

KILBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018

Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 7.30pm

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I'd like to welcome you to this year's Annual Parish Meeting. Unlike the bi-monthly formal meetings of the Parish Council which only include a short Parishioners' Time slot on the agenda, this is an open meeting at which parishioners may discuss village matters, ask questions or raise issues which they wish to be considered by the Council on a future agenda. You are encouraged to take part and your contributions are most welcome.

Since I took office 12 months ago, it's been a busy year, particularly on the Planning and Environment front. A number of planning applications have been considered, the most controversial being a proposal submitted to Blaby planners by Leicestershire County Council to build 8 houses and car park for the village school at the rear of Broadway Farm, Main Street. Thanks to our ward councillor, David Jennings, the application was 'called in' for consideration by the Planning Committee. However, following adverse comments received from neighbours and the Parish Council, together with a planning officer's recommendation for refusal, the application was withdrawn at the eleventh hour. We wait to see whether revised proposals are submitted in due course. Applications were also submitted for the construction of two new standalone dwellings. The first was for a 5-bedroom house, to be substituted for a previously approved single storey new build dwelling behind Limes Farm, Main Street. This application was also withdrawn following adverse comments from this Council, although an amended version of the approved scheme (including conversion of two barns into a single dwelling) is currently under consideration by Blaby planners. We also commented on the other proposal, for construction of a house in the garden adjoining 1 Wells Close, which was approved and building is likely to start this year. Other local applications reviewed were of a minor nature.

Further afield, three planning applications for large residential schemes in Countesthorpe were refused following many objections, including from this Council, on the basis of inadequate infrastructure. A similar objection was raised to the David Wilson Homes outline application for 150 dwellings in Kilby Road, Fleckney. This was, however, approved. A subsequent application seeking approval for the detailed (reserved) matters is currently under consideration by Harborough DC. We have submitted comments, requesting that construction traffic passing through Kilby is restricted, especially at school drop-off and pick-up times.

At a County-wide level, a consultation draft of the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan has been published, with initial comments already being submitted by the Parish Council. This plan includes vastly increased housing targets,

as well as major highway schemes, including a new A46 dual carriageway skirting the south and east of Leicester, with a target completion date of 2031. This is likely to pass within a short distance of the village. As the consultation period has been extended to next week, we have expanded our own comments for submission. We also plan to get involved with other parishes and organisations to make sure we have our say as things develop.

Here in the village, our major project has been the construction of a new 'play castle' on the playing field. Thanks are due to Councillor Kilsby and other willing volunteers in realizing his vision, the imminent completion of which is eagerly awaited by local children. We are also very grateful to a local decorator who gave up his free time to re-paint the existing play equipment. Prior to that, he also re-painted the old phone box where the defibrillator has been installed, again at no cost.

Highway-related issues still cause concern. In the light of increasing traffic volumes, mainly due to new housebuilding elsewhere, we continue to press for safety improvements to the Spinney Road & Welford Road junction. The County Council are generally unsympathetic, but at least the interactive warning signs are now working again, with the trigger speed reduced to 45mph. We continue to badger County Highways regarding the poor maintenance of local roads, especially continuing storm drain issues in Main Street. A problem which has seen further deterioration is fly-tipping adjacent to the highway. Despite periodic litter picking by Blaby Council and willing volunteers, casual discarding of drink cans, etc out of car windows now seems to be compounded by serious dumping of bagged domestic and other waste. We are requesting removal by the authorities, but parishioners are also asked to report instances, with details of the culprits if possible. On a more positive note, County Highways have advised that the willow trees on the green facing Wistow Road will be surveyed and trimmed as necessary this summer.

A new development which will be of benefit to parishioners, is the introduction of high speed broadband in the village. After much active encouragement by myself and representatives from other parish councils, the County-led 'Superfast Leicestershire' project has at last borne fruit and service upgrades are now available from BT and other suppliers.

Finally, for those who may not have met her yet, I'd like to introduce our new Council Clerk, Tina Cox. Tina, who joined us last December, following Julie Whitehouse's resignation, has settled in really well and is doing a sterling job. Please contact her with your day to day queries and requests for information or action by the Parish Council. Her contact details are on the Parish web site.

Andy Collins

Chairman, Kilby Parish Council

1st May 2018