

This is my third report to the Parish as Chairman of the Council, the purpose of which is to outline to you what the Parish Council has done since the last annual meeting in May 2017.

As mentioned last year, the Council together with Kirby Juniors FC undertook, with funding secured by the Juniors from Sport England and Section 106 monies for the benefit of recreation in the Parish, extensively renovate the Council owned brick changing rooms, these were officially open last June and are an obvious benefit to users. This facility is not for the exclusive use of the football teams that use the recreation ground but for any sports that use the ground. Again it proves that when the Parish Council works in partnership with the community, good things happen. No council tax monies was used for this project, similarly with the tennis court refurb. That facility is still being well used by the people of the village, so much so that we received an anonymous complaint that people were using it too early on a Sunday morning.

The Council would dearly like to refurb the green pavilion on the recreation ground which is in dire need of attention, that part of the recreation ground is subject to a trust deed from the 1920s which is restrictive on what can be done, for example it would be difficult to extend the footprint of the building as it would require more land, but it may be in the future, consideration could be given to upgrading with an upper floor with balcony.

We will also be considering very shortly, hopefully at either our May or June meeting what to do about the council owned bungalow in Court Close, the previous tenant vacated the property last year and the Council have had an indicative quote of over £20k to bring the property anywhere near modern standards of housing one would expect. Unfortunately again these are issues that were left to the current council to deal with, as far as I can ascertain other than a annual gas appliance inspection nothing has we done to improve the property. The choice that the Council have is to pay for a costly renovation or sell the property. If the decision is to sell the that would not impact the tennis court grounds.

As you may be aware as it has been reported in the Local publication, the Parish Council over a number of years has been subject to a great many requests under the Freedom of Information Act. This is by far unprecedented throughout the country, at best a parish council may be subject to one per year but we seem to have had 172 over a period between 29th November 2011 and 3 August 2017 since 3 August until the present around another 20 more have been received. These emanating in the main from three village residents. The parish council wrote to the Information Commissioner asking that a number of requests received were of a vexatious nature and she agreed with the Council. All this is a matter of public record on the ICO website, please take the time to have a read of some of them, decision notice FS50645635 dated 24th August 2017 has some very salient points made by the information commission regarding these three individuals they may surprise you. Whilst the Council acknowledges the right of these few individuals to submit these requests, with rights comes responsibilities and I leave it to you if you consider that a reasonable use of those rights.

Finally I will update you on the current position regarding the library, there are a good number of willing volunteers and as I understand it they are currently operating the library with light oversight by LCC. The library was built on that part of the recreation ground which is part of the 1920's charity trust, from what we now believe permission was not sought from the Charity Commission to permit this use. Again a legacy issue that this Council has to put right and we are doing just that in conjunction with the Charity Commission and we should conclude this matter to legitimise the library building later this year.

My last remarks concerning the people that comprise our parish council who receive no remuneration for the work and commitment they give on your behalf, I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their friendship and commitment month in month out. We need more councillors we currently have six vacancies, so if you want to help make our village a continuing good place to live, come and join us, we are non political and just want to do the best for our great village.