**PARISH MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS MEETING**

**Stantonbury Parish Council Chairman’s Report April 2018-2019.**

2018-2019 has seen moderate changes in the way the Parish Council supports the local community. Simply put, the reduction of finances across all sectors of society such as Milton Keynes Council, reduced policing, and social support is now impacting our community and the services we offer.

As a Parish Council we have looked ahead at the potential impact of these reducing services and maintain our commitment that we will act ourselves to maintain what we currently have as a minimum, but wherever possible improve on these services.

To take up the additional demands on us, we have slightly increased the precept to each household 2%. To put this in perspective this is less than the cost of a cup of tea/coffee per week.

To ensure we provide what the community want, our approach has been to positively engage with the community by the introduction of Parish Guardians who regularly meet and provide valuable feedback on matters affecting the community. Any community minded resident can become a Parish Guardian.

Financially, the Parish Council is in a position to meet all our commitments without incurring debt or loans. We are in a strong position to provide the needed additional support. We have a new Responsible Financial Officer; Mr Rupert Fairclough and his financial report is appended for your review.

**What have we been doing?**

**We continue to be involved in the following matters:-**

**The Bradville North Regeneration project** has, as far as we have been advised, been taken back into Milton Keynes Council and Your MK are no longer involved in the project. The future direction and execution of the project remains an unknown at this time. We will continue to watch for formal notifications received from Milton Keynes Council.

**The Neighbourhood Plan** has reached the stage of review by the independent examiner who has come back with a number of questions regarding the specific policies. None of the questions are likely to fundamentally change the document. There was a flurry of last-minute comments from land owners who had not made their ownership known until the end of the Milton Keynes Council consultation period. This has resulted in some minor changes to amenity land areas. A date for the referendum has not yet been fixed.

**Planning**

This year we saw and commented on some major pre-planning and planning applications.

**Aldi** at Stantonbury presented the developer with some difficulties since, as a Council we insisted that the mural be retained. It has now been shown that the brittle nature of the tiles makes vertical retention technically not possible. We have provided a solution to retaining the artwork but it would be laid on an embankment adjacent to the store. This is an ongoing discussion with Milton Keynes Council and the developer, who is committed to retaining the artwork in some form.

**Village Hotels.** The Council recently held discussions with Village Hotels who propose to build a 135-room hotel at the Linford Wood site (Junction of V7 and H3). The Parish Council narrowly voted to object to the application on the basis of it being the highest structure in North Milton Keynes which would be outside of the height set in the Neighbourhood Plan. It also would present a large black rectangular façade, similar to the old Stephenson House in Bletchley and not in keeping with the area. We also considered that the 4500-membership quota for the proposed gym would attract un-welcome pollution to Linford Wood from vehicles using Breckland to access the hotel.

**The Rowle Close** application has changed slightly. The land owners have clarified that the extent of the site is slightly larger than previously communicated, with four small satellite areas at the extremities of the site. Technical difficulties have resulted in a rethink of the housing layout but overall, residents adjacent to the site will see little change.

**Sponsorship**

**Grants**

This year the Parish Council awarded grants to the following organisations for the sums noted. I believe these grants have helped develop these organisations in community relations and contributed to maintaining community cohesion.

1. The Wednesday People - £259.40
2. Roman Park Residents Over 50’s Club – £250.00
3. Wood End Scout Troup - £1,000.00
4. Squirrels Children’s Centre - £420.00
5. Rainbow Children’s Centre - £1,000.00
6. Bradville Bloomers - £522.99
7. Roman Park Management Ltd - £1,000.00
8. Roman Park Management Ltd - £1,000.00
9. MK Food Bank - £1,000.00
10. Stephenson Academy - £1,000.00
11. Bradville Bloomers - £238.50
12. The Wednesday People - £238.50
13. The Wednesday People - £879.97
14. Wood End First School - £1,000.00
15. Bancroft Pre-School - £968.17

**Coach Trips.** This year we arranged for 4 coach trips for senior residents and families to

1. Cotswold Wildlife Park – July 2018
2. Barnsdale Gardens – September 2018
3. Nottingham – November 2018

**Play dates – MKPA & Circus Skills (The Great Gappo).** As well as the earlier Easter sessions, we also arranged for 3 summer play and circus skills sessions. These were completely free for residents to bring their children to in the summer holidays.

