

## **CHAIRS REPORT**

### **PARISH MEETING 2019.**

In the past year the Parish Council has continued with its work on behalf of the community of Little Waltham.

We have had a full complement of 9 Councillors during the course of the year. This year is election year, some of us will be standing for re-election, others will not.

We have dealt with a number of issues during the course of the year - both local and city-wide.

The main issue has been the Local Plan. Little Waltham has been designated an “area of growth”, and the Plan suggested that there would be a site entitled North Broomfield (where the majority of the site is in Little Waltham) in the first instance 800 houses, which was first reduced to 600 and now 450 houses. The main driver for this development is to gain an alternative access into the hospital. Along with Broomfield Parish Council we are consulting with Bloor Homes the developer on the site. One issue that only came to light at the Enquiry in Public into the Local Plan was that it is suggested that the road would only be for those who work at the hospital. Both Broomfield and us have strongly rejected that idea and we are working to get this restriction removed.

The other major site is the proposed Garden Village which will accommodate 3,000 houses. At each iteration of the Plan we voiced our strong views about both sites. Our main objections were around the infrastructure - or more accurately lack of infrastructure.

As before we joined with Broomfield, Writtle and Chignall Parish Council’s to make representations and instruct experts to assist us with our submissions and represent us at the Enquiry in Public. Also at the Enquiry the Gypsy and Travellers Site was discussed.

We are awaiting the Inspectors decision, but understand that the Inspector has returned to the Council asking them to reappraise the Green Corridors which we understand will lead to further consultation. In particular the Inspector has asked the City Council to review the extension to the green corridors around Boreham and Danbury, which may mean that further development can take place around these areas. Our further understanding is that this will not be completed until after the local elections in May 2019.

Another issue that comes up on a regular basis is speed of traffic and parking. With regards to parking the areas of difficulty are around the doctor’s surgery and the school. We have engaged with both the Surgery and the School. The surgery advise their visitors to use the Memorial Hall carpark and the school has been attempting to improve the parking by engaging with the pupils to influence the parking. As residents

will know our success on this has been variable, but we continue to monitor the situation and would encourage residents to let us know about any issues they encounter.

With regards speed of traffic, we have purchased a speed gun and trained a number of volunteers who have been out monitoring the speed of traffic. We also asked the City Council to undertake a speed survey which they have done. Unfortunately, while the survey showed some excessive speeding (mainly during the early hours of the morning) once the Council applied their statistical matrix to the results, they deemed that there was not sufficient speeding to qualify for any deterrent measures.

We were successful in our application for a grant from Tesco under their Community Scheme for money to improve the allotments behind the playing fields, and we will institute the remedial works shortly and hopefully these allotments can on stream very soon.

We continue producing our Parish Newsletter which will be published on a quarterly basis. Our aim is to make the newsletter self-financing by selling advertisements. I would like to thank in particular Tony Campen for all this work in selling the advertising space and Suzanne our clerk for arranging the contributions and the logistics. Feedback continues to be very positive, and supportive of the initiative.

The defibrillator has now been installed in telephone box and about 35 people attended the training session we had a few weeks ago. We are grateful to the lottery who funded this project.

A lot of our time is taken up with planning applications. Most of these applications are uncontroversial, however where they are not we have made our views clear and where necessary we have attended Planning Committee Meetings of the City Council to present our viewpoint.

In the past year there have been several which have concerned us. Namely the application for Channels Golf Club to amend the Section 106 notice so that they did not need to reinstate or keep running a golf club. Unfortunately, they were successful. However if they want to build on that land they will need to make a planning application. Part of the deal that the owners did with the City Council was an agreement to give the City Council over a £1M for sports facilities, we are arguing strongly that this money should be spent in the Little Waltham parish and should not just go into the City coffers to bail them out of the deficit they are running with the Riverside Complex.

Whilst on the subject of sporting facilities, some of you may be aware of the proposal to site a David Lloyd Centre on part of the golf club that was released under the section 106 amendment. Access to the site would be from Pratts Farm Lane. Whilst these plans are not yet fully formed the developer along with representatives from David Lloyd attended a recent Parish Council meeting. Once again we are concerned about

the issue of traffic - not only in Pratt Farm Lane, but also rat-running through Little Waltham and possibly Domsey Lane and more traffic on Essex Regiment Way.

Another planning issue which we took to the Planning Committee of the City Council was the Gypsy and Travellers site at Noakes Lane. We had spoken against this at the Enquiry, and did the same at the Planning Committee meeting. A lot of local people spoke and the business in the adjoining industrial area. No one spoke in favour of the site, but we were unsuccessful - and permission was given. However we understand that one of the local businesses has applied to have the decision Judicially Reviewed.

Other initiatives that we arranged this year have been the sessions of "Play in the Park" during the school Easter holiday and we have recently arranged a Parish "Litter Pick" with another one later this month. We have also engaged with both Macdonalds and Costa coffee about the litter as much of it emanates from their customers. Indeed for the next litter pick Macdonalds has offered free coffee and food for those who take part.

One issue that has given us a lot of concern over the past year has been the erection of a fence by the Cricket Club. To be clear this fence was erected without our permission, or indeed planning permission. We have engaged with the Cricket Club on this matter from the time they started putting up the fence. The land that the Cricket club uses is owned by the City Council. We lease it from them and then sub-lease it to the Cricket Club. It is a complex legal issue, however the City Council have told the Cricket Club that they will need to apply for planning permission for the fence. The Cricket Club have told us and the City Council that they will do so - but have not yet done so. We continue to press the City Council to deal with this issue, but we are effectively in their hands as far as any enforcement action is concerned.

A lot of the work of the Parish Council goes on due to the commitment of my fellow councillors and I would like to thank them for all their help and work over the past year.

I would also like to thank the other organisations on behalf of the Parish Council who do so much to help the village and the community.

Thanks are also due to our County Councillor John Aldridge and City Councillors James Raven and Barry Knight who between them attend the majority of our meetings and are always willing to assist us and help to fight our corner.

The work of the Parish Council is supported by our Clerk Suzanne and on behalf of the Parish council I would like to thank Suzanne for all her help and assistance over the past year.

