

Newton & Biggin Parish Council

Chair's Report for Annual Parish Meeting 2024 – Ian Davis

CHAIR'S REPORT.

A QUICK REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE PC OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

LET'S LOOK AT INTERNAL STUFF FIRST BECAUSE UNLESS THATS RIGHT WE HAVENT GOT A FUNCTIONING PC WE HAVE SET A BALANCED BUDGET AND WE HAVE SUBSTANTIAL RESERVES WHICH WE ARE PLANNING TO INCREASE IN LINE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A COUNCIL OF THIS SIZE.

OUR INTERNAL & EXTERNAL AUDITS RAISED NO MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE - IN FACT THEY RAISED NOTHING AT ALL.

WE HAVE A FULL SET OF POLICIES, STANDING ORDERS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS.

OUR FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS WONT BE CONTESTED BUT WE HAVE A FULL COMPLEMENT OF COUNCILLORS -UNLIKE SOME.

LOOKING EXTERNALLY WE HAVE SECURED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SIGNAGE & SPEED LIMITS AT ST THOMAS CROSS - I KNOW SOME (NOT ALL) WOULD LIKE MORE BUT WEVE ACHIEVED ALL THAT IS PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE AT PRESENT.

WE HAVE ENGAGED CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH RBC AS IT STARTS WORK ON A NEW LOCAL PLAN - AND WILL CONTINUE INVOLVEMENT AS THIS PROGRESSES.

WE'VE COMMITTED TO A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WHICH REMAINS IN THE COURSE OF PREPARATION.

WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE FIVE ARCHES WILDLIFE SITE WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RBC AND BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION TO ENSURE ITS MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT.

IN TERMS OF CELEBRATIONS WE FUNDED EVENTS TO MARK THE CORONATION BOTH IN THE VILLAGE AND COTON. WE ORGANISED CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND CELEBRATIONS IN THE VILLAGE AND PROVIDED FUNDING FOR COTON. WE DELIVERED THE REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE AND WE ALSO PROVIDED THE WARM HUB OVER WINTER MONTHS.

IN TERMS OF REACTIONARY ACTIVITIES WE RESPOND TO ALL CONSULTATIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND WE ASSIST, WHEN REQUESTED, RESIDENTS WITH ISSUES THAT THEYRE FACING EITHER BY OUR OWN DIRECT ACTION OR BY SIGNPOSTING THEM TO APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.

LOOKING TO NEXT YEAR ITS GOING TO BE MORE OF THE SAME IN SOME AREAS BUT I LOOK FORWARD TO PROGRESS ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND CONTINUING ENGAGEMENT WITH RBC ON THE LOCAL PLAN.

WE MAY SEE SOME PROGRESS ON THE EXTENSION TO THE FIVE ARCHES SITE AND SECURING THE ECO-OFFSETTING FUNDING DEPENDENT UPON THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS PROVIDING THE FUNDING GOING AHEAD.

ALSO HOPE FOR PROGRESS ON THE ADOPTION ON THE ELLIS GARDENS OPEN SPACE.

SO - I THINK WE'RE IN A GOOD PLACE. WE'VE ACHIEVED A LOT WITH THE PROMISE OF MORE TO COME. CAN I THANK MY FELLOW COUNCILLORS FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT AND PARTICULARLY THANK BECKY WITHOUT WHOSE GUIDANCE, FORESIGHT AND PROFESSIONALISM NONE OF WHAT WE DO WOULD BE POSSIBLE.