

Nailstone Parish Council

**Annual Parish Meeting of Nailstone Parish Council,
Wednesday 24th April, 7pm in All Saints Church, Nailstone**

Chair's Report

Welcome to everyone on the occasion of the Annual Nailstone Parish Meeting. This is the occasion where all groups and associations in the village can congregate and give their news and updates.

It has been an interesting 12 months or more for the Parish Council and certainly not something that I have experienced in the 8 years that I have stood as a councillor and I am sure that I can say the same for some of my fellow councillors.

For over 18 months the Council has had continued attempts to disrupt the running of the council and carrying out of projects, however we have continued business as usual and committed to a number of projects.

Conservation Area

Back in 2015 we were awarded conservation status within the village. We set out a number of aims linked to this, some based on feedback from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC). This last year we have achieved the aims set out to install new benches, a village sign and noticeboards along with the re-location of the existing board from The Oval.

We had also identified areas of maintenance within the church yard and church meadow that has now been carried out

Planning applications

The year has seen a number of planning applications and we remain concerned regarding over development of the village. We worked with Cllr Crooks and Cllr Ould to successfully stop a development off Veros Lane behind Main Street. Due to the concerns the council has agreed to ascertain interest from parishioners' to take forward a Neighborhood Development Plan. Fortunately we have the skill of Cllr. Crane and Helen who have had experience in developing these plans. We also have a company interested in supporting this work. It is hoped that the new council and Helen will take this forward and a meeting will be arranged late spring early summer for parishioners.

Speed reduction

We have completed further work with highways this last year and been successful in

securing further speed reduction initiatives at the entrance to the village from Bagworth Road over and above what had been originally agreed by the developers. We have been advised that this work will commence this summer.

Old Colliery

There has always been uncertainty over this site, for many years parishioners, the parish, borough and county council have campaigned to ensure that a waste site was not created, planning permission was agreed for industrial units with us seeing no development or movement for many years. We have now started to see work taking place, which hopefully takes away the ongoing concern of the use of the site.

Good Friday site

After much campaigning and monitoring this site was finally closed and made good last year taking away yet again further uncertainty for this village and surrounding villages.

Dog Fouling

This remains an issue for some residents, Cllr Harrion has taken the lead for this but does not have many incidents reported to him. He will however take out a spray and report to highways to clean away. We have requested support from HBBC and for signage near to recent hotspots to deter irresponsible dog owners. The borough council are assessing the suitability of CCTV to catch culprits and deter others. I would encourage you to continue reporting and if you witness anyone allowing their dog to foul and not clean away to report to HBBC or Cllr Harrison with details.

HGV's

Again a concern that remains for residents, Cllr Harrison remains the point of contact for these and reports to the companies so I would ask residents to continue reporting to him.

WWI Commemoration

Last year marked 100 years since the end of World War I. The Parish council, along with generous donations from parishioners purchased a number of poppies, which adorned the lamp posts. These poppies are being stored away for future use.

Grounds Maintenance

Once again Church Meadow and the closed church yard have been very well tended by Mr. Preston and Bosworth Ground care over the last year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank both alongside thanking those parishioners who tend outside their properties to keep the village looking nice.

Audit

For the year ending 17/18 the accounts were agreed by the internal auditor. This year PKF Littlejohn was appointed as external auditor and it is the first year we have decided to declare exemption as suggested by the auditors.

Thanks

Thanks, and appreciation to Helen, our clerk, who has worked tirelessly, her knowledge and skills are greatly appreciated. There has been an increased amount of email traffic, including some from potentially fictitious parishioners, but in particular 50+ from one parishioner and 5 Freedom of Information requests for numerous items of information/documents. This culminated in 5 complaints to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and the complainant requesting copies of any correspondence sent to the ICO, which in turn, they sought permission for disclosure. This all added to her time and subsequently the parish having to pay over time.

Complaints were made to other authorities / companies regarding the council, again all adding cost and to no avail or consequence as I suspect would have been the intended outcome.

Despite this continued stream of emails and criticism of her work and the numerous complaints, alongside the attempt to discredit her within other councils, affect her employment and running of these councils, she has continued to provide support to us. I admire her strength and determination. Her network and contacts at the various councils and organisations have been a great source of knowledge and support in the circumstances.

Sadly the considerable costs of the complaints and increased workload have been borne by the village - 40% increase in 17/18 and a further increase this year.

Thanks and appreciation to fellow councilors for their support over the year and valued contribution and commitment to the village. Some of them have had what could be perceived as personal harassment towards them but have continued in ensuring projects were completed and decisions were made for the greater good of the village. We say goodbye to Cllr McCarthy Young after nearly 40 years, this is immense dedication and commitment to the village and to Cllr Higgott, thanks to you both.

Unfortunately some of the behaviour described previously escalated to a complaint being made back in January 2018 to Leicestershire Police of harassment towards the clerk and council as particular councillors were also targeted. I would like to thank the Police for their support after we took the decision to report this case of perceived harassment. They have supported the council, visited the person and have continued to support.

Thanks to Cllr's Ivan Ould and Bill Crooks for all of their help and support over the last 12 months in enabling us to achieve for residents. They both give everything to support our village, we are grateful to you for you always being there whatever the

problem.

Despite the attempts to disrupt the work of the council and negativity levied towards us by a minority I would like to thank parishioners for their continued support, it can be a thankless role however we have received a number of supportive emails, letters, cards and personal thanks for the achievements this year. Again, something that I have never experienced in the last 8 years. It is also positive to see that our website is being interacted with – 31,731 views in the last 12 months – an increase on last year.

Thanks to Joy Crane for ongoing checks of the defibrillator, Mr and Mrs Shaw for moving the Vehicle Activated Sign, an added note of thanks to Mr Shaw who kindly took it upon himself to refurbish some of our older benches within Church Meadow.

As we enter a momentous year of an election (the 2nd one however in just over 12 months) I am not in a position to share what we look forward to over the next year and some of the aims of the new council however some projects agreed by this council for future include

- Commemorating the loss of 12 American airmen in the WW2 bomber B-17G Flying fortress just outside the village.
- Consider taking forward a Neighbourhood Plan
- Monitor development of Bulls Head site as this still remains uncertain – increased development and loss of current planning conditions.
- Ascertain views for play equipment on the Oval
- Snapdragon Children's Festival to be held on Church Meadow during the summer holidays.

I would like to wish Cllr. Harrison and Cllr. Crane all the very best for the forthcoming election along with those residents who have been nominated for council.