

Parish Council APM Report 12 April 2018

The Parish Council has responsibility for liaison with BDC, SCC and Suffolk police on matters such as planning, highways, footpaths and safety. The PC also manages the playing field and other green open spaces in the village, publishes the village magazine, and not least, manages the Council's budget (known as the precept).

During the year there have been a number of changes to the parish council and officers as follows: -
Councillor Paul Brinkley has stood down and Paul Bendall was co-opted in his place following due procedure. Councillor Bendall volunteered to be Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Charles Camp has stood down as Footpath Liaison Officer and Martin Annis volunteered to become Footpath Liaison Officer.

Emma McKenna volunteered to be the website coordinator when Emily Woods proposed to relinquish that role. Emily continues to be editor and publisher of the village magazine.

Recently Dr. Wendy Wakeman has decided to step down as tree warden and so we are looking for a volunteer to take over this responsibility

The Parish Council met 6 times during 2017/18. During the year the PC has reviewed and updated the PC's internal procedures and controls, reviewed the PC insurance to see that it meets our needs, approved the PC's Financial Regulations, approved the Standing Orders.

The precept was held at £4290.00 for the fiscal year 2017/18 and with the income from the village magazine we have managed to increase the reserves to approximately £6000. I should note that £5000 of the reserves is identified for the renewal of the play area. The Parish also has a further £10000 held by Babergh DC under clause S106 agreements between BDC Planning Office and the developer of new houses for the benefit of Brettenham village.

In October 2016 a village review was conducted and the following identified as main concerns to villagers:

- broadband speed,
- poor mobile signal,
- traffic speeding,
- development of the play area.

Village action groups were formed for broadband speed, traffic speeding and development of the play area .

The traffic speeding group, led by David Golding, has decided on the purchase of speed gun coupled with training for six people. The cost is £1200 which will be funded 50% by County Councillor Robert Lindsay and 50% the Parish Council.

The play area group, led by Emma McKenna, identified specific equipment for the play area and have subsequently conducted a survey of villagers regarding this proposal. The support has been

positive. The cost of the equipment is approximately £10000. The cost assumes that volunteers will prepare the play area for the new equipment. The cost will be funded in part by accessing the S106 money from BDC, in part by the Parish Council and in part by accessing grants.

Broadband continues at its own pace i.e. slow. Openreach and SCC keep managing matters in a fog of confusion with limited and inaccurate advice on when fibre optic will arrive in Brettenham.....end of 2016, March 2017, December 2017, middle of 2018....sometime, never!?! We are waiting. This is certainly disappointing and appears to be very poor project management by Openreach. The Parish Council is an observer on the side lines with little influence however we shall try to get some clarity. I would like to thank Peter Knight for his continued persistence in trying to find out what is going on and to Larry O'Hara for his involvement.

During 2017 the playing field has been maintained with Brian Gooderham cutting the grass. However Brian has decided to relinquish this activity. The Parish Council put the grass cutting out to tender and the contract has been agreed with Roger Staines who lives in Cockfield and currently cuts the church yard grass.

During 2017 the Parish Council has been in negotiations with Mr. Peter Haigh-Thomas to acquire a new lease for the playing field. The current lease expires in 2021 and in order to obtain grants for the play area we need to hold a longer term lease. I am pleased to say that a new agreement for a lease has been reached with Mr. Haigh-Thomas giving the Parish a lease until 2051. I would like to express our thanks to Mr. Haigh-Thomas for the new lease on favourable terms for the village. I would also like to thank Nick Tavener who provided guidance on legal aspects during the negotiations.

Several members of our community help with Parish Council responsibilities and I would like to thank the following people, Emily Woods for editing and publish the village magazine, David Golding for acting as liaison with SALC, Peter Truin for Suffolk Passenger Transport representative, Wendy Wakeman for tree Officer, Val McGuill for neighbourhood watch coordinator, Martin Annis for Footpath liaison officer, Martin Frey for representative on the Rattlesden Flying Club Liaison Committee, Roger Bere for auditing the Parish Council accounts.

I would like also thank the Brettenham Gardening Club for their excellent efforts in planting bulbs around the village and creating and maintaining the flowers on the green by the church.

An especial thanks goes to Jane Moulding as Clerk to the Parish Council for all her hard work during the past year.

Chris Clarke