1. 2 August 2018
2. 9 August 2018
3. 16 August 2018

**Football**. Football remains a very popular sport within our community so we arranged for 4 summer sessions (again, free to residents).

1. 31 July 2018
2. 7 August 2018
3. 14 August 2018
4. 21 August 2018

**Alternative Games.** In line with our diversity and inclusive policy we have decided to expand the sessions we offer by including a number of free alternative sports sessions within 2019. During the summer holidays, there will be 3 basketball/tennis sessions.

1. Wednesday 7August 2019
2. Monday 12 August 2019
3. Wednesday 21 August 2019

**Parish Council expansion**.

**Buildings**

Due to the expanding role of the Ranger we required additional equipment. This needs to be stored. After investigation it was decided that the most cost-effective solution is to extend the Wylie Centre to provide a secure garage in which to store our equipment. This has been budgeted for and will commence this year.

**Parish Councillors.**

It is clear that the number of Parish Councillors we have is insufficient for the needs of the community. We are therefore considering apply to Milton Keynes Council to increase the number of Councillors in all areas of the Parish by at least one person per area.

**Staff**

We are legally obliged to have a responsible Officer for Council work. We have considered very carefully the role of the Parish Clerk and we propose to fill this position with a very part time role this year.

**Other initiatives of the Parish Council**

**Parish Guardians**

The Parish Guardians are integral with the work of the Parish Ranger and the Parish Office.

The interaction of the Guardians in generally through the Parish Ranger and as his role develops the support infrastructure within the Parish has had to change to support him.

Donna Moore has joined us in a role specifically aimed at chasing Milton Keynes Council for resolution to matters we report to them by the Ranger or the Guardians as well as maintaining other records of what’s happening in the Parish such as the analysis of the returns from the speed indicator signs.

A long- term project to clear paths and red-ways is at the conclusion of its first year and I’m pleased to report very positive feedback from residents. Such is the success of the Ranger’s work we will be employing a further Ranger in the very near future.

**Speed Cameras**

As reported in the last Parish Magazine the incidents of speeding in the areas the Speed Indicator Signs is frankly horrendous. Repeated 65mph in a 30mph zone is completely unacceptable and further Speed indicators are proposed.

**Liaison with Thames Valley Police**

Partly as a result of the speeding information generated and with records showing an increase in crime in our Parish the Parish Council is proposing to relook at the possibility of hiring our own Police Community Support Officer form Thames Valley Police.

**Enforcement Officer**

I’m pleased to report the Parish Council have engaged a part-time enforcement officer with the legal authority to Issue Penalty notices in the case of repeat offenders of dog fouling. The enforcement officer will patrol all parts of the parish during periods from very early in the morning to late at night.

**Parking**

We undertook a pilot parking survey in Bradville that resulted in extensive consultation with traffic enforcement at Milton Keynes Council. Proposals for yellow lines, parking restrictions etc have been formulated but currently we have been waiting for some time for MKC to come forward with the costs. Before any of the proposals (see web site) are introduced there will be consultation with the affected residents.

**New Council**

A new Council will commence on the 15 May 2019 with the Annual meeting. I’m pleased to report that all the vacancies for the election on the 2nd of May were filled exactly and no election will therefore be contested.

We therefore anticipate welcoming Mrs Northwood representing Stantonbury, Mrs Wright representing Oakridge Park. Mr Anwar representing Bradville.

It is with regret Councillor Parker (Stantonbury & Linford Wood Ward) and Councillor Farmer (Oakridge Park) will be standing down after 2 May 2019. The Parish Council are very grateful for the contributions they have made.

**Cllr Graham Davison**

**Chairman Stantonbury Parish Council.**