

WILLOUGHBY WATERLEYS PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT – MAY 2021

The year 2020/21 has been dominated by the Covid pandemic. Having been through a number of lockdowns and following Government laws and guidelines, all meetings have had to be held remotely in the last 12 months. The law for such meetings to be held, is expected to lapse on the 7th May 2021 and our future meetings will be held in person, but still with social distancing restrictions. Our first such meeting will be 1st July 2021.

The Parish Council acknowledges and thanks Phil Leech for his lengthy tenure as the previous Chair, having stepped down in November 2020. My appointment is anticipated to last 12 months and currently Councillors expect the Chair to rotate on an annual basis.

Some Council meetings have been attended by both Neil Bannister (Harborough DC- Dunton Ward Councillor) and Blake Pain (Leicestershire County Councillor - Bruntingthorpe Divisional Councillor) and the Council thank them for their attendance over the last 12 months.

The biggest threat to the current rural way of life in Willoughby Waterleys, is the impact that Whetstone Pastures Garden Village would have on our community if approved. The Parish Council has actively engaged in a number of public consultations and supported the work of Willoughby Waterleys Residents Association where it has been able. The most recent consultation submission was in relation to the Blaby District Local Plan review in March. There was some good news earlier in the year, with the abandonment of the A46 Expressway. However the County's Councils through the Members' Advisory Group, appear not to have given up in their desire to see major development to the South and East of Leicester.

The Parish Council's finances are now in a good position, following the significant expenditure a few years ago on upgrading obsolete street lighting. Subject to there not being any significant unforeseen need and following some recent large increases in our Precept, The Council is hopeful next year, to minimise increases.

I think we all hope that once the pandemic impact is over, we will see the General Elliott re-open. The Asset of Community Value registration runs for a further 4 years. Let us hope that a new tenant can soon be found.

During the year, despite the Covid difficulties, the Council has managed to carry out its normal activities. This included supporting the village with Church Gate repairs, sourcing a new notice board (soon to be erected) and the carrying out of a Tree survey to the graveyard and cemetery, which is likely to result in some maintenance work being undertaken (subject to planning permission) in the near future.

The administration of The Council has again been superbly run by our Clerk, Jackie Jackson and the Audit signed off by Liz Coates. Thank you to both. Thanks also to Councillors for their help and support through the year.

Let's all hope that we are now exiting an extremely difficult time and we can all get back to some semblance of normality in the near future.

David Campbell-Kelly

Chair

6th May 2021