and issues for our Parish to have to discuss. This past year again has been very heavily involved in planning matters! More of those later on in the Open Forum session.

The Parish Council has held **Quality Council Status** since September 2007. This is re-applied for every 4 years and in August 2017 the Council was again awarded Quality Status, recognising our good practice, community engagement and council improvement.

FINANCE

Precept – the 2018/19 Precept has been set at £63,400, meaning a band D property will pay £66.88 per year towards the budget for the Parish. This is an increase over last year's precept of £3.27 per Band D property.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT DURING THE PAST YEAR continued to village groups and projects including: Swavesey Memorial Hall charity, Churchyard and Cemetery maintenance, Community Warden Scheme.

HIGHWAYS and COUNTY COUNCIL

Parking around village continues to cause serious safety concerns and we continue to work with the Schools, County Council and Police to try to improve the situation.

Market St – parking bays and additional yellow lines were provided in June, however although providing a few more parking spaces there are still serious issues with parking in the area. We constantly ask the Police to visit and enforce the double yellow lines but they do not visit very often. We are not the only village with these issues.

Speeding – Still a concern through the village. In January we took part in an initiative with 7 other local villages and the A14 Team to have a speed camera for two weeks, which we located in Boxworth End. The data collected was interesting to say the least and we hope to be able to have the camera back again in other areas of the village over the forthcoming year. The summary data from January has been published on our website and facebook pages.

Speedwatch – We now have sufficient trained volunteers to run a Speedwatch group. Hopefully they will be carrying out the first Speedwatch sessions at the end of April. We would still like additional volunteers, so if you are interested please contact the Clerk.

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Swavesey Cllrs attended a number of **Parish Forum meetings at SCDC** along with other Parish Councillors from surrounding villages.

Cllrs also attended **Planning Forums** and other meetings with Planning Officers, which have been quite numerous this year.

District Cllr Sue Ellington supports the Parish Council's work with the District Council and I would like to thank Sue for her time and help.

PLANNING / CONSULTATIONS

Many local planning application consultations were received and commented on and Cllrs have attended numerous SCDC Committees, Appeal Hearings and meetings with developers.

Proposals outside of the Village Development Boundary

No new major applications have been received but further permissions have been granted.

There are now three with permission for a total of 200 new houses (30 off Boxworth End, 70 off Middlewatch and 99 off Fen Drayton Rd). The application for 90 on the Dairy Farm Site in Boxworth End was recently refused at Appeal.

More on this later in the Agenda

Neighbourhood Plan - The Steering Group have now been working for just over a year on this and Vicki Bidwell, from the Group, will give a short update later in the meeting.

A14 Improvements – This is now well and truly underway. The Mobile Exhibition Centre for the scheme will be at the Festival Gala Day.

We have recently been aware of the intention to close the Longstanton-Oakington road across the old airbase, which the Parish Council has objected to and so has Longstanton Parish Council. The closure of this road will cause all sorts of issues for local traffic and in particular agricultural traffic, particularly whilst we are also coping with the A14 works and road closures.

DRAINAGE

For the past three years now, we have reported here that we are still pressing for the improvement works promised for the Mare Fen Drain and River Gt Ouse banks to be completed. Unfortunately we are still in the same situation, with the Environment Agency still not confirming when work will take place. We continue to meet with EA Officers when we can and hope that the work might commence this year.

An update and brief explanation of the issues has been circulated with the Agenda pack for your info.

VILLAGE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Recreation Green – last summer the Parish Council provided a basketball hoop/goal wall and table tennis table on the green for public use. This was initiated by a small group of teenage boys in the village and paid for using some of the S106 development money we received. If there are any other ideas from other residents for outside community space improvements, please do come and speak to us about them.

Another resident has approached the Parish Council about land for a community heritage orchard, which we would like to support. A request for suitable land has been put out, so if you think you might be able to help with this, please let us know.

Carters Way/Priory Ave Open Space Area - This project is still ongoing, having been delayed whilst trying to find a solution to the underground drainage of the area. Hopefully this will move forward during this year.

Litter clearing – Many volunteers continue to give their time to help collect litter from areas around the village and we would like to thank all of them for their time. Earlier this year some litterpick blitz-mornings took place on the recreation green. The Parish Council is happy to help out with any further clearing days and we can obtain loan of litterpickers, gloves, etc from the District Council as well.

Community Warden Scheme – We are now in our fifth year of this scheme which is providing much appreciated help and support to elderly residents.

FINALLY – to keep in touch with all of the work and issues which the Parish Council is involved with look at our WEBSITE and FACEBOOK pages, plus the regular updates in the Meridian Magazine

Thank you to all our Parish Councillors for their time in the many activities of the Parish Council. And to the many volunteers who join our working parties to discuss and help formulate ideas and proposals around various projects.