

ORTON WATERVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Report 19 April 2017

1. Membership of Council

The full membership is thirteen Councillors. At the start of the year there were three vacancies. Due to the Boundary's Commission removing the majority of ward boundaries elections were due to be held on 5 May 2017. The existing councillors were re-elected unopposed as there were no new candidates.

The three vacancies were filled during the year by co-opting, Roger Proudfoot, Councillor Gavin Elsey and Brenda Fearon.

Since 16 April out of a possible 11 meetings the average attendance has been approximately 8.

In recognition of Mike Chambers' long service to the Parish Council Mike has been invited to a Buckingham Palace garden party.

It is with regret that the resignation was received from Cyril Long due to ill health. Cyril had been a Parish Councillor for 43 years and his knowledge and incisive contribution will be greatly missed. The resultant vacancy has been advertised and two applicants have applied to fill the vacancy.

2. Council Meeting Start Time

It was agreed to change the meeting start time from 7.30 pm to 7.00 pm. In the event that a pre-meeting presentation is scheduled the start time reverts to 7.30 pm.

3. Community Volunteer

It was agreed that ex Parish Councillor Paul Froggitt should be engaged as a Community Volunteer. This has been a very beneficial action. Paul has continued to help keep the Website up to date and has attended the Parish Council Liaison Meetings when they clash with Parish Council Meetings. Mike Chambers represents the Council when available. Paul is on the Parish Council Liaison Committee working party.

In addition to the foregoing Paul's knowledge on Council matters has also been made use of.

4. Financial Regulations

The Parish Council Financial Regulations were updated in February 2017 and approved by the Council

5. Parish Councillor Guidelines

The Parish Councillor Guidelines were brought up to date and clarified and accepted by Council in February 2017.

6. Environmental working party

An Environmental working party has been set up as a sub-section of the Leisure and Amenities working party. Terms of reference of the group were approved by the Council and these make clear that all proposals have to be agreed by the Council. All members are welcome to join the working party. At present the group is looking at improvements to the ponds in Orton Waterville village and the planting of wild flowers.

7. Leisure and Amenities working party

The working party is currently looking at improvements to play areas for which there is an allowance in next year's budget.

8. Skate Park

A decision to provide a Skate Park in Ferry Meadows was approved, subject to public consultation. A meeting has been held with the Nene Park Trust and a positive response was received regarding locating the Skate Park near the water sports area.

9. Planning

64 Planning Applications were received for comment during the year. Whilst comments were made on some applications no objections were made.

The main cause for concern was the appeal by RP Meats against the City Council's refusal to grant approval for a Refrigerator that had been installed on their premises. The Parish Council are concerned that the vehicles associated with the business are too large for the road running through the village of Orton Waterville and cause damage to the verges and unacceptable congestion.

An informal hearing of the Appeal was held on 7 February 2017 and to the Council's disappointment the Appeal was approved. A meeting has been held with the P.C.C. Planning Officer who stated that no further action could be taken under Planning legislation. The Planning Officer agreed to consult the Highways section to see if any highways restrictions could be applied to relieve the situation for the local residents.

10. Grants

Grants paid over the last financial year were:

Orton Counselling Service £1,000 plus £2,250 from the Aiden Fogarty Trust Fund

Key Sports (Peterborough) CIC - £500 (after school club at Ormiston Meadows)

Bushfield Bowls Club - £5,000 (renovations)

St Mary's Church roof alarm appeal - £2,000

Peterborough Roller Hockey Club - £2,000 (tracksuits) in recognitions of the grant the Council's name is to be shown on the tracksuits.

11. Burial Ground

St Mary's burial ground is now full and the P.C.C has asked the Parish Council to take control when it is officially closed. Two ways forward are being considered. One, the Parish Council take control, two, the City Council take over control.

12. Cemetery

There have been 7 burials at the cemetery during the last year. Minor problems have been dealt with including a leaking waster main and dog mess.

13. Allotments

The three allotment sites have continued to be maintained during the year with only limited problems due to falling trees etc. At present there are 2 vacant plots at Gostwick and 8 at Wyman Way which is an unfenced site.

The change in policy regarding more available time for bonfires has not to date caused undue complaints.

14. Vandalism

During the last year there has been a serious outbreak of vandalism. Graffiti has been extensively sprayed and public property damaged. Dealing with this is generally not the Parish Council's responsibility but is of concern; however the Council are pleased to be informed by Councillor Elsey that a budget had been agreed by the City Council to deal with fly tipping, rubbish and graffiti removal.

15. New Initiatives

a) Parish Council Survey

A survey is being prepared to ascertain the parish resident's prioritised order of requirements.

b) Speedwatch

A team of 11 volunteers is being trained to monitor and report on vehicle

speeding within the Parish.

c) **Bulky Waste Collection**

A free service for bulky waste collection is being trialled in the Ortongate car park on 29 April 2017.

16 Acquisitions

The Peterborough City Council are actively looking into passing on responsibilities for the 33 Community Centres they own. A meeting has been held with the City Council and the Chair of Orton Wistow community centre. Both parties stated they would like the Parish Council to take over the Orton Wistow Community Centre. Before agreeing to this the full implications for the Parish Council would need to be assessed.

Trevor Rouse

14 April 2017