

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**BARBY & ONLEY PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMANS REPORT** Councillor Dawn Cotton

### **Barby & Onley Parish Council Annual Report**

#### **APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2019**

Dave Blezard was elected at Council Chairman in May but he has moved away from the area, so in October Dawn Cotton was elected as Chairman and Paul Reynolds became Vice-Chairman.

James Wood from Onley Grounds joined the Council to fill the vacant seat left by Howard Vale. There is currently a full compliment of 11 councillors who have another year to serve of their term before the next Parish Council elections which will take place in 2020.

Councillor Nigel Gove acts as Internal Financial Controller and has kept a close eye on the Parish finances checking all payments against invoices each month and providing help with the budget.

The Parish Council has increased its funding by 4.7%. The estimated spending for 2019/20 is £53,330 therefore, the Parish Council requested £2,511 more than last year to be collected via the Council Tax.

During the current financial year 2018/19 the Parish Council has had the surface of Barby Tennis Court painted and lined. We have secured a Grant of £1000 from Tesco towards Outdoor Fitness Equipment for Barby Play Area. We also secured a £10,000 Lottery Grant which has enabled us to install new Play Equipment at Barby and to top up the safety surfacing.

Parish Councils act as Consultees on Planning Applications within the parish, and over the year, we have been consulted on 33 planning applications. The final decision on planning is made by Daventry District Council.

We have also been successful in securing a District Council grant which will allow us to install Outdoor Fitness Equipment at both Barby and Onley soon.

Despite a huge hike in the cost of Electricity supply the LED street lighting upgrade carried out last year has helped to offset the increases. We have also installed a power supply on Barby village green, and hope to be able to have better lights for the Christmas tree using the power. The Parish Council will be installing 4 more street lights in particularly dark areas of the village very shortly. These are on order and we are awaiting an installation date.

Onley has had a new Notice Board and a Commemorate WW1 bench seat installed and repairs carried out to the fence around the play area.

The threat of a huge housing development at Lodge Farm, off A45 opposite Onley Park was fought and has been removed from Rugbys Development plans.

Sadly Onley Youth Club folded in September and the Parish Council have decided that there are insufficient youngsters at Onley wanting to attend to make it worthwhile employing a new youth worker at the current time.

We have carried out tree work around the parish, tidied up the Pocket Park next to Barby Primary School, put in a height barrier for the sports field, in partnership with Barby Townlands Charity and Barby Cricket Club, taken on ownership of 3 Grit bins which otherwise would have been removed by Northamptonshire County Council.

The Parish Council has arranged and paid for mowing of the grass verges and open space areas in the parish, and has taken on responsibility for litter picking within 30mph limits from Daventry

District Council.

Thanks to Councillor Cliff Jones for organising a Village Litter Pick in March.

We have taken part in the Police Speedwatch initiative, and after many years of campaigning managed to get visits from the Police Speed camera van to monitor traffic speeds down Daventry road. Speedwatch will take place in the village again this year starting at the end on June.

In addition we have kept up to date with all the latest legislation, and in particular had to comply with changes to the General Data Protection Regulations. We have upgraded the Council printer, and have moved to online banking.

Thanks very much to the band of hard working Councillors who make it all happen!

Thanks also to Ian Webb for his work as Newsletter and Website Editor and for the improvements that he continues to make to our website, and to the young people who deliver the newsletter to every household.

Thanks also to Dom Fisher who acts as Highway Warden on behalf of the Village. Mike Dalton who keeps the Vehicle Activated Sign charged up and Baggy who picks up lots of litter, and the footpath wardens who walk our village paths and report and repair stiles etc.

#### **PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS**

Barby & Onley Parish Council financial year ends on 31 March. Barby & Onley accounts are particularly complicated as when the village of Onley Park was transferred to the Parish by the Ministry of Justice in 2005, a lump sum of £165,185 was also provided to cover maintenance of the Open Space land. This has to be ring-fenced for that purpose. At 31 March 2019 we has £103,464 of the ring-fenced money left.

**For year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019** the parish income was made up of the Precept of £ 50,819 which is collected through the rates by Daventry District Council on behalf of the parish.

Other income of £ 25,552 came from a Grant of £ 9,980 from Awards for All, £ 11,717 VAT refund on the street light installation project which took place last year, £ 794 payment towards the cost of mowing from Northants County Council, bank interest, advertising income. This gave us a total income of £ 76,371.

#### **EXPENDITURE**

Maintenance of Onley Open Space £10,944 was paid out of ring-fenced money and covered the cost of mowing, weed-killing and tree works. All other expenditure is paid for from money raised through the rates, or from grants and referred to as general spend on the Bank Reconciliation sheet. We spent £61,727 during the year, plus £ 5,767 on repayment of the loan to cover the new street lighting. £ 5232 of this will be reclaimed from HMRC as the Parish council is able to reclaim VAT paid.

Parish Council accounts are scrutinised annually by an independent verifier who checks the figures, and also ensures that the Council is operating correctly and has the necessary policies, insurance and risk assessments in place. To ensure we comply with Governance and Accountability legislation the accounts are also reviewed annually by external auditors.