

## **STRETTON ON DUNSMORE PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 2018**

It has been an unsettled year with the untimely death of Councillor Robert Stephens, and retirement of long standing councillor and Chairman John Simmonds. However through the statutory electoral process we welcome two new Parish Councillors; Sarah Gambling and Chris Burton.

I thank all councillors for their support and dedication throughout the year and would like to especially thank Helen Stewart, our Clerk, for the dedication that she puts into her job and her ceaseless attention to detail which enables us to function as a cohesive unit. Special mention also to Mark Cooper the village handyman who will be found tending verges and the brook most days of the week and almost certainly in excess of the hours we see on his timesheet.

There is much to report this year; from administrative changes where our banking, payroll, tax and NI are now all online, Councillors, Clerk and Handyman have all undertaken training to keep skills current and legal, and we have put new procedures and policies in place to reflect the openness of governance that is now required of a modern Parish Council.

Despite the increasing cut backs in Borough and County Council funded services, and no increase in the Parish Council precept, the Parish Budget is healthy allowing us to maintain the existing infrastructure and to make modest additions or replacements including bus shelter structural repairs, the addition of new grit bins, dog poo bins and waste bins at the village hall, cleaning of the war memorial, additional Christmas lights and additional fencing at Plott Lane park, repairs to skateboard equipment, a new basketball hoop and pavilion improvements

The Parish Council have introduced a Small Grants Policy, in order that it can contribute to groups and organisations within Stretton on Dunsmore which benefit the community. So far this year it has awarded grants to the Village Hall, the Scouts and All Saints Church (for the upkeep of the churchyard and refurbishment in the bell tower) We have also strengthened our support for primary age swimming by funding the teaching programme through Knightlow School.

The Parish Council have supported or actioned a number of community initiatives including the annual litter pick, additional grass cutting, an active speed awareness group, first aid training to back up the deployment of de-fibrilators, allotment management and we have welcomed a new resident football team to the Fosse way playing field,

Whilst the Parish Council has no remit for planning or policy we do canvass on behalf of the village providing robust responses to planning matters specifically the Local Minerals Plan and the 5 year Rugby Local Plan. The 2028/19 year will see further developments in the Borough and County plans and we will continue to represent the local view.

*Delivered to the Stretton on Dunsmore Parish Council Annual General Meeting, May 14<sup>th</sup> 2018*  
*Paul Gordon*  
*Chair*