

Chairman's Report to the AGM Parish Council meeting on the 18 May 2015

In July last year we welcomed Matt Cooper onto the PC to fill the vacancy that we had had for several months. This May we did not have to have an election as there were only ten nominations. Jason Allan did not seek re-election because of work commitments and we thank him for all his hard work whilst he has been on the Council and John Sykes put his name forward for nomination, we welcome John to his first meeting as a Councillor. Steve Wilkinson retired as our Borough Councillor in May and will be greatly missed and Olivia Hunter was duly elected as his replacement as Ward Councillor, and we welcome her to our meeting tonight and in the future.

In the Autumn, the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement Scheme proposals went to The Planning Inspectorate and were subsequently approved, with the Secretary of State for Transport giving the go ahead in September. Work commenced in November and will take two and half years to complete. Although the scheme does not go through High Legh, our consultation response has I think ensured that there will be minimal disruption to High Legh, both during the construction period and after its completion. The contractors, Costains visit our meetings to keep us informed of its progress and to answer queries. They are seeking projects in High Legh and other Parishes affected by the scheme that they can assist with that can use their skills and resources. Keeping on the highways theme, we have seen the introduction of a new speed limit on the A50, something the PC has been asking for over many years and we shall shortly see the introduction of a Weight Limit on Swineyard Lane and Heath Lane.

Other improvements in the Parish have seen the provision of a Defibrillator at the Village Hall, the levelling of the footballing area and the installation of Trim Trail equipment on the Belfry field. The Village Appearance Group are to be congratulated on completing the Woodland Walk, now named in honour of Mr and Mrs McKeown. The lease between the Bowling Club and the PC has been extended to 2039 and our congratulations go to High Legh Community Transport for being successful in obtaining funding from the Department of Transport.

Parish Councillors and others continue to work on the Neighbourhood Plan, progress has been steady on this important document but that is not through any fault of the PC.

The Garden Waste Collection Shutdown Consultation has resulted in a shorter period during the Winter months when there is no Collection. There have been two major planning applications approved, the former electricity store on West Lane has approval for ten houses on the same footprint and approval was granted for an underground car storage on the disused Appleton Airfield, which was HMS Blackcap, with the removal of the Permitted Development Rights on the main runway and taxiways being an important issue. Also just outside our boundary The Cheshire Fire Service got approval for a state of the art Fire station with training and teaching facilities on the Old Poplar truck stop site. And finally in the New Year, the much loved Blasted Oak in Broad Oak Lane was felled by Cheshire East contractors, doing more than they were instructed to do and without consultation. A meeting between Parish Council representatives and Cheshire East and their contractor has resulted in there being no cost to the PC in having it re-erected by Mike Ellison's Cheshire Woodlands.