

Chairman's Annual Report

Good evening everyone and thank you for attending this evening's meeting, the 2006 Annual Parish Meeting of Cottenham Parish Council.

This forum has a functional remit, to enable the Council to communicate with its parishioners all the activities it has undertaken during the year. Parishioners who wish to ask questions will be allowed to speak for 2 minutes and will be allowed a short right of reply.

I would like to introduce your Parish Council: Cllr David Warham, vice chair, Cllrs Robert Clarke, Rex Collinson, Pat Fox, Hugh Gautrey, Alan Leeks, David Mudd, Tony Nicholas, David Norman, Pauline Allin, Rick Bristow, Tim Wotherspoon and Mrs Julie Groves, Clerk to the Council.

This Council has now served its four year term and its composition will change after May 8th.

I would also like to welcome the guests with us tonight, District Councillor Simon Edwards and Tim Wotherspoon. Also in attendance is Cllr David Jenkins our County Councillor.

The Council meets once a month for a full Parish Council Meeting in the Library at the College, and twice a month, on Thursdays for Planning Meetings in Watson's Yard. Agendas are posted 3 clear days in advance on both the two Parish notice boards. Our website gives details of our duties & powers, contact details, dates & minutes of full council & planning meetings and associated documents: www.cottenhampc.org.uk

Each household will have received notification of this meeting along with the agenda. We requested questions to be directed to

Mrs Groves, the Clerk. No questions had been received by the deadline. I will take questions from the floor at the end of my report, if answers are unavailable tonight we will respond in writing within the next two weeks.

The business of this meeting will conclude by 10pm at the latest.

Chairman's Report for 2005/2006

Finance

Our precept for 2004/5 was £90k, which for a Band D property was £38.41 per week. The Parish Council has set a precept of £105,000, for 2005/6 £ 44.79 for a D band property.

As in previous years none of the Councillors received an allowance for their role on the Council.

Regular Commitments

Parish Council undertakes a number of regular activities within the village.

- maintaining the Green,
- Recreation Ground, the Village Pound, the Old Village Green in Broad Lane,
- the War Memorial & Village sign,
- bus shelters
- emptying of litter bins
- From April 2006 we will also have responsibility for some street lighting-approx 30
- Christmas carol concert
- Public Open Space on Tenison Manor

Projects Completed during 2005/6

The major project were completed in September of 2005 and was the next phase of the playground revamp which consisted of the replacement of the Aerial Runway, the large wooden

multiplay equipment and the provision of four new swings. Consultation for this phase took place at the Ladybird fete in 2004.

The cost of this project was £22k.

We received grants from Wren: £4.5k, Evolve: £10,800, donations from the Baptist Church (£50) and the Newsletter (£100) along with the PC's contribution of £6,640.

I would particularly like to extend my thanks to Cllr Pauline Allin whose commitment & hard work has enabled this project to proceed to completion.

Support for Village & other Organisations

The PC has also been able to support other groups & initiatives during the year. These include:

- Citizens Advice Bureau, a grant of £250.00
- Cambridge & Ely Victim Support, a grant of £300.00
- Mobile Warden Scheme, a grant, of £1000.00
- Cambridgeshire Libraries, a grant, of £70.00
- Open Air Swimming Pool, a grant of £500.00
- Fen Edge Family Weekend, a grant of £850.00
- Cottenham Charities, a grant of £ 10,000
- Cottenham Bowls Club, a grant of £5,000
- Cottenham United Football Club, a grant of £2,000
- Royal British Legion, a donation of £35.00

Public Open Spaces at Tenison Manor & Brenda Gautrey Way

We have been able to complete transfer on the Tenison Manor site late last summer. Since then extensive work has been carried out on the Moat site. The County Council has stated that

they will take over the regular maintenance of the Scheduled Monument in September 2008, with the proviso that the area is brought up to a satisfactory standard.

To date Persimmon still has not implemented the improvements at the emergency access which were agreed in early October 2005 and promised by Christmas. A meeting was held with Cllr Kindersley yesterday. He instructed officers to issue either an enforcement notice or breach of condition notice by the beginning of May with an instruction that work be completed in one calendar month. We shall wait to see the outcome of this action.

