

Manley Parish Council

Chairman's Report

1st May 2024

Planning

The planning applications for traveller sites at **Pingot Lane**, the simultaneous occupation of the sites, and the subsequent refusal of planning permission continued to attract much local interest and comment. The applicants' appeal against the refusals and enforcement notices went to appeal, which were decided by public inquiry in early April. The inspector found that a key element of the decision was the inadequacy of CWaC's planning policies, in particular the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which are not helped by the recently amended definition of Gypsy and Traveller in planning terms by central government. As a result, the Inspector allowed the appeals and granted a temporary (5 year) personal planning permission to both applicants.

The next step for the Parish Council is to ensure that the conditions imposed by the Inspector are followed, and to alert CWaC Enforcement of any breaches of the conditions.

In the meantime, in view of the importance of this decision standing as a precedent in support of other similar applications both in our Ward and across the Borough, we have asked Hugo Deynem to take this up as soon as possible with the relevant policy makers in CWaC so that a robust defence can be made against harmful and inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and that planning decisions are judged fairly for all parties.

Community

The **Coronation Picnic Event** on 7th May 2023 was organised and managed by the Village Hall Committee, but as always those of us who are on the Parish Council helped out with the planning and running the event. This was a well-attended event and succeeded in bringing the community together.

The Parish Council continues to support the maintenance of the Parish Field and the Memorial Garden in the corner of the Parish Field. Work on the latter is carried out by volunteers, and we welcome all forms of community support to improve the environment.

Councillors Pam Brook, Colin Ford, and Kate Birkenhead had a meeting with CWaC's Community Orchard Team with a view to establishing one on part of the Parish Field, early next year. This is another opportunity to engage more people in our community facilities.

Thanks to support from our Ward Councillor, Hugo Deynem, the Parish Council has been the beneficiary of a grant for the improvement of community assets, and this year the Parish Council was able to contribute £700 to the funding of the replacement boiler at the Village Hall.

Safety and Security

Safety and security are always important, and the Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (formerly Homewatch) is actively seeking volunteers to coordinate **Local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes**. Each Local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is facilitated by a coordinator, whose role is to ensure that the members of the local scheme are fully linked into all methods of communication to and from the police and other community safety organisations.

If anyone would like to set up or join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme please contact cheshirewatch@cheshire.pnn.police.uk.

You can also keep to date with our local PCSO Debbie Netherton via:

Twitter: @KingsleyGowyPol

Facebook: @Kingsley-Gowy-Police-542570959475387

Email: chester.lpu@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

Debbie also holds regular drop-in surgeries around the Parishes in the Kingsley and Gowy area, and details of these are also listed on the Cheshire Police website: <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/local-policing/chester/kingsley-gowy>.

Highways

We are pleased to see that there has been some progress in improving the state of the roads, but **the poor state of the roads** remains a major concern for residents, with many roads suffering from general wear and tear, and winter potholes. This is also problem for cyclists; the roads pose a hazard for themselves and for motorists trying to overtake cyclists weaving around avoiding the potholes.

The new contractor is Colas, who are tasked with repairing potholes on a strict priority basis of existing potholes based on size and depth. This approach cannot be described as pro-active prevention. The common refrain from CWaC is that resources are limited, with the inference that this situation is not going to improve.

Notwithstanding the above repairs, it is clear that we are the victims of financial priorities and therefore we continue to adopt a strategy of reporting all incidents of road defects on a case by case basis. The Parish Council encourages everyone to download the CWaC app and report road defects whenever they see one.

Speeding is another common concern, and several neighbouring Parish Councils are using Speed Indicator Device (SID). Local residents can be trained to use and deploy these devices, as well as hand-held devices which collect speed data that the Police can use to warn, but not prosecute, motorists.

Sandstone Ward Group

Manley Parish Council was the chair and host for the Sandstone Ward's Parish Council meetings this year. This forum is an opportunity for the 6 Sandstone Ward Parish Councils to discuss common

problems and concerns and share best practice. As expected from the points raised in this report, major topics are planning, road condition, road safety, and environmental matters.

Priorities for 2023/24

Looking forward, the Council's top 5 priorities remain unchanged as:

- Providing funding and support for community events and initiatives including the Village Hall
- Reviewing planning applications as a statutory consultee and liaison with CWaC Planning
- Working with CWaC Highways to improve the state of the roads
- Completing the Parish Plan priorities (budgets permitting)
- Supporting Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch in Manley as required

And Finally

We still have a vacancy for a Councillor to bring us up the full complement of 9.

We continue to work closely with our Ward Councillor, Hugo Deynem, who represents the Sandstone Ward, (comprising Dunham Hill and Hapsford, Manley, Alvanley, Mouldsworth, Ashton Hayes with Horton cum Peel, and Kingsley). As I noted at the start of this report, Hugo has been very supportive of various community projects and events, and we are grateful to him for his advice during and outside of our meetings, and for helping us to secure funding for various projects.

I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors for their help and advice over the year, and of course their contributions at Parish Council meetings and at various times in-between.

Last, but not least, I am once again indebted to our hard-working Clerk, Gaynor, whose tight control of finance, agendas and minutes is vital to the functioning of this Council.
