

# Keyworth Parish Council

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016/17 Plans/Priorities for 2017/18

### Council Members

- At the time of my last report, the Parish Council had sixteen members with one outstanding vacancy. This was subsequently filled by co-option, as was a subsequent vacancy, but Cllr Neil Pinder decided to stand down with effect from the end of March, so that leaves another vacancy to fill. Fortunately, Neil has agreed to continue as manager of Keyworth Meadow Nature Reserve. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Neil for all his sterling work on the Parish Council over the years.

### Council Staff

- At the time of writing, the Council employs seven staff, all part-time, including Clerk to the Council, Facilities Manager, Admin Assistant, Bookings Clerk, cleaner and handyman. It should be borne in mind, however, that the total basic hours worked by these staff equates to the hours worked by less than three full-time staff.
- One recent change is that Steve Mottishaw took over as Facilities Manager in November following the retirement of Brian Cullen. Steve's role is to oversee the maintenance, administration and improvement of Parish Council facilities (see below), so he's the man to contact if there are problems.
- Another change in the offing is that Debbie Cooke will take over as Clerk to the Council/Proper Officer with effect from 1st May, but the financial side of the Clerk's duties will continue to be taken care of by the previous Clerk, Neil Grocock whose job title will be Finance Officer. Spreading the workload along those lines will enable Neil to reduce his hours, but will also make the Council much less reliant on one particular person.

### Council Facilities

- The Council owns, or is responsible for:
  - The Village Hall complex – including the Village Hall, Centenary Lounge and Feignies Room
  - Rectory field
  - Keyworth Activity Park
  - Rectory field Pavilion and Changing Rooms (occupied by Keyworth Table Tennis Club and Transition Keyworth/Abundance respectively)
  - Memorial Gates
  - Wysall Lane Burial Ground
  - Nottingham Road Play Area (leased from Notts County Council)
  - Platt Lane Skatepark (leased from the Natural Environment Research Council)
  - Keyworth Meadow (managed by the Nature Reserve Management Group)
  - Keyworth Bowls Club – clubhouse and green (managed by the club)
  - Keyworth Tennis Club – clubhouse and courts (managed by the club)

The clubhouse and tennis courts have now been leased to Keyworth Tennis Club, and similar leases are being arranged for Keyworth Table Tennis Club and Keyworth Bowls Club.

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## Village Hall Complex

- During the early part of 2017, the Village Hall kitchen underwent a complete refurbishment. This inevitably caused a certain amount of disruption, but I hope everyone will agree that the new-look kitchen is a great improvement.
- Quotations are currently being obtained for replacement of the carpet in the Centenary Lounge.
- The Council has budgeted for installation of a drainage system in the Village Hall car park in 2017/18, to reduce the risk of flooding on Elm Avenue.
- The Council's Facilities committee has agreed that there will be no increase in hire fees for the Village Hall complex in 2017/18.

## Platt Lane Skatepark

- Low level solar lighting has been installed at the Skatepark, financed by a grant from the Big Lottery fund; many thanks to Cllr Tony Wells for his efforts in this respect.

## Rectory Field

- The Keyworth Show will, as usual, take place on the Rectory field in July and, at the time of writing, it looks likely that there will be a circus in June. I know that many people have reservations about the involvement of animals in circuses, but I've been assured that this particular circus restricts itself to horses and ducks as 'petting' animals only. Look out for further details in due course.

## Wysall Lane Burial Ground

- Tenders for the extension of the Burial Ground were invited early in 2017, and a tender was accepted at the Full Council meeting in March. Work should commence in the near future.
- A new feature at the Burial Ground is the Memorial Garden, completed in March.

## Activity Park

- I am sure many will have taken advantage of this great new facility which was completed and opened last summer. The park was built at no cost to the Parish Council due to donations by Sport England, WREN and Rushcliffe Borough Council, plus a lot of hard work by both members of the public and Councillors. I would like to thank all concerned for the hard work put in to bring the Activity park idea to fruition. There have been a few teething problems which are in the process of being addressed. Unfortunately, there have also been a few cases of mindless vandalism.

