

## **Chairman's Annual Report 2015-2016**

### **Tribute to Councillor Dolores Whitton**

It was with great sadness that, whilst writing my first Chairman's report, I learnt of the passing of an incredibly well respected, dedicated, long serving Councillor, Dolores Whitton. This is a devastating loss to, not only those on the Parish Council, but to our local area. Dolores gave all of her heart and passion to help create a better community for all of us.

I have included in this report some of the Parish Council's achievements from the past year. These were accomplished because of the dedication and passion of your Parish Councillors who give their time for free to help create a better community for all of us. Councillor Dolores Whitton played an integral part in these achievements.

For this year's report, I asked every Councillor and the Clerk to provide a short biography about themselves, their interests and their involvement within our community so that you can be better informed of whom the Councillors are that represent you.

In March, Councillor Dolores Whitton provided me with information that she wanted parishioners to know about her for inclusion in this report. Out of respect for Councillor Whitton, her family and friends and to highlight the passion and dedication she had for her local community, this is set out below in her own words.

"Dolores Whitton...village born and bred...74yrs ago...Chestnut House. Passionate about the village as a safe, vibrant environment for all age groups. 35yrs in Education, 43 yrs on the Parish Council.....Chester City Council 16 yrs. 1975-1992...Mayor of Chester 1986-1987. Chester City Magistrate 30 yrs...Chair of the Youth Bench. Governor at Upton High School 34 yrs...Vice Chair and Chair for 17 yrs. Governor at All Saints. Active in a number of organisations...initiated Christmas lights a decade ago...Knit and Natter Craft, Centennial poppies. New play area consultation"

I consider myself incredibly privileged to have worked alongside Councillor Dolores Whitton and I know that her efforts during her time as a Councillor were very much appreciated and what she accomplished will be of great benefit to future generations.

## **New Council**

May 2015 saw the birth of our new Parish Council. Due to boundary changes following a governance review, the number of seats on our Parish Council dropped from 14 to 12.

Sadly, several long serving Councillors decided not to stand again last year and they are still sorely missed. These include Mr Andrew Storrar, Mr Brian Kerr OBE, Professor Dennis Holman and Mr Rakesh Shukla. It is fair to say that their many years of dedicated service to the Parish Council has helped shape our community and made it what it is today - a very active, strong and vibrant neighbourhood.

The Council did not see the return of Mr Andrew Errington as he did not want to stand for election. Mr Errington was co-opted on to the Parish Council for a short period of time. We are grateful to Mr Errington for the time he served on the Parish Council and for the contributions he made.

## **What has your Council achieved this year?**

### **Christmas Lights**

At our Council meeting held on 3 August 2015 the Council agreed:

‘To install and store 12 x 9 feet pre-lit garlands to wrap around each lamp post and connect to the commando socket to be installed in Year 1, in the sum of £1,468 + VAT each year and to also install the infrastructure to lampposts - power sockets at a cost of £3,840 + VAT.’

These lights were switched on, on 2 December 2015 just before the Vernon Institute’s Christmas Lights Switch On event which was held on the same evening. The lights provided a welcome boost to the lights provided at the Vernon Institute. Lots of positive feedback has been received on this new Council initiative and on how beautiful the village looked.

At our January Parish Council meeting it was agreed to increase the number of Christmas lights in 2016. If we are able to attract funding from local businesses/charities to sponsor the installation, the Council will ‘match-fund’ any such donations. The Council is asking for one off donations to sponsor lampposts - £450 each. The Council will then fund the ongoing rental costs out of its Christmas Lights Budget. If you are interested in sponsoring one or more of the lampposts please contact Shirley Hudspeth, the Clerk to the Council.

## **Cheshire Railings**

You may have noticed the beautiful restoration work that has been carried out on the Cheshire railings on the junction of Long Lane and Fiddlers Lane, around part of the Golden Jubilee Park. This restoration and refurbishment work was carried out by a local company at a total cost of £3,677. This included the replacement of a much needed gate into the swing park.

The Cheshire railings are a very important feature within our community and the Council is pleased with the work and that the railings have been maintained for future generations to enjoy.

## **Home Watch 2016**

Led by our Home Watch Co-ordinator, Councillor Alan Bailey, January 2016 saw the launch of a brand new Home Watch Alert System, bringing our Home Watch into the digital age and providing for the changing needs of our community by ensuring Home Watch Alerts are transmitted via email and social media.

