

Chairman's Report for APM May 2018

This will be my fourth report as the Chairman of Bredfield Parish Council, and I would again like to thank my fellow councillors for their continued support and work for the Council.

In the last twelve months, we have held six meetings at which a range of subjects were discussed and considered.

In addition, councillors have represented the Parish Council at District Council Planning Committee meetings; at Sizewell-C Consultation briefings, and a public hearing on a planning appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. Our Parish Clerk has also attended courses and briefings to ensure that he is up to date with new legislation.

An update on points raised last year - some concern had been expressed over the life of the battery in the speed activated sign, but these concerns have receded now we have the battery regularly changed and the sign moved between posts.

The village sign was successfully taken down, refurbished and re-installed. Much of this work was done by councillors, and I must thank David Leyland and Vince Buckman for their efforts and acknowledge the contribution from Derek Spall and S.G.C. Coatings of Parham for their work.

Progress has been made with the War Memorial: having satisfied ourselves that the Memorial is the property of the Parochial Church Council, we volunteered to assist the PCC to investigate whether any refurbishment was required. We arranged an inspection of the memorial by an expert and I am pleased to say that his report indicates that the memorial is in good condition, but the surrounding concrete plinth is moving away from the memorial. It would seem likely that the costs of any work will hopefully not be as great as once feared. We have established contact with the War Memorial Trust regarding a possible grant to assist with any costs.

We have continued to support the Neighbourhood Development Plan. During 2017 a plan was completed in draft, approved by the Parish Council and in September submitted to the District Council for screening. This resulted in the recommendation that we should complete a technical document known as a Strategic Environmental Assessment – this is an appraisal of the impact the plan policies will have. It was clear that we would need professional assistance with this and following a request to Locality – the organisation that supports neighbourhood plans – we were given the services of a large consulting company, Aecom: their work being paid for by the Department of Communities and Local Government. They have already produced a report of Site Assessments, which is now available on the website, and they will complete the SEA during the summer. Meetings have also been held with the District Council Planning Policy officers, and we are hopeful that the Plan will be ready to go to Public Consultation during the summer.

The Jubilee Orchard and Meadow has received support, and the Parish Council is pleased with the excellent progress being made with this community facility.

We are now governed by new data protection regulations, and I am grateful to our Parish Clerk for pointing us in the right direction and keeping us in line.

Our activities are typical of the work of the Parish Council – we meet regularly and the most common things we find ourselves dealing with are planning applications, problems with highways, footpaths, looking after public assets etc.

For this each year we can claim money from the Council Tax for our use, and the amount the Parish Council requests will help determine how much you pay. The money we get from the District Council is known as the precept, and this last year we requested the amount of £5.500.

Much of this money goes out on fixed costs: waste collection, accountancy fees, insurance and wages. Expenditure over the last year has included the village sign, ridding the green of moles and replacing equipment in the defibrillator that had reached its expiry date.

Planned expenditure over the next twelve months will include refurbishment of the Pump and the purchase of a second speed indicator sign – this last will be assisted by a grant from our District Councillor, Tony Fryatt.

If you wish to see the exact figures, then I would direct people to the website: <http://bredfield.onesuffolk.net/> which contains all the Parish Council material we must show by law, and lots more beside. I would extend thanks to Councillors Anne Henderson for her work keeping our website up to date and David Leyland for the financial details.

Finally, I would just add that all our meetings are free for the public to attend, and we always have a section of the meeting for parishioners to voice any concerns they may have.