

Chairman's Report - Kempsey Parish Council Meeting - 12/01/2012

First of all I hope you all had an enjoyable festive season and that the coming year will be a memorable one which is certainly true as far as the Parish Council is concerned in the many challenges that lie ahead not least the forthcoming decision on the South Worcestershire Development Plan preferred options proposals which is due in February but may be deferred until later in the year due to the amount of opposition, especially from residents of Malvern Hills District Council area. We have been active liaising with several other Parish Councils in formulating a press campaign to impress on the SWDP team what a bad deal this is generally for the whole Malvern Hills region and Kempsey in particular. We will keep you updated through the hub and this newsletter of any significant developments.

At the January Parish Council meeting we agreed the budgets for 2012-13 and I am pleased to report that for the third year in a row we have maintained the precept at the same amount so there should be no significant increases, if any, to your Council Tax bill. We felt it important that in this period of austerity your council was seen to act responsibly with the public purse and thanks to prudence in the past we have been able to achieve this while utilising a small proportion of our reserves to continue with our plans for improvements within the parish. We will not be able to do as much as we would like but it is far from a make do and mend budget and hopefully you will all notice our continuing commitment to making Kempsey a better place year on year. We are also making arrangements to maximise our income from interest on deposits held and this will provide an additional source of funds in the future in addition to our other commercial rents and wayleaves.

Speeding through the village and outlying hamlets is a continual problem and recent police activity netted several offenders which has led the council to consider discussing with adjoining parishes the merits of purchasing illuminated speed warning signs. These signs do have the benefit of reminding drivers visibly of their speed and they also record the number of incidents which cause the sign to trigger which would provide valuable data that would enable the police to target specific hotspots with their enforcement equipment.

We recently carried out a leafletting campaign to remind dog owners of their responsibility of clearing up after their pets and utilising the dog bins provided. We have had some criticism from some residents who may believe they had been specifically targeted but this is to reassure you that this was delivered to all households as a general reminder because of the continuing complains we have from residents about dog fouling. Despite what has been said we are not obsessed with dog mess but we are obliged to remind parishioners of their community responsibility regarding their pets in light of the amount of complaints we receive.

In preparation for any wintry weather that may come our way we have provided additional grit bins at locations in Kerswell Green and Plovers Rise. If parishioners feel that grit bins are needed in their particular areas then please have a word with any councillor or the Parish Clerk.

The kitchenette area at the Community Centre is now finished and has the benefit of crockery, kettles, a fridge and microwave for the benefit of all those groups who use Room 1 for meetings and activities.

Work will shortly commence on extending the corral on Ashmoor Common. This will allow graziers more space in segregating livestock for all the necessary animal husbandry procedures and will encourage graziers to increase the amount of stock currently turned out as part of our ongoing strategy to improve the common.

John Michael

Chairman