

Clerks Report April 2023

Confirmation has been received from Breckland District Council that the voting in May's elections are uncontested and further confirming all 9 existing councillors will be remaining as Councillors for the forthcoming year.

National Highways have contacted me to provide an update on the junction improvement at Tuns Road and the A47. It would appear this improvement falls under a designated fund programme. This means funding is sought at each stage of the scheme. They confirmed the benefit to cost ratio value at the last stage was lower than they hoped and therefore they need additional work to be done to get funding. They concluded by confirming the works are now anticipated to commence at the back end of this summer now.

I have requested a new litter bin to be placed next to the dog poo bin at the Hale Road and Kingfisher Drive area. This is NCC owned land and therefore I have had to request permission from them to place a bin there. I sent all information required to them on 21st March and as of yet I have not had a response. I will wait until the end of the month before chasing for a decision. I have also requested the dog poo bin to be placed on Ketts Hill near the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood entrance. It seems the ownership of the preferred site cannot be established and so we are in the process of looking at moving slightly in order for it to be on Breckland land. We are just awaiting final details before proceeding with the request.

The 3 silver birch trees purchased and planted at the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood have been registered with the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. This was kindly undertaken by Necton Area Trust and means Necton are recorded as a parish that has contributed to this scheme.

The insurance renewal that forms part of this month payments was provided by our usual brokers- they specialise in Parish Council insurance policies. I can confirm that our insurance also covers the whole of the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood as an open site and also covers the natural pond that will be created there. As this site will be open shortly I ensured that this area was fully covered including public liability from its renewal in May.

The work at the play area has been completed and the surface around the zip line has been resurfaced and the zip line itself re-tensioned. At the February 2023 meeting it was agreed to transfer £2500 from the Youth and Lighting account to contribute towards the cost of the works needed and this transfer is listed on the payment lists for approval for this month. Fenland Leisure also inspected the roundabout as per our request and it appears there is an issue with the bearings. I have had a long telephone conversation with Baz from Fenland and he has confirmed that the bearings need replacing as they are worn. Unfortunately, these are not made any more and so a repair cannot be made. He has suggested a site visit with the Clerk and any Councillors to discuss options and to provide information on any equipment we may want to consider. I have therefore arranged for him to visit on Tuesday 2nd May at 10.30am.

Following the grant received from Groundworks last year which supported the Neighbourhood Plan I have completed their requested breakdown of expenditure and finalised the return. They

have confirmed this is all satisfactory and are happy the funds were spent appropriately. We spent within £1 of the grant received and therefore, there is nothing to return as the amount is so small.

The timers have now been fitted to all of our streetlights and so I will be sending off the revised information to UKPN in order for them to issue us with a new certificate I can submit to our energy supplier. They can then adjust our bills to reflect the switch off during the early hours.

All end of year accounts and paperwork have been finalised and the AGAR forms completed. Everything balances and is in order. I delivered all of the accounts and paperwork to our internal auditor last week in order for her to undertake her audit. She will also be auditing the accounts for NRCC.

I received a letter from Breckland District Council dated 28th March confirming they have received the nomination for the Windmill to be listed as an Asset of Community Value. The letter confirms that they now have 8 weeks to consider whether the property is of community value and will be in touch after the 8 weeks have passed.

Finally, I have been collecting the responses to the tennis court from the box in the shop- I plan to count them at the end of the month as agreed. This can then be on the agenda of the May meeting