

## **Chairman's Report to Temple Guiting Annual Parish Meeting, 2nd May 2018**

First of all I would like to thank you for attending the annual Parish Meeting.

I wish to thank the Clerk and 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.

There has been one change to Council personnel since our last meeting: we have welcomed Stephen Gower to the Council following the resignation of Mandy Tye.

Maxi Freeman continues to develop her role as Clerk and RFO. She has attended appropriate training, has revised the way we conduct our meetings, ensures that our policies are up-to-date and continues to produce a Parish e-Newsletter, amongst other initiatives, in pursuit of greater efficiency and compliance with the Transparency Agenda. We have recently updated our Assets Register, undertaken a Health & Safety assessment of the Allotments at Kineton and reviewed our data practice. Two 'new' Councillors are due to attend a training course this month.

The Council has changed from monthly to bimonthly meetings, on the first Wednesday of the month. 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 full 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. We increased our precept/share of your Council Tax bill by 2% this year but for reasons which are not clear this was shown as a 4.7% increase on Council Tax bills. Our finances are sound and we continue to allocate reserves should the need arise for legal advice in the future.

Last August we invited Frances Newman to formally to commemorate Councillor Bill Newman's long service on the Council by designating a tree at the foot of Mill Lane to his memory.

We have purchased the telephone boxes in Temple Guiting and Kineton and we look forward to their refurbishment and adaption (as a 'notice board' in Kineton) by volunteers.

It is not clear what will happen at New Barn Farm, which appears to have been vacated by Bemborough Farm. We have been assured by Praedium Property that another three year lease on the Village hall and Recreation Field will be forthcoming when the current lease expires in September 2019.

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 about the operation of some quarries and the prospect of new applications for quarrying in the Parish. The County Council (the planning authority for quarries) has recently refused permission for the unregulated importation of material in to Cotswold Hills Quarry. We registered our opposition to a scoping enquiry for a new

quarry close to Fiddlers Green. We are planning to meet with a quarries planning officer in the near future to develop more effective liaison and a more joined-up approach to future quarry applications.

The Vice Chairman and I have met with Corpus Christi College Oxford's new agents (Bidwells). They are keen to clarify ownership of residual parcels of land in the village following the sale of the Temple Guiting Estate to Mr. Dawson. They mentioned long term plans to divest the college of all its assets in the village (including the beech trees in the centre of the village) and to explore the possibility of new housing in part of the field known as Near Hitchen, adjoining The Sherry.

We have continued to maintain a constructive relationship with Gloucestershire Highways, ensuring clearance of gullies and grips, new signposting and pot hole repairs.. As ever it is a struggle to get all that we would like done, done including the restoration or consolidation of eroded verges in the parish. We are not convinced that the new and advisory 'Unsuitable for HGVs' signs are proving as effective as residents would wish.

Last year we appealed for volunteers to help create a more effective Speedwatch team. Unfortunately none were forthcoming although residents continue to express concerns about speeding in Ford, by the School and in Kineton. Gloucestershire Constabulary are increasing their support for local Speedwatch schemes are we would like to see our team back in operation with additional volunteers - the training is straightforward and the commitment minimal.

We continue to liaise with the Green Energy Scheme, which was the subject of a television programme last year, though progress appears to be limited.

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. We have made several donations to local voluntary organisations.

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

End.

## **Summary for minutes:**

MK thanked parishioners for attending.

Stephen Gower has joined the Council.

MK thanked Councillors and the Clerk for their participation and support during the year, as well as the snow wardens who worked so hard to clear the roads this winter.

A tree has been dedicated to the memory of the late Bill Newman (former Chairman)

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

- Continuing liaison with Gloucestershire Highways
- Planned liaison with Gloucestershire County Council Planning department re quarries
- Community Speedwatch needs more volunteers to continue operating
- Council's continuing contribution to recreation field, village hall and churchyard maintenance
- Liaison with Corpus Christi College Oxford's new agents
- Adoption of phone boxes in TG and Kington