

## **Chairman's Annual Report 2016-2017**

We have come to the end of a very difficult year!

As you know Kathy Ford our Chairman resigned in November 2016 closely followed by Michelle Collins in January 2017. I would like to thank them both for all their hard work and contributions whilst serving as Members.

We welcomed Brian Kerr back last June, after an absence of just over a year as Brian stood down at the last election in May 2015 after many years of dedicated service to the Parish Council. It was with great pleasure that we co-opted him to fill the vacant seat that had arisen due to the sad death of Dolores Whitton. At the Council meeting his month we have co-opted Mike Johnson on to the Council. Please remember we still have one vacancy though so if you are interested in joining the council please contact the Clerk.

I was elected Chairman in December 2016 and Peter Young was elected Vice Chairman. I am very grateful for the support of the other Councillors who have assisted me by running the various items, initiatives and projects the Council has on the go. I could not do it all on my own so I am pleased that they have taken on the roles of organising and running particular aspects of the Council and sitting on its Working Groups. I want to thank them all for their contributions. Much of which I am sure the majority of village people do not realise, goes on.

Parish Councillors are all volunteers and are bound by legislation for their rules and regulations, and they represent the whole parish. Councillors have put in many hours over and above the scheduled meetings they attended during the past year. They have supported the many Working Groups we have set up and represented the Parish Council at outside body meetings. They have also liaised with the electorate, and consequently the work behind the scenes has been enormous.

The Council continues to meet monthly and its Working Groups meet on a regular basis too. Attendance at meetings continues to be very high. Members of the public are of course able to attend these meetings if they wish to, and are always very welcome.

We started our year with a number of issues that had been rumbling on for a considerable period, all of which needed to be resolved before the redevelopment of the Golden Jubilee Park could go ahead. Numerous consultation exercises have taken place. Finally, we have made up our minds on how we will progress this and Alan Dymond has been appointed as the Project Manager. The next step will be to decide on the new play equipment the Council will procure to provide many years of enjoyment for our children.

This year the Council's Business Plan has been revised and refreshed. Its aim is to provide residents with a clear understanding of what the Parish Council does and what it is trying to achieve. It details what we intend to focus on over the next five years. We will use it to drive the budgeting process, plan activities for the coming year, monitor progress against key priorities and it will help us to take a planned and consistent approach to the design and delivery of the services we provide, prioritising and allocating resources and to achieving real value for money. A copy of the Business Plan and Action Plan are published on our website. They are "living documents" and as such are liable to change and be amended going forward.

For the future I believe that the Council needs to seriously consider developing a Neighbourhood Plan as this would give the local community direct power to develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood and shape the development and growth within our parish.

We have provided a regular Parish Surgery over the year in order to engage openly with local people and receive their views and feedback on village matters. Of late, the Parish Council has taken a whole new approach to the way it organises and holds Parish Surgeries by working, in Partnership, with local businesses and organisations in the village as it evolves new, effective and innovative ways of engaging and communicating with local people. We were delighted to welcome the support of two Local Bus providers, Stagecoach and Arriva, at two Parish Bus Surgeries.

The Council is investigating a proposal to widen the scope of its Newsletter to cover all aspects of village life in Saughall and to give all organisations and businesses one place to promote their interests. We need ideas and assistance to compile its contents and to bring the distribution into the digital age, via the Council website and other social media. The Council must be open and visible. Consequently, a Communications

Working Group has been established to consider this matter and make recommendations to the Council.

Last August we welcomed back PCSO Wendy Leason to our Parish she replaced PCSO Lauren Davies who was confined to desk duties due to an injury. We thank them both for the police work they have carried out over the last year in Saughall.

We continue to support local events including:

- The Music in the Park on Saturday, 3 June
- The Chester Half Marathon on Sunday, 21 May
- The Summer Play Scheme from 7 to 11 August
- Remembrance Sunday on 12 November
- The Christmas Lights Switch on

The Council relies a great deal on volunteers to assist and help run these events and we are grateful to all concerned for their support and important contributions to these excellent village occasions.

At the Annual Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils on Thursday, 20 October 2016 we moved the following Motion:

‘Many villages and areas in Cheshire and other counties too, are mobile phone signal deserts! They have serious difficulties in receiving a signal. Consequently, customers who are resident in such areas should have discounted tariffs or the providers should improve the signal.

Our economy needs good communications. Many businesses and organisations depend on mobile phones. In the 21st Century people’s expectations are high and mobile phones are a necessity.

Therefore, this meeting calls upon the Cheshire Association of Local Councils to lobby the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport along with Ofcom, the communications regulator, to carry out urgent reviews of this unacceptable situation, with the purpose of bringing about the changes required to resolve this frustrating and unacceptable situation, to the benefit of all of those people who are currently affected by poor mobile phone signals.’

The Annual Meeting was very impressed with this and Jack Hughes from Saughall, who attended as our guest, along with his partner Victoria, performed very well indeed and the Motion was carried.

On behalf of the local community the Parish Council has commented on 29 planning applications during this Municipal Year. It has made recommendations to the planning authority, Cheshire West and Chester Council and some of them have been upheld.

Our latest acquisition has been to acquire two defibrillators for the village at £950 each. One is sited at the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters and the other is at the Vernon Institute. A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to someone who is in cardiac arrest.

Defibrillators are very easy to use. They give clear spoken instructions. You don't need training to use one. If you come across someone who is not breathing or breathing erratically, the most important thing is to call 999 and start CPR to keep the blood flowing around the body. After a cardiac arrest, every minute without CPR and defibrillation reduces someone's chance of survival by 10 per cent.

Aside from all this, the year has carried on with us receiving the usual complaints regarding litter, dog fouling and parking. Please remember to clear up your litter and dog mess as well as parking sensibly when going to the shops and school or outside your house. Parking inconsiderately, blocking roads or on double yellow lines not only causes delays to buses but also to emergency services. With a little thought a lot of problems can be solved before they have even started.

We have set the Council's Budget for 2017/18 at £90,488 and this means that the Band D Council Tax will remain the same as in the previous Financial Year. Cheshire West and Chester Council has provided the parish precept required which is £62,270 along with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) grant funding of £3,189, in total £65,459.

Again I would especially like to thank all the Councillors for their massive contributions and hard work. I hope you feel we have served you well, to the best of our abilities.

I would also like to thank our Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Brian Crowe, our Internal Auditor Dave Glavin and our Responsible

Financial Officer, Graham Hudspeth for their attendance at our meetings and for their assistance.

And last but not least I would like to thank the Clerk to the Council, Shirley Hudspeth for her advice and guidance during the last few months I have been Chairman.

Councillor Andrew Warrington  
24 April 2017



## WHO'S WHO ON THE COUNCIL

### Parish Councillors

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