

Good evening everybody, I am Jackie Fee Chairman of Chislet Parish Council and I am one of the four councillors representing Upstreet and this is Geoff Eaton our clerk.

I will now ask my fellow councillors to introduce themselves in turn together with the part of the parish they represent.

I will now ask Geoff to read the minutes from last years' meeting.

### **Chairman's Report 2022**

Firstly I would like to say a very big thank you to Mike Wilkinson who left the Parish Council this year after over twenty five years for all the hard work he and his staff at Chislet Court Farm have put in over the years to keep our parish up and running, particularly during and after bad weather, you will be sorely missed Mike.

And of course to welcome our newest councillor Mrs Sally Appleby, you have a big place to fill Sally.

### **Parish Website**

I am pleased to report that the Chislet Parish Council Facebook page administered by Cclr Prosser is almost up and running although there will be no Like or Reply feature and will be used in addition to the Parish Council website to advise parishioners of local matters

### **Planning**

There have been no major planning applications in the parish during the past year although we are in dispute with City Council over the "informal" planning permission given to the unofficial Traveller Site at Puddledock Wood.

I am not in a position to give any further details other than to say we are currently investigating the legality of the planning decisions made by the local authority.

Two further sites at Highstead and Hollow Street where illegal development appears to be taking place are still being investigated by Planning Inspectors.

No decision has yet been made on the retrospective planning application for the enlarged digestate pit in Marley Lane on the Parish boundary with Hoath following objections from both Parish Councils.

There is no further update on the proposed Solar Farm and to date no planning application has been submitted.

### **Freedom of Information Request**

During the year a parishioner has seen fit to require information readily available on line in the form of several Freedom of Information requests.

On one occasion dissatisfied with our reply we were reported for withholding information.

I can assure you that the Parish Council does not hold an off shore bank account, our total assets apart from our current account bank balance stand at the Chislet Village sign positioned outside the church, the Upstreet 'bus shelter, two defribulators, one in Upstreet and one in Chislet and the Clerk's laptop and printer.

### **Election**

For the first time in many years the council had to hold a by-election to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Cclr Wilkinson.

As there were no other elections taking place at the same time Parish Council were required to bear the full cost for running the election at nearly £2000.00 although we may have been successful in recovering some of that money by adding the item to our 2002/3 Parish Precept meaning that the cost of the election will be met by our parishioners via their community charge.

This is particularly tiresome as only about 100 voters out of a total number of 711 registered electors voted, many of them by post.

I am glad I am not one of the Polling Station staff appointed to Chislet Polling Station; it would have been a very long day

### **Proposed Parish Hall for Upstreet**

We are no further advanced with this proposal and have been informed by City Planning that the site we propose to use is unsuitable.

### **Speeding**

This is still a problem throughout the parish with parishioners regularly approaching us on the subject.

While we are hugely sympathetic to the problem we are acutely aware that both the local authority and Kent County Council have no available budget even to repair the two existing interactive speed signs, one outside the school which are currently out of order.

We are informed by both our City and County Councillors that we will in fact see a reduction in traffic calming measures in the area as existing equipment fails and is not replaced as there is no money to do so.

### **Capital projects and expenditure**

We have no large projects planned at present, particularly as the Ecclesiastical Parish is currently in an interregnum at the moment so although we have a small sum set aside to help with the cost of a new central heating boiler as the Chislet Centre is also used as a main hall by the school that is now on hold.

We have provided a second defibrillator with the help of a grant which has been positioned in the unused telephone kiosk by the school in Chislet.

Investigation is also underway to move the Upstreet defibrillator from the Royal Oak to the telephone kiosk outside the village shop in Upstreet as there are currently access and maintenance problems at its current situation.

The Upstreet 'bus shelter has been repainted and the parish noticeboard repositioned inside as the display case outside the village shop was in a bad position and needed replacing.

The noticeboard outside the church shared by the church and Parish Council has been replaced at no cost by a parishioner and two further noticeboards one at Greys and one at Boyden Gate outside the Gate Inn Public House have been decommissioned.

We have revised the grass cutting contract for next year as the Concurrent Function Grant no longer covers the full cost and with great regret decided to no longer maintain the Churchyard.

A different contractor has also been appointed who will cover the remainder of the contract at a much lower rate than the current firm.

However I would remind every one that we are not a wealthy parish, we do not have allotments or a village hall that we can rent to supplement our income.

We have the support of Rachel Carnac our Ward Councillor but we are far from Canterbury, neither are we connected to either Herne Bay or Whitstable and have few parishioners and high value properties to generate income for Canterbury City Council meaning that our value to them other than a potential development site is also small.

Year by year we see our funding grants cut until we have now reached the point where our income no longer covers our obligations which means looking into the future we will have no alternative but to reduce or completely remove some of the services we currently provide.

Thank you for coming this evening and, as I say every year you are our eyes and ears so if you see anything you think we should know about please contact any one of us by phone or our clerk via the Parish website.

These details can be found on both the Parish noticeboards, on line or in the Parish magazine.