

## **CLOPTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017-18**

Six meetings of the Parish Council were held during the year, as scheduled.

### **Changes**

There were no changes to the members of the Council during the year and I wish to thank all participants for their work and effort. Two vacancies continue to remain unfilled. I should like to thank Tony Fryatt for his on-going work as our District Councillor for the Grundisburgh Ward and for the insight he gives us into the various aspects of the planning process through his participation in the planning committees. I should also like to thank Cllr. Robin Vickery for his representation of Clopton as part of Carlford Ward at County level.

### **Accounts**

Total receipts for the year amounted to £4,049.78, of which £3,700.00 came from the Precept, £331.70 for Transparency Funding and £18.08 from bank interest. Total gross expenditure amounted to £6,255.00 excluding VAT, of which £3015.31 was taken from Ear Marked Reserves and the playing space funding from SCDC. General Reserves at 31 March 2018 stood at £6,557.35, an increase of £899.97 over the year.

The internal auditors have approved the accounts and have issued a clean audit report. The precept for 2018/19 remains unchanged at £3,700.00 for the 6th consecutive year.

### **Planning Applications**

Twenty-two new planning applications were validated during the year, 16 of which were permitted, one conditional approval was met, 2 applications were refused and 3 are awaiting decision.

### **Events, Topics & Issues**

#### **GDPR:**

A considerable amount of time has been spent, especially by the Clerk, in finding out exactly what the Council must do in order to implement the requirements of GDPR by the enforcement deadline of 25 May 2018. The process is now well on the way to compliance and the Clerk and I will work together to finalise and document the outstanding issues, including the Clopton Newsletter. It remains to be clarified whether the appointment of a DPO is necessary in that, although it is a statutory requirement for all public bodies, a dispensation is being sought from the government for parish councils.

#### **Defibrillator:**

The Council decided to revisit its decision recorded in last year's report not to proceed with a defibrillator. It has now been agreed to install a defibrillator in the redundant telephone kiosk opposite Shop Road under the guidance of the Community Heartbeat Trust. The

telephone kiosk has now been adopted from BT, a grant of £1,725 has been received from the National Lottery, further support has been kindly promised by Cllr Fryatt from his District Council funds and the Parish Council will fund any shortfall from Reserves. The support package offered by the CHT includes the training of volunteers in defibrillator use.

#### Emergency Planning:

Following discussion with the VH, it was decided not to proceed for the time being with the installation of a power connection for a generator in the VH for use in emergencies since it was felt that a) it would not be used and b) securing a generator would be difficult in the event of any likely emergency. Further views are to be sought.

#### Notice Boards:

The parish notice boards on the corner of Shop Road and Rouse Hall Gardens and at the Village Hall continue to be subjected to repeated vandalism and the broken glass and Perspex presents a safety risk. Some of the glass has been replaced with polycarbonate sheet to test its vandal resistance but this is an expensive solution to a needless problem.

#### Faster Broadband:

Openreach has completed the installation of fibre cables along the B1079 and at the Charsfield end of Drabbs Lane which should become operational during this summer. It is expected that this will make a significant improvement to broadband speeds in the village for little additional cost. The Council will continue to monitor broadband speeds from time to time to gauge the improvement.

#### Suffolk Coastal Local Plan:

The Council responded to the SCDC Consultation Document broadly to the effect that there would be no objection to an appropriately sized and properly sited small development of affordable housing within the parish. A list of all potential development sites within Clopton as submitted by landowners to SCDC following their call for sites was circulated.

#### RDA Woodbridge

The RDA completed the construction of its new facilities at Shop Farm and held its official opening in December. A notice has been placed at the entry to Shop Road notifying visitors that access to the RDA is via Catts Hill / Monewden Road

#### Traffic Speed:

The Council hosted a meeting of SaViD in April 2017 during which the provision of a SID for use in local villages on a shared basis was discussed. A County Council site suitability checklist had to be completed under which Clopton unfortunately did not meet the required criteria for deployment of a SID.

Once again, The Council is most grateful to Della Hughes, an unsung hero for all her hard work in running the Clopton News email and the village website.