## Support for Local Organisations

- The Council continued in 2016/17 to provide financial assistance to:
  - Platt Lane Joint Management Committee (the Council has a one-third financial interest in the facilities at Platt Lane)
  - Keyworth Bowls Club
  - Keyworth Tennis Club
  - Keyworth & District Community Concern
  - Keyworth Conservation Area Advisory Group

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- The Council also made donations to Keyworth & District Twinning Association and RH Cadet Corps of Drums, and continued to make its premises available at concessionary rates, and in many cases free of charge, for various community events and services such as:
  - Weekly Borough/County Council contact point – Friday mornings in the Centenary Lounge
  - Keyworth Advice Centre – Tuesday afternoons in the Feignies Room
  - Centenary Lounge coffee mornings
  - Keyworth Show
  - Village Quiz

### Parish Council Events/Seasonal Activities

- During the past twelve months, the Council has organised &/or sponsored the following events and activities:
  - Queen's 90th Birthday celebration on 16th July.
  - Activity Park opening ceremony (see above).
  - Christmas Lights: fifty-eight trees with lights at various locations around the village; thank you to the local businesses which once again contributed towards the cost.
  - Charities' Christmas Event in the Village Hall on 19th November; many thanks to everyone who helped out.
  - Annual Christmas Card Competition, with entries from Keyworth Primary & Nursery School, Crossdale Busy Bees and Willow Brook Primary School.
  - Hanging Baskets: some sixty in total during the summer months; again, thank you to the businesses which made a contribution.
  - Annual Parish Dinner, Parish Council Reception, and Parish Service.
  - Keyworth Quiz (January to March) – sponsored by the Council; congratulations to the winners, South Wolds Staff, and also to the organisers for once again making the quiz (in its 42nd year) such a success. Results and reports can be found on the Parish Council website: [www.keyworthparishcouncil.org/keyworth-quiz](http://www.keyworthparishcouncil.org/keyworth-quiz).

### Publicity/Information

- The Council website ([www.keyworthparishcouncil.org](http://www.keyworthparishcouncil.org)) continues to be updated on a regular basis, and is well worth a visit for anyone who wants to stay abreast of what's happening.
- We also keep residents informed through news items and the Keyworth Diary in the Keyworth News, distribution of which, to all households in Keyworth, is financed by the Council. (The Keyworth Diary can also be found on the Council website.)
- The Online Keyworth Guide, which can be found on the Council website, is a useful source of information about local organisations, although we are reliant on the relevant organisations to provide us with updates.
- This year's Annual Parish Meeting was publicised by means of a full-page advertisement in the April edition of the Keyworth News, and also on the Council website.

### Finance

- At the time of writing, the Council's accounts for 2016/17 are yet to be finalised, but interim figures suggest that the budget has been more or less fully utilised.
- The Council reviewed its reserves policy, as usual, in January. On the face of it, the level of the Council's uncommitted reserves (reserves not earmarked to fund specific commitments or long-

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term development plans) might seem high, but it should be borne in mind that the Council owns, and is responsible for maintaining, fixed assets valued in excess of £1 million, and it follows that it needs to set aside substantial funds for emergency/contingency purposes.

- As for 2017/18, the Council set its precept at such a level as to only marginally increase (by 38p per year for a Band D property) the Parish Council portion of the council tax.

## Planning

- The Council's Planning committee has had another busy year: there were thirteen Planning meetings in 2016/17, at which the committee considered eighty-three planning applications, some straightforward, but some not.
- It's important to bear in mind that it's the Borough Council which makes the final decisions on planning applications, but the Planning committee submits comments and recommendations, having taken on board the views of members of the public who often attend its meetings.

## Neighbourhood Plan

- The Neighbourhood Plan was completed and adopted by the Parish Council last autumn, the preferred sites for housing development being, land North of Bunny Lane, rear of Nicker Hill and off Platt lane. The plan has been submitted to Rushcliffe Borough Council who are considering it; the next stages are a short public consultation before it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and, if agreed by the inspectorate, a public referendum will be held so that the people of Keyworth can vote on it.

## Other Issues

- As I reported last year, the Parish Council had approved in principle proposals for "a new charity organisation to be created to take on the ownership and management of the [sports facilities at Platt Lane] to reflect current usage and to promote and develop future sporting and recreational use of the site". This, we understand, would involve freehold ownership of the site, in which the Parish Council has a one-third financial interest, being transferred from the County Council to a new charity organisation. The Parish Council agreed that the County Council should explore this option and, at the time of writing, is still awaiting news of further developments.

## Plans and Priorities for 2017/18

- Most of the activities and many of the issues outlined above will, of course, be high on the Council's list of priorities again in 2017/18.

In my view, the Parish Council's most important priorities in 2017/18 will be:

- Progressing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Completing the extension of the Burial Ground.
- Installing Village Hall car park drainage.
- Completing legal formalities for Bowls Club and Rectory field pavilion leases.
- Considering developments in respect of the sports facilities at Platt Lane.

**Tony Grice**  
**Chairman**  
31.3.17