

Chairman's Report to Temple Guiting Annual Parish Meeting, 3rd May 2017

First of all I would like to thank you for attending the annual Parish Meeting and especially County Councillor Nigel Moore for being here on the eve of the County Council election.

I need to give apologies from our Clerk whose mother is seriously ill in hospital in Sussex.

Changes to Council personnel since our last meeting:

Last summer we co-opted Mandy Tye from Kington to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Councillor Roberts; Mandy took on the role of RFO. At the same time we appointed a new Clerk, Maxi Freeman, following the resignation of Ruth Waller. Unfortunately promotion and associated increased work commitments caused Mandy to resign as Councillor in March and your Council is seeking to co-opt a new Councillor to take her place.

Our new Clerk Maxi has quickly established herself in the role and has now taken on the RFO responsibility as well. She has made a point of attending appropriate training, has revised the way we conduct our meetings and has launched a Parish e-Newsletter, amongst other initiatives in pursuit of greater efficiency and the Transparency agenda. We have recently updated our Assets Register.

Frances Newman has called it a day as Parish Tree Warden, a role she has fulfilled for many years. Many of the trees planted in the last 40 years in the Parish, for example alongside the Recreation Field and Mill Lane, are evidence of her practical contribution to enhancing the local environment - thank you Frances. We plan to install a tree guard and plaque at entrance to Mill Lane to commemorate Councillor Bill Newman. Councillor Beaver has taken on the role of Tree Warden.

I wish to thank my fellow Councillors for their participation in the various aspects of the work of the Parish Council during the past year, and for their valued advice and support.

The Council has continued to meet on the first Wednesday of the month (except January). Public attendance has rarely exceeded one or two parishioners. It is regrettable that local residents do not appreciate that this is their Council and a forum for public debate especially with regard to local issues and planning applications. This in spite of, or maybe because of, regular mailings to parishioners with details of our meetings and other relevant local news.

Most of our business has been routine: monitoring and responding to Planning Application consultations, liaising with CDC, GCC and Gloucestershire Highways Officers, attending meetings, undertaking minor maintenance and otherwise responding to matters brought to our attention by parishioners. Our precept/share of your Council Tax bill remains the same as the year before. Our finances are sound and we have allocated reserves should the need arise for legal advice in the future.

We now have a new three year lease from Praedium Properties for the village hall and recreation field. This runs until 26th September 2019. It is expected that there will be a Planning Application for new housing at New Barn Farm before that date.

There have been no significant Planning Applications in the Parish since we last met. Most applications considered by the Council have been relatively straightforward and the Council has met as a Planning Committee on site when necessary. We are concerned that the reduction of staff numbers at CDC may be impacting adversely on the Planning and Enforcement processes. Major developments are taking place at Bemborough Farm and the Farm Park as supported by this Council.. You may have noticed that a tall bund, as we requested, obscures extended quarry working at Tinkers Barn.

We have been in touch with Corpus Christi College Oxford's new agents (Bidwells) to clarify ownership of woodland in the Parish following the sale of the Temple Guiting estate.

We sought to support the residents of Farmcote (part of our parish) in objecting to regular intrusive clay shooting at Hailes Fruit Farm (in Tewkesbury District) but have heard no more.

We have continued to maintain a constructive relationship with Gloucestershire Highways. Some new signage including advisory 'Unsuitable for has been installed.

All but one of the gullies in Temple Guiting has been cleaned, something of a record! We are concerned that two quarries are not complying with planning conditions relating to depositing mess on the roads and that many drivers do not respect the soft verges of our narrow lanes.

Four volunteers, coordinated by Robert Graves, have continued to operate occasional Community Speedwatch checks in the hope that motorists will observe the 30mph speed limit in Temple Guiting, Kineton and Ford. We do need residents, who are concerned about speeding in our Parish, to come forward to help run the scheme - the training is straightforward and the commitment minimal.

At this time last year we were celebrating the announcement that Gigaclear had been awarded a contract to install 'fibre to property' in the parish (excluding Ford); the fulfillment of this contract has not been without some problems and, although Ford has now been included, some houses within the Parish are still waiting for their connection to go live.

We will hear in a moment about the progress of the Green Energy Scheme initiated by Robert Llewellyn. The funding for this was lodged with the Council and has now been paid to the consultants as planned.

The Council continues to share the cost of maintaining the Recreation Field with Temple Guiting School and contributes to the cost of maintaining the Village Hall and the mowing of St Mary's churchyard.

I will take this opportunity to thank Jimmy and James Arkell for their role (however minimal this winter) as Snow Wardens and for the hedge-trimming that Jimmy undertakes in Temple Guiting and Kineton.

End.

Summary for minutes:

MK thanked parishioners and Nigel Moore for attending.

MK outlined changes to personnel: Councillors and Clerk.

MK thanked Councillors for their participation and support during the year, as well as the snow wardens, retiring tree warden and especially the new Clerk.

MK reported on the work of TGPC, much of it routine (e.g. Planning and Highways) and specifically on:

- New 3 year lease for the Village Hall and Recreation Field
- Liaison continues with Gloucestershire Highways
- Community Speedwatch needs more volunteers
- Installation of FTP ultrafast broadband almost complete
- Council's continuing contribution to recreation field and churchyard maintenance