

Lane End Parish
Annual Parish Meeting
Chairman's Report

Introduction :

The last year has been a particular busy year for the Parish Council and throughout the year the burden on members of Council has been considerable. In addition to undertaking the normal routine business of Council, considerable time and effort has been expended on a number of important issues which have emerged during the course of the year. Alongside these issues, members of Council have also been actively involved in taking forward many of the key priorities which were established in our Parish Plan. On one or two occasions, in conducting our normal business, we have even managed to set new records for the length of Parish Council meetings.

As such, I would like to record a vote of thanks to all members of Council for their considerable efforts and contribution throughout the course of this last year and also to our Clerk who has assisted and consistently supported Council in the work it has undertaken. In addition however, I would also like to express a special vote of thanks to all those parishioners who have actively engaged in the work of Council through their participation in the various working groups associated with the Parish Plan and through their direct contribution to specific Council activities and projects.

During the course of the year, the Council has seen a number of changes and, as a new Councillor, we have been pleased to welcome :

- Bill Dunn

Regrettably we have also seen some departures from Council and in recent weeks a number of long standing Councillors, for reasons which are completely unconnected, have decided that it was time for them to stand down. As we move into the new year therefore we will have lost or will be losing :

- Susan Wright
- Simeon Achurch
- Ann Fitzpatrick
- Clive Lumbers

All of these Councillors have made an invaluable contribution to the work of Council and many have served on Council for a considerable number of years. As such, and on behalf of the whole Council, I would like to record a vote of thanks to each of them for the time they have given up, the effort they have expended and the individual contributions they have all made to the work of Council over the past years.

Looking to the future, we now have a number of vacancies on Council and we will be seeking to fill these over the course of the coming months. With this in mind if any of our parishioners has an interest in joining the Council and contributing to the work we do in support of our local community, then I would ask them to put their name forward to our Clerk so that we can further explore the potential to make a co-option as a member of Council.

Review of 2008-09

In undertaking a review of the work of Council over the last year it is of course difficult to fully capture everything which has happened but a number of achievements do stand out as worthy of mention :

- Rural Housing Trust
 - The construction of a shared equity housing development at Chalky Fields on the Marlow Road has recently been completed. These homes have been provided for people who were able to demonstrate a long standing association with village.
 - The development was directly facilitated by the Parish Council and undertaken by the Rural Housing Trust.
- Parish Plan
 - A number of initiatives and priorities identified in the Parish Plan have been progressed and successfully taken forward during the course of the year. These are reported under a separate agenda item of the APM so will not be repeated here.
 - The Parish Plan however sets out a range of objectives and aspirations that cover a number of years and the work on pursuing these will therefore continue into next year and beyond.
- Management Plan for Moor End Common
 - The Parish Council continues to receive both a grant and direct support from Natural England in respect of the work that is being undertaken to reinstate Moor End Common in accordance with an agreed Management Plan

- As the owner of a site of special scientific interest the Parish Council will have a continuing responsibility for the upkeep of Moor End Common in future years
- Parish Council Web Site
 - The Parish Council Web Site was successfully launched in 2008 and now provides a further means on communicating to our community in Lane End
 - The Web Site will continue to be developed on an on-going basis and comments and feedback from Parishioner to support this development will continue to be welcomed
- Delegated Budget Scheme
 - The Parish Council submitted two proposals under a Delegated Budget Scheme, operated by the County Council, for a pedestrian refuge at the junction of Church Road with the Marlow Road and a pedestrian refuge along Park Lane in the vicinity of Archers Way.
 - It is understood that both these schemes have been approved and it is hope that the refuges will be provided during the course of 2009-10
- LESA Business Plan
 - The Parish Council has supported the Lane End Sports Association in producing a Business Plan for the future development of the facilities available at the recreation ground
 - The Parish Council will continue to work with LESA to take this forward
- Youth in the Community
 - The Parish Council continues to support the Oasis Project operated through the Elim Church to support youth in our community
 - The Parish Council has also commissioned, and recently received, a market research report looking at the facilities available to youth in our community and identifying new initiatives to enhance the facilities and activities available to them

