

Chairman's Report 2012/13

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow members, having only been elected to the council a little over 6 months ago, and elected chairman 2 months ago, this report will be fairly short and based on those past few months.

I must start by once again regretting the resignations of three councillors in March. I would like to thank Mesdames Harrison and Fiander for the work they have done over a number of years, and particularly last year with the Olympic flame coming through the Village and the new benches that have been generally very well received, and I wish them both well in the future. Cllr Rogers has decided to rejoin the council for reasons best known to himself, but I hope that this council can put whatever bad feelings that have gone on in the past behind us, draw a line in the sand and move forward together for the benefit of the village as a whole.

The Parish Council has been working very hard behind the scenes on such items as the meadow, where we have signed a contract with landscape services to keep the meadow mown regularly and keep the hedging in good order as required by the terms of the lease and, after discussions that have been had with our Landlord Mr Rob Chapman.

We are awaiting quotes for some form of permanent pathway across the meadow as the Landlord has ruled out any hard surfacing such as concrete or asphalt, and we are looking into getting picnic tables, and some outdoor play equipment; regretfully at the moment the Landlord is against the playing of football and cricket on the land.

The Neighbourhood Plan, which is a fairly new initiative from the government under the Locality Act, allows parishes and Town Councils to determine what development can or should be allowed and where, within their town or parish.

It also deals with utilities, transport and general infrastructure; but like Rome these Ideals won't be completed in a day, but will be laid down for the future. And indeed it fits in with the work already done by CCPG, and we would welcome them to assist us with this project, where their knowledge gained would be of considerable help to prevent doubling the work load; and both parties could be seen to all be working together, (now that would make a change) for the benefit of the village.

Speaking of which we are producing an interim report back to the CCPG, following the presentation of their report, but due to the lack of numbers on the council since the presentation, time really has not been on our side on this occasion; but something will be sent by their given date of 23 May or very soon afterwards.

The council played a pivotal role in maintaining access to the car park on the Sandwich road, when the sea defence wall was built, as at one time access would have been virtually impossible. There are still issues regarding the edge of the car park and the cycle track merging and not being fully able to see the considerable drop in levels, and outstanding issues with regards signage.

Likewise a close look is being taken with Operation NEMO the power interconnector from Belgium whose cable will come ashore in Pegwell Bay; and connect up at the old power station site, plans of which will be available at our meeting next Tuesday.

Cliffsend PC is actively working with TDC & other affected PCs to alleviate any collateral environmental problems, and that a possible alternative cable route has already been suggested to the NEMO project team as a result of these talks

The council along with representatives of the Residents' Association and (then) County councillors Liz Green and John Kirby, have met with Mr. John Farmer (Highways' Project Manager) regarding the traffic calming. Much has been promised but nothing has yet been done; further pressure will be

applied now that a new financial year has begun, new budgets set, and new county councillors elected; but thanks must be recorded to both previous county councillors for the work that they have done on behalf of this parish.

We have also been busy on planning applications within the village to assist residents to improve their homes.

We have given £3,700 of your money to the Village hall to help pay for the new heating system, which will certainly make it far more bearable in the cold weather, with hopefully a lot less noise.

We were also prepared to assist the Shop Association with its efforts to keep the Post office open, which as we all know will not now happen due to the severe long term financial costs involved in manning the P.O terminal.

I would like to thank all those councillors who have worked tirelessly on the sub-committees where the hard work is really done – Cllrs Hovenden, Searle and Ratnasingham – and not forgetting our Clerk Ashley Stacey for her hard work and dedication to this council, over what has been rather difficult times these last few months.

And finally and to our detractors who say that this council is not fit for purpose, I say watch this space, for I hope that with new members on this council, we can continue what has now begun and ALL work in harmony for the benefit of this village, the place where we ALL reside. And treat each other as we would be liked to be treated ourselves, and treat with respect those we purport to serve.