

Chairman's report May 2016

(Reported by Mr J Sharp – Vice-Chairman)

In the absence of Chris I would like to report the following activity of the parish council:

This was yet another busy year for the parish council.

Speculative Development

The year started with considerable concern that a speculative developer intended to make a planning application to the borough council to build on open space along Earls Barton Road. This space is designated as 'Environmentally Important Open Space', so it would have been unlikely that any planning permission submitted would have been approved. At the time, however, the borough council didn't have a five year supply which was of concern, since then confirmation of an eight year supply has alleviated this risk. The local plan is also currently being consulted on and the parish council has already submitted a request that this land along with other open space land in the village be designated as official open space which will protect us even further from future development. Parishioners are also being encouraged to submit their own representations by visiting the borough council's website www.Wellingborough.gov.uk.

Street Lighting

The other major concern has been the lighting throughout the village. We appointed an independent lighting company to carry out a full inventory of the street lamps detailing the condition, along with recommendations of what improvements were required. As expected the lamps in John Gray Road were in the worst condition and a number of the lamps are to be replaced over the next couple of weeks with alternative styles of lighting so the parish council can decide which style of lighting is most appropriate for John Gray Road and other parts of the village. The parish council will then put in place a programme of replacing lamps throughout the village. This may take some time but will be carried out as quickly as possible.

Magna Grove

There has been continuing concern over the lack of a footpath from Magna Grove into the village and parish councillors will shortly be meeting with the highways department to see if anything further can be done. This concern was of course expressed when the development was initially built but at that time Highways said that there was insufficient room for a footpath. We will monitor developments regarding this.

Speeding

Speeding continues to present problems and the police periodically carry out random speed checks. Should sufficient parishioners come forward as volunteers a speed watch for the village could be considered. At the moment there is concern relating to traffic cutting through Lower Street speeding on what is a very narrow road. Residents are monitoring this.

Recreation Ground

Following a donation from the Scarecrow Fund the parish council decided to fund a replacement fence which has now been installed at the hardstanding. The contractors have to finish this off but it is more or less ready for use.

Following quotations and different designs a decision on the improvements needed for the play equipment has been made and funding is currently being sought. We had hoped that the Lottery may be able to assist but we did not comply for funding from this. We have already received some contributions and continue to find funding sources to enable this project to move forward.

Another major issue has been the future of the Football Hut following the demise of the Senior Team. There had been much discussion with the Football Foundation who had confirmed that it had funded the hut and that at the present time it was still under the control of the trustees.

A surrender of the Lease would be needed should anyone or indeed the parish council wish to take on this building. We were awaiting more information in this regard from the trustees.

Solar Farm

The solar farm had been completed apart from the planting of the promised hedging which had to be done at a certain time of year. There had been issues with horses on the land but these had been removed and the fencing secured by the land owners.

Crematorium

The crematorium building is coming on well and is due to be completed in July. This will be known as Nene Valley Crematorium.

Wellingborough Bereavement Services will be running the crematorium and a new manager Tracey Lawrence will be starting at the end of May. There will be open days which the parish council will be invited to attend.

As you can see all these projects along with the day to day running of council business keeps us very busy, my thanks are extended as always to my fellow parish councillors, Mr Taschini, for editing the village news and the clerk.

Chairman

May 2016