

Chairman's Annual Report 2017

Welcome everyone to this year's Annual Parish Meeting, my first in the role of Chairman. I would like to thank Gill Ashby for all her hard work as chairman over the past 4 years.

We have changed the format a little this year in the hope that we can have a more informal discussion with the community with village groups available for you to review during the refreshment break. But the biggest change is that we will have a public discussion about community safety following tea and coffee.

This year has been yet again, another busy year with more projects being undertaken by the Parish Council and issues that need to be discussed.

FINANCE

The precept for 2017-18 was set at £94,360 (no change from 2016-17) meaning that the average Band D property will have a decrease of £3.85 or 5.14% on a band D property compared to the equivalent charge for 2016/17.

Longstanton Parish Council has continued to support village groups throughout the year including funding the hall hire for Rainbows and part funding the hire for Music Madness and Little Leprechauns. Funding has also been made available to Longstanton Tennis Club.

HIGHWAYS & COUNTY COUNCIL

Longstanton Parish Council has worked closely with County Council over the last year.

Parking continues to cause concerns for residents on the High Street generally but more regularly we are receiving concerns about parking outside the Co-op. Though the Parish Council has looked at the potential of double yellow lines, the police (who would need to support this) have provided conflicting advice. The Parish Council intends to revisit this.

Longstanton Parish Council approached some local hauliers to ask them to consider joining the County Council's **HGV Voluntary Covenant** which would mean that they do not come through the village. So far the John Henry Group and subsidiaries have signed up to this.

The **airfield road** continues to cause concern but we see this will ultimately resolve itself as construction commences on the southern access road to Northstowe phase 2 in late 2018.

Change of speed limits for Home Farm Road, School Lane and Hattons Road were applied for with County Council last year. This has been approved but is still to be implemented. The Clerk is keeping in contact with the officers involved.

DISTRICT COUNCIL

At the South Cambridgeshire District Council community awards, Gill Ashby received the joint parish councillor of the year for 2016. These awards are held annually and if anyone has any thoughts on nominees for next year, it would be great to spread the word of the good work done in Longstanton by our residents.

County Cllr Hudson and District Cllr Riley continue to support Longstanton Parish Council making themselves available with their guidance and assistance with village matters and we would like to thank them for their time and effort.

PLANNING/CONSULTATIONS

Planning applications for consideration by the parish have increased again this year. So much so, that we have set up a separate meeting each month simply for planning applications which come in and need to be commented on between full meetings.

The application to build 9 homes on Mills Lane has been refused by the local planning authority. Longstanton Parish Council continues to support residents through this application.

Northstowe

Northstowe has commenced construction with the first 92 homes at Bloor (Parcel H1) and the first residents have moved in. 4 other developers will be on site within the next month or so.

Barratts – Parcel H2 – 135 dwellings

Taylor Wimpey – Parcel H3 – 43 dwellings
Bovis – Parcel H4 - 83 dwellings
Linden – Parcel H12 – 271 dwelling

Longstanton Parish Council continues to be represented at the Northstowe Community Forum meetings which are held quarterly. The potential dewatering of Phase 1 has been a topical discussion point and owing to concerns raised by residents and independent expert is carrying out a detailed survey and we are awaiting the report.

OTHER WORK

Community Hub report will be provided by Cllr McPhater shortly.

Home Farm phase 2 roads are still not adopted. The parish council and Home Farm Forum have been liaising with all parties concerned to try and get this resolved as a matter of expediency.

You will notice that a new footpath has been installed on the village green with an extension to follow the preferred route of many pedestrians.

We held our second Christmas Light Switch on in December last year. We intend to continue this with a further event in early December this year. We have also been approached by a resident to hold a Farmers' Market on the green. This and other ideas will be considered by members shortly.

We were recently approached by a group of young members who asked the parish council to support them with the setting up of a **Youth Council**. This would only be the second in South Cambs. They have been working really hard with the Clerk to get established and will be holding their first event 'Picnic in the Park' on 25th June 2017 and we hope you will support them with your attendance.

As a result of this enthusiasm and due to lack of attendees, the Connections Bus was cancelled as at Easter this year. The Youth Council has been tasked with finding an alternative solution and it is felt that the savings from this can help the young members start something that is of benefit to all young members.

The parish council is keen to work on a new '**Community-Led Plan**' and will be looking for some support from residents. The idea of the plan is to find out the views of residents on matters concerning things like the environment, community safety, etc. If you would like to be involved, please contact the Clerk or Cllr Steve Burns.

In the last 12 months, the former Clerk of the Parish Council who pleaded guilty to theft of £17,000 from the Parish Council received an 8 month suspended sentence for act of theft. This sentence was suspended for 2 years and there were other conditions she must comply with.

Finally, community safety has been raised as concerns recently with instances of attempted and actual distraction burglaries, break in of sheds, theft of number plates, the various instances at the Co-op to name a few. Owing to concerns that have been raised by residents in relation to community safety schemes, we are keen to find out if these would be supported by residents in the village. John Fuller will be discussing Neighbourhood Watch after the break.

May I take this opportunity to thank Steve Smith for all his hard work on the websites over the last 12 months.

Cllr John Street, Chairman