

KILBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2019

Tuesday 7th 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' Forum slot on the agenda, this is an open meeting at which you may discuss village matters, ask questions or raise issues which you wish to be considered by the Council on a future agenda. You are encouraged to take part and your contributions are most welcome.

The Parish Council has had another busy year. On the Planning and Environment front, a number of planning applications have been considered. Following the withdrawal of a proposal by Leicestershire County to build 8 houses at the rear of Broadway Farm, Main Street, a new Class Q application was submitted to convert one of the existing open sided barns to a dwelling. Class Q applications allow redundant agricultural buildings to be converted to dwellings without formal planning permission, providing certain criteria are met. Following the sale of the site, the new owners submitted a replacement Class Q application which included conversion of both barns. The Parish Council sent in comments on both applications, primarily relating to the small size of proposed gardens. The revised planning application for the conversion and linking of two barns at the rear of Limes Farm, Main Street was approved and this scheme is now nearing completion. A further revised application for an adjacent new build dwelling, larger than previously approved, but still with a 'barn' aesthetic was commented on and is currently under consideration by Blaby planners. Another proposal, for construction of a new house in the garden adjoining 1 Wells Close, has now started building with completion expected towards the end of this summer.

The Reserved Matters for the David Wilson development at Kilby Road Fleckney, were eventually approved and construction is now well under way. In our view, a major shortcoming of the approvals for this scheme was the lack of planning for construction traffic access. After discussions with Harborough District Council, we reluctantly had to accept that routing of construction traffic via Kilby was unavoidable, given the weight of local opposition to routing via the centre of Fleckney. We did, however, make requests to both Harborough and the developer for construction traffic to avoid school drop-off and pick-up times. Unfortunately, some 'rogue' lorry drivers still continue to ignore this advice, as well as others coming to and from sites beyond the weight restricted zone, despite a dispensation only applying for access within the zone. Representations to County Highways on this matter have met with an unsympathetic response. Further afield, planning applications have been approved for large developments in Kibworth and Great

Glen, which will inevitably result in an increase in general traffic using the 'rat run' through Wistow & Kilby.

County-wide, the final version of the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan was approved by all the District Councils. This was despite the adverse comments made by many Parish Councils, including our own, as well as the CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) and other pressure groups. A major element of the plan is the proposed A46 'expressway' to the south and east of Leicester, which would pass close to Kilby and have a major impact on the countryside through which it passes. It would also be a catalyst for large new residential and commercial developments, which is being driven by City and County Councils as well as major developers. The Parish Council continues to express strong views in relation to the proposal and has also joined CPRE, as well as attending meetings organised by them.

A proposal by County Council Leader, Nick Rushton, to disband the District Councils and replace them with a new unitary authority, based at County Hall, was considered. The Parish Council sent in their observations, which were mixed and, unsurprisingly, the District Councils generally oppose the proposal, which would need Central Government approval to proceed.

Here in the village, this year has seen the completion of the new 'play castle' on the playing field. Thanks are due to Councillor Tony Kilsby and other volunteers in helping to achieve his vision. This facility, which is already proving popular with local children, cost in the region of £13,000, but I'm pleased to tell you that around £12,500 was received as a 'Section 106' grant from Blaby Council, which means that the Parish Council's finances remain healthy. Such grants will be harder to come by in future, so this is a good result for Kilby parishioners.

Highway-related issues still cause concern. Our efforts to get improvements at the Spinney Road / Welford Road junction have met with limited success, in that the road lining has been re-done and improved, with some new static signing being provided. However, relocation of at least one electronic sign has not happened as promised and one of them is now defective again, which has been raised with County Highways. Maintenance of local roads continues to be an issue, especially with damage now being caused by construction traffic. The problem of fly tipping in the spinneys adjacent to the Welford Road junction is worsening. We request removal by the authorities and this is done promptly, but parishioners are also asked to report instances, with details of the culprits if possible. We believe that provision of temporary CCTV cameras is now under consideration. Despite periodic litter picking by Blaby Council and willing volunteers, casual discarding of drink cans, etc out of car windows continues unabated and public education would seem to be the only solution. On a more positive note, County Highways have now trimmed back the willow trees on the green facing Wistow Road, although this has been done in a fairly haphazard manner instead of the trees being properly 'lopped' or 'pollarded' – no doubt due to financial constraints. Despite CCTV surveys of the adjacent foul sewer being carried out by Severn Trent, we continue to believe that frequent

blockages may be due to tree root damage and discussions with them continue to be inconclusive.

Finally, I would like to offer the Parish Council's thanks to Cllr Tony Kilsby who is standing down after over thirty years' service, many of them as Chairman, as well as for his time given freely on the design and building of our new play castle. Thanks are also due to Cllr Gail Butler is also standing down and has ably supported our Clerk Tina Cox, on financial and administrative matters, as well as helping out on the Castle project. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Mark Pauser, who will be taking up his seat at the Annual Parish Council Meeting this evening.

Andy Collins

Chairman, Kilby Parish Council

7th May 2018