Transfer on Brenda Gautry Way has been slowed down due to a dispute regarding the ownership of the adjacent watercourse. Discussions have come to a complete halt; we have not heard from the developers of this land for some considerable time.

KGV Playing Field

In the autumn the Parish Council signed 99 year for an additional 8 acres at the rear of the recreation ground. The cost of the lease, £18k was already budgeted for in 2004/5. During this year work will begin converting the agricultural land to recreation ground. This will involve levelling, drainage and seeding. The Parish Council has set aside a sum to cover this work and has also received a grant of £6.5k towards the cost of the drainage work from SCDC. There is no public access onto this land currently and will not be for some considerable time. When the extension is to open to the public, an announcement will be made by the Council.

The first phase of the Recreation Ground Re-Development Project, which along with further phases which will run between 5-10 years, is being undertaken by the Parish Council. Subsequent phases are being undertaken by a steering group

comprising the Parish Council, CUSSC, Football, Cricket, and Tennis Clubs.

We have been in a position to feedback & consult with the wider community. During November and December two evenings of public consultation were held at the Village College, with a presentation and static display of ideas to date, which include further sports facilities and a new sports pavilion and Parish Council office. Members of the Steering Group were also on hand to answer questions.

Currently the Business Plan is being completed and then a funding period of approximately eighteen months will commence.

Highways Issues

In January the Parish council commissioned a traffic census. Its findings included:

- A daily average of 32,400 vehicle movements in and out of the village
- The majority of road users entering and leaving the village are technically breaking the speed limits
- At weekends the volume is much reduced but the speeds are greater
- We are concerned with vehicle density on the High Street and Lambs Lane especially with regard to pedestrians- 1,500 children and young people attend schools and cross roads in these two areas
- Cottenham traffic flows exceed those of Willingham and Longstanton, both of which either have a by-pass under construction or consideration.

We believe that this situation will only get worse when work begins on the Guided Bus and Northstowe.

The Parish Council has established a small sub-group who will be considering options for traffic calming based on lights, pedestrian crossings, speed and weight reductions. We have had positive initial discussions with both the Police and County Councillors. In the very near future we hope to initiate feedback from within the community for any ideas generated.

Planning Issues.

I gave evidence on behalf of the Council in July and was present for the entire 8 days at the Victoria View inquiry at Cambourne. We instructed a barrister for this inquiry at a cost of £6.5k

Alongside the planning process, the Parish Council have tried in a number of small ways to build links with the local Travelling community on Smithy Fen. Councillors visit the site to distribute the village newsletter, and we are active participants in SCDC Travellers Liaison Forum.

The Parish Council has also made formal representations in regard to the Local Development Framework, Northstowe, Mereham, A10 widening proposal, and the Mineral and Waste Development Plan 2, all of which could affect Cottenham.

Anti Social Behaviour

Recently there has been a reduction in the number of anti-social incident around the village. The bus shelter at the top of Victory Way has been re-painted a number of times and graffiti appears to have stopped in this area. If residents know of particular area and times when problems occur, please inform our local officer PC Rogerson, as he is often able to re-organise shift patterns in order to target specific problem areas.

We would urge anyone with information regarding any incidents to contact the Police.

The other problem currently is dog fouling. This is a problem all over the village despite a number of additional bins provided. Currently the Old recreation Ground is being used as a dog walking area. This will only continue if dog owners are responsible and remove dog excrement, either home with them or to an appropriate bin.

We would urge anyone with information regarding any incidents to contact the Police.

And finally I would like to extend our thanks to our Clerk, Julie for all her conscientious hard work on our behalf during the last year.

Neville Rice, our groundsman and his team.

Cottenham Village College for accommodating our public meetings.

CBM Paul Rogerson and PCSO Jacky King for their hard work around our village.

Thanks to all our District and County Councillors. I believe we have had an extremely effective Parish Council which has achieved and maintained positive working relations with the District and County Councils and the Police during the last four years.

Finally thanks to the parish councillors who have finished this current term of office and particularly to Mr Robert Clarke, who has served on the council and as Chairman for many years and has remained enthusiastic and proactive throughout.