In addition there are two other matters which deserve reference:

- Legal Actions
 - The Parish Council has been engaged in two legal actions relating to land ownership and the protection of parish assets
 - The first of these actions has now been successfully resolved and a final settlement reached
 - The second of these actions appears to be close to successful resolution and it is hoped that a final settlement will be shortly reached
- Parochial Church Council – Holy Trinity Church
 - During the course of the last 18 months the Parish Council has experienced difficulties in its relations with the Parochial Church Council with regard to the maintenance of the Churchyard at Holy Trinity Church
 - The Parish Council hopes that recent developments have now resolved these difficulties and that the two Councils can now once again move forward on the basis of the good relations which have always traditionally existed

Plans for 2009-10

In looking forward to 2009-10, there remain a number of important priorities which the Parish Council will be seeking to address :

- Parish Plan
 - The Parish Council will continue to take forward initiatives and priorities set out in the Parish Plan
 - Again, these will be referenced under a separate agenda item at the APM and will not therefore be repeated here
- Village Design Statement
 - The Parish Council is investigating the potential to develop a Village Design Statement which would be able to be used to support objections to inappropriate planning applications across the Parish
 - The development of such a Statement will involve a considerable amount of work and will need support from members of the community
 - A short presentation on Village Design Statements is included as a separate agenda item of the APM
- The Clarion
 - Plans are already well advanced for a major development of the Clarion
 - The revamped Clarion should hopefully appear in the autumn of 2009
- New Street Lighting

- The Parish Council has approved in principle the provision of additional street lighting to address two particular areas of concern that have been highlighted by parishioners
 - This will lead to the provision of 2/3 additional street lights along both Footpath 25 (Simmons Way to Grouse & Ale/Pond) and the section of Church Road from the village to Clinkards Place.
- Cadmore End Drainage
 - The Parish Council has approved in principle plans to address the drainage problem on the common at Cadmore End opposite Cadmore End School.
 - A consultation with the local community will now take place to progress these plans
- Traffic Calming
 - The Parish Council will continue to progress measures to reduce the levels of speeding occurring within the village generally but particularly on the Marlow Road and along The Row / Park Lane.
 - This may lead to the introduction of some traffic calming measures measures along these two roads
- Moor End Common
 - The Parish Council will have an on-going responsibility for the management of Moor End Common and will have to plan for the funding of this when the grant from Natural England eventually reduces or even ceases totally
- LESA
 - The Parish Council will continue to work with LESA in the development of its Business Plan and where possible it will also try to support LESA in taking forward its implementation
- Dog Fouling
 - The Parish Council has already taken measures to bring this problem to the attention of its community
 - Plans are now being drawn up to see whether it would be possible to provide for the installation of some additional “doggy bins” in areas that are particularly popular with dog walkers
- Best Kept Village
 - The Parish Council is hoping to enter Lane End in the “Best Kept Village” competition in 2010
 - This will be a significant undertaking requiring active support from the community if Lane End is to be a serious contender in 2010 or merely an entrant

Summary

The Parish Council is conscious of the ambitious agenda it faces in the forthcoming year and the demands that this will place on its limited resources. A number of initiatives can only be taken forward with the active engagement and support of members of the community.

With this in mind, the Parish Council would welcome further offers of support and assistance from anyone who has a particular interest in the initiatives it is seeking to take forward. Many of these initiatives arise directly from our Parish Plan and are already being actively supported by parishioners directly participating in the various working groups which have been set up. However on two new projects, the Village Design Statement and the Best Kept Village, such offers of support would be particularly welcome, and indeed vital, if they are to be progressed to a successful conclusion.

Graeme Coulter

Chairman of Lane End Parish Council