

## **TWYXCROSS PARISH COUNCIL-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2017**

### **REPORT TO TWYXCROSS PARISH COUNCIL 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017**

I am pleased to present my first annual report since becoming Chairman of Twycross Parish Council on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016. I would firstly like to place on record my thanks to my predecessor Kristina Kent for her work on behalf of the Council. Kristina left the Council in 2016. The Parish Council has held 8 council meetings in Twycross, Orton on the Hill and Norton Juxta Twycross since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and those meetings were open to the public and were attended by a number of our residents. At each meeting we allow a small amount of time for public participation.

One of the biggest issues for the parish council this year has been the sale of the Twycross play area by the crown estate. The parish council was told of this unexpected sale after we had set our budget for 2016/17. We asked the crown estate to give us the land for free, but our request was refused. An extraordinary council meeting was held in Twycross in June to discuss this matter, and was well attended by 15 residents. After a full discussion, the parish council decided to purchase the play area to preserve public access. There was unanimous support for this decision from those present.

The total cost of the play area acquisition will be around £15,000-approximately £7,000 for the land and £8,000 for taxes and fees. As we only have a small annual budget (around £16,000 a year) we agreed to take out a loan of just over £11,500 to help pay for this acquisition. We can reclaim some of the money we have to pay, and we have made a grant application to help repay some of the loan.

This year the parish council changed the contractor who maintains our 2 play areas in Twycross and Norton and the green in Orton. The standard of work by the previous contractor was totally unacceptable and I apologise to our residents for this. The new contract is already working much better, and has included some tree and hedge maintenance work. The parish council also gives a grant each year to our 3 churches to help maintain their churchyards. We also offered each church a grant of £150 towards the cost of maintaining or replacing their notice boards.

The parish council comments on planning applications where appropriate, and we noted that a proposed housing development in Wood Lane, Norton, (which we had objected to) was refused by the planning inspectorate shortly after Christmas. We also commented on the latest proposals for HS2b and noted that whilst noise is unlikely to be a serious problem for us, we have asked that any work takes into account the impact for our residents, to minimise any problems during construction.

We are also monitoring possible changes in local health services ('NHS sustainability and transformation plans') and we have asked health authorities to consult our residents properly about changes; we continue to raise the issue of speeding vehicles, particularly in Twycross, with speeding discussed in detail at a recent parish forum meeting; we objected to the proposed removal of the BT pay phone in Twycross; and we have painted our 2 former BT phone boxes in Norton and Orton.

I do wish to thank former councillors Geraldine Massey and Robert Vero, who have now left the council, for their hard work for our parish and our residents. I thank our MP David Tredinnick, and our local Councillors Ivan Ould and Kevin Morrell, for their continuing help and support. I also thank my councillor colleagues for their contributions. A special thank you too for our clerk Chris Bailey.

Alan Davies. Chairman, Twycross Parish Council. May 2017