This new initiative is called - SCRAM **S**aughall **C**Rime **A**lert **M**essage

Alert messages are sent via email to residents of Saughall and surrounding areas, as criminals do not respect boundaries. Initially, alerts are being sent out from and received back to one point. The target is to obtain 200 contacts during 2016 and at least one contact in every Street, Road or Close in the Village. We will also encourage those in surrounding parishes to participate in order to expand the system. The same alerts are sent via Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council's Twitter account which currently has over 500 followers and is run alongside the Cheshire Police Alert database at [www.cheshirepolicealert.co.uk](http://www.cheshirepolicealert.co.uk)

The main aims are to:

- have a happy and safer community;
- reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- provide re-assurance, encourage a flow of information and engage the public of Saughall and beyond; and
- further improve the quality of life for residents.

This scheme has the active support of the Cheshire Constabulary. All you have to do is to provide your name, street name and email address to Councillor Alan Bailey or to our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Lauren Davies at [lauren.davies@cheshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:lauren.davies@cheshire.pnn.police.uk) or to any Parish

Councillor. This system is ONLY to be used to transmit important crime based information and is not to be used for any other purpose. Residents can unsubscribe at any time that they wish.

NEIGHBOURS CAN COME TOGETHER, VIRTUALLY, TO MAKE THEIR COMMUNITY SAFER so please consider joining us in this exciting new version of Home Watch in 2016.

### **Golden Jubilee Park Consultation**

July 2015 saw the Council agreeing to a whole site approach being taken to improving the play and leisure offer in the Golden Jubilee Park. In August 2015 Members agreed to work in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council on this major project, to employ the services of two of its landscape architects to help consult our community on it and to ensure that the communities' aspirations for the Park are fed into the final plans.

Councillors have been very busy over the last few months visiting and consulting local community groups on improving the Park. The developing plans have also been presented at several of our Council meetings and will be available after this meeting for you to view and share your thoughts on.

### **The New Saughall Bus Service**

Prior to September 2015 the Parish Council was made aware of a new bus service provision for Saughall. The Council was very disappointed as Cheshire West and Chester Council, the bus service providers and most importantly Saughall residents had not been consulted on the changes that had been agreed in respect of the village's bus service.

This led to a great deal of distress and dismay within our village. Some parents were concerned about how their children would get to school in September and many of our elderly residents were worried that they would be unable to attend important GP appointments, as our local surgery is twinned with City Walls medical practice.

Due to the concerns raised by residents and the Parish Council, a meeting was arranged between representatives of the Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and the bus service providers. As a result of this meeting some changes were made but not enough for our resident's needs.

After several months of feeding resident's real concerns through to Cheshire West and Chester Council, we are pleased to note that the Principal Authority and the bus contractors have listened and from early May, a new bus service will be introduced.

Details of this new service can be found on the Parish Council's Website [www.saughall.gov.uk](http://www.saughall.gov.uk). However, this service will be reviewed in September and if it is not proving to be financially viable – we may lose it again.

I encourage everyone to use it otherwise we will lose it!

### **Finance**

The Council has set its budget for 2016/17 at £81,653 and has asked Cheshire West and Chester Council for a precept of £62,214. The Council Tax will be £56.20 for a Band D household. This equates to an increase of 2.2% on the precept levied for 2016/17.

### **In Conclusion**

As you will see from this report the Parish Council has been very busy over the last 12 months and this report only touches on some of the great work it has been carrying out on your behalf. Please read our Newsletters and take the opportunity to speak to the Parish Councillors to find out more about what we are doing for you.

Councillors continue to work incredibly hard, all year round, to help to provide a better community for all of us, as did our former Councillors who put many of the building blocks in place to ensure we are able to enjoy the vibrant and active community that we have today.

Councillors remain very committed to their role and give their own time and passion for free to improve the quality of life of those who live in the local area. They are summoned to attend all Parish Council meetings and I urge residents to attend some of them in order to share ideas and concerns about the local community during public speaking time. You will be made very welcome and we want to hear from you!

### **Biography**

As we are a relatively new Council, at my request the Councillors and the Clerk have provided a short biography below about themselves for your information.

Each Councillor's individual details can always be found on our Website and in our Newsletters. We all look forward to working with you and hearing from you during the next Municipal Year.

### **Councillor Alan Bailey**

Alan was re-elected to the Parish Council in May 2015, having last served as a Councillor between 1998 and 2006. He is currently responsible for the Public Footpaths and Allotments, is the Home Watch Co-ordinator, and a member of the Budget Committee.

Alan has recently reformatted the Home Watch procedures to bring it in line with current electronic means of communications and has invented a system of email alert messages called SCRAM (Saughall CRime Alert Message), such messages are also transmitted via Facebook and Twitter.

