

## **ORTON WATERVILLE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**15 APRIL 2015**

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL**

For most of the year we have had our full complement of 13 councillors but unfortunately with the election in May approaching, several councillors have indicated that they will not be standing again. During the year June Stokes has been able to keep us informed of developments at the City Council and Paul Froggitt has represented us with CPALC and Parish Council Liaison meetings. The election process seems a little more bureaucratic this year but I suppose that in common with many authorities we have to be mindful of the risk of election fraud.

#### **POLICING**

The local police attended twice during the year but ECOPS and the Police Panel meetings do help to keep us informed. PCSO Helen O'Driscoll has outlined her proposed "meet the street" initiative to counteract loneliness and on-line fraud. The first meeting will take place in the village hall and financial help has been offered by Councillor Stokes from the Community Leadership Fund and Jenny Farnham from the Constables Branch of the Orton Waterville Charities.

#### **PLANNING**

There have been a total of 61 submissions during the year but a considerable number of these related to trimming or removing trees. We made one objection which is still on-going and there has been a refusal to an extension in the Rookery. The R & P Meats saga continues and the owners seem to be trying to put off the City Council planning department implementation.

#### **GRANTS**

We have made a further payment of £500 for Key Sports coaching and a further £200 for the Bobby Scheme. We have also had a request for a donation to MAGPAS which will be dealt with when they have let us have a copy of the accounts.

## **THE BURIAL GROUND**

The landscaping has now settled down and it is becoming an attractive feature of the village. We have decided to install sanctum units for cremated remains. This involves a considerable capital expenditure but this will be recouped as and when they are required.

## **ALLOTMENTS**

These tend to be a lost leader as the rents by no means cover the on-going outlay and administration. However, they do form an important facility for residents and the working party are to be thanked for notifying us of problems arising.

## **PLAY AREA**

We have renovated the play area and installed new equipment. It has also been decided to protect children from dog fouling and possible attacks by the erection of a substantial fence to replace the old one which was removed.

## **PARISH COUNCIL LIAISON MEETINGS**

These take place periodically and keep us informed of developments. As we know the City Council have had their budget cut for the last few years and are taking steps to cut the cost of maintenance of verges and disposing of council properties. The Bushfield Bowling Green was in danger of having its maintenance removed but this has been deferred this year, bearing in mind that it is an election year. We may however have to give them assistance in years to come although they are employing ways to boost their income.

The Clerk, Paul Froggitt and myself met Kate Harding, who goes by the curious title of Community Capacity Enabler, on 26<sup>th</sup> of last month and it became apparent that the City Council will be looking to ways of disposing of the Matley and Wistow Community Centres. Obviously as a Parish Council we will have to look carefully at what responsibilities we undertake but it will certainly be necessary for us to at least note our interest with the City Council.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their support during the year and in particular Alison Brown, who has now completed her qualifications as a Clerk.