

KING'S SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My report as Chairman is intended to give a brief overview of the work of the parish council (PC) over the past year. Separate reports giving more details of the work of each of the council remits and committees are also available at the meeting.

In addition to the annual parish meeting, the PC is only required by statute to meet three times a year. However, throughout 2017/18 we have chosen to again continue to meet every month.

Currently there are nine serving parish councillors. The Council's remits are assigned to individual Councillors who report back to the PC.

- Amenities and the Rec – Cllr W Dowling
- Cemetery – Cllr J Creed
- Communications and website – Cllr D Bridson
- Footway lighting – Cllr B Burrell
- Traffic calming – Cllr R Sykes

Councillors also form the PC's two standing committees – the Planning Committee whose Chairman is Cllr T Forde, with Cllr R Burne serving as Vice Chairman, and the Finance Governance & Policy Committee chaired by Cllr R Irving. Some may also sit on working groups such as the Flood Alleviation Group which make recommendations to the full Council.

Representatives of the PC also sit on the village Playing Fields Association committee, and, as its nominees, act as trustees of the Poores' Allotment charity and the Millennium Memorial Hall and Health Centre. All full council and committee meetings are open to members of the public, with agendas published on the council noticeboards and website.

The PC also has appointed wardens who are not necessarily councillors but oversee the parish trees, parish footpaths, and the war memorial, on its behalf. During the past year these roles have been undertaken by Cllr M Bailey, Mr D Hall and Mrs A Burrell, and Mr A Waite, respectively.

As last year, in order to facilitate the attendance of one of its members who is disabled, meetings of the Planning Committee and the full PC are now held in the Oman Room in the parish churchyard. Meetings of the FG & P committee continue to be held in the first floor Astrop Room of the Memorial Hall.

A range of issues have exercised councillors over the past twelve months. These have included the following:

- The campaign to secure funding for the Wales Street flood alleviation scheme has absorbed an enormous amount of time and dedication of members of the Flood Alleviation Group – in particular its chairman Cllr Forde. Despite initial high hopes following a successful public consultation meeting - it looks like funding will not now be provided for anything other than individual property level resilience (PLR) for those premises identified as most at risk in Wales Street.
- The relaying of the metalled paths and the installation of a mains water trough in the cemetery at the total cost of £17,097 - both projects have been generally

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well received. Discussions have also begun with a local landowner for the purchase of adjacent land to extend the cemetery.

- Financial assistance has been provided to a number of village organisations: the Playing Fields Association for building work; to the Primary Academy "ITs for the kids" project and to the parish church for repairs to the church clock. The PC continues to sponsor the Youth Club that meets at the Memorial Hall; the Thursday Bus to and from Banbury; the King's Sutton in Bloom competition and, as of 2017, the village garden Annual Show.
- The PC's request for double yellow parking lines at the Astrop Road/Glebe Rise junction has been implemented and appears to have gone some way to alleviating concerns about inconsiderate parking in the area around the children's play equipment. However, having sought advice from the Highways Authority, we have had to note that our options to deal with parking on grass verges elsewhere in the village are very limited.
- A Community Speed Watch survey co-ordinated on behalf of the PC by Cllr Bailey, led to 16 police warning letters being issued. Discussions are ongoing with a view to finalising additional locations for the portable vehicle activated speed sign (VAS) in Astrop Road to be displayed in other parts of the village.
- The PC took part in the County Council budget consultation process and expressed its concerns on NCC's proposals to cut funding for libraries, the Trading Standards department, road maintenance and subsidies to local service buses.

The PC's finances and reserves, which are externally audited, remain sound and appropriate for the services the PC provides. The budget precept for the coming financial year has been set at £64,650 representing a 6.5% increase for a Band D property. It is appropriate here to once again place on record our indebtedness to our excellent parish clerk who also doubles up as our Responsible Finance Officer.

Over the past challenging year it has been pleasing to welcome the newly elected County and District councillors to our meetings. We look forward to developing a mutually beneficial working relationship with them both.

The PC has recently been given approval to reduce to the number of councillors from 15 to 11 with effect from next year's election. It is to be hoped that all these positions will be filled and I encourage all eligible residents to consider doing so.

Bob Burrell

Chairman – King's Sutton Parish Council

April 2018