Part of his duties regarding the Public Footpaths around the Parish is to report any problems through to the Public Rights of Way office at CWAC and do to this he regularly walks all paths but needs the public help to identify any problems.

### **Councillor Michelle Collins**

I have been a Parish Councillor since May 2015. Becoming a Parish Councillor was not in the life plan however I have been a resident of Saughall for 40 years and after volunteering for a number of other charities for half of that time I wanted to volunteer and use my skills and experience within the local community.

### **Councillor Kathy Ford**

I have been a Parish Councillor since 2009 and I thoroughly enjoy my role as a Councillor. This year I have had the incredible privilege of becoming Chairman of the Parish Council and working alongside a dedicated team of Councillors. I enjoyed helping lead the MUGA project alongside other Councillors and I look forward to all that the new Council year will bring to improve our community.

### **Councillor Howard Jennings**

Councillor Jennings became a Councillor in 2012 and is a trustee of the Vernon Institute in Saughall and also helped established Saughall's new History Society that is held in the Vernon Institute.

Councillor Jennings is involved in many current issues/projects within Saughall.

### **Councillor Janette Knox**

I've been a P Cllr since 2007 & I volunteer on Reception @ Dial House once a week.

### **Councillor Jessie O'Malley**

Councillor O'Malley joined the Council in May 2015. Councillor O'Malley volunteers at the Saughall Toddler group and the Saughall Ethical food market that is held every Saturday in the Vernon Institute.

### **Councillor Anna Manning**

Cllr Anna Manning joined the Parish Council in October 2015. Anna is concerned about social isolation in Saughall and aims to reduce this as much as she can. She is involved with the committees of Chester Debating Society and Saughall History Society. She works full-time as a nonfiction author.

### **Councillor Jeanne Storrar**

Cllr Jeanne Storrar was elected to the Parish Council in 1999 and also served Saughall as a City Councillor from 2000 to 2009 when Chester City Council ceased. Jeanne sits on several committees within Cheshire that shape and look to improve Communities. Jeanne can often be found at the Saughall Friday Club, serving a hot lunch to many of our elderly residents and providing much appreciated chatter and companionship.

### **Councillor Andrew Warrington**

I joined the PC in the 1980's (cannot remember the exact date). Was Vis/ chair for many years while Peter bond was chairman. I was chairman for 4 years and during my tenure in 1992 celebrating 100years of parish councils. Have been involved with a number of PC projects new play equipment including the following new play equipment for the Golden Jubilee Park, procuring a new war memorial plaque and the electrification of the war memorial clock.

### **Councillor Jenny Young**

Councillor Jenny Young requested to be left out of this report.

### **Councillor Peter Young**

I am a Trustee and secretary of the Vernon Institute as well as a primary school governor and in my second term as a parish councillor.

### **Shirley Hudspeth, Clerk to the Council**

I am now in my fortieth year of working in Local Government. I work full time for a Principal Authority and at the same time have been the Clerk to Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council since 1997.

I hold numerous local government qualifications as well as the Certificate of Local Council Administration which is tailored for officers of Local Councils.

Councillor Kathy Ford

25 April 2016

## WHO'S WHO ON THE COUNCIL

### Parish Councillors

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<p>Howard Jennings Copperfield Church Road Saughall Chester CH1 6EN 07949377943 <a href="mailto:Howard.Jennings@collegeof-lawalumni.co.uk">Howard.Jennings@collegeof-lawalumni.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Janette Knox 7 Rosewood Grove Saughall Chester CH1 6AN 01244 881259 <a href="mailto:janknox51@gmail.com">janknox51@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Jessie O'Malley 7 Rake Way Saughall Chester CH1 6AZ 01244 881240 <a href="mailto:omalleyjessie@gmail.com">omalleyjessie@gmail.com</a></p>
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<p>Jenny Young 212 Hermitage Road Saughall Chester CH1 6AE 01244 881133 <a href="mailto:Jennifer.y@virgin.net">Jennifer.y@virgin.net</a></p>	<p>Peter Young 62 Hermitage Road Saughall Chester CH1 6AQ 01244 880685 <a href="mailto:pete4848young@yahoo.co.uk">pete4848young@yahoo.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Clerk to the Council</b> Shirley Hudspeth 10 Merton Close Little Neston Cheshire CH64 0TR 0151 336 3367 <a href="mailto:clerk@saughall.gov.uk">clerk@saughall.gov.uk</a></p>