

Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 6 May 2020

I would like to inform residents of my resignation from Nunthorpe Parish Council on 30 April 2020. I joined the Council in September 2013 and became Chair in December of that year. During my time as Chair the aim of the Council has been to enhance and maintain Nunthorpe for the benefit of the residents. I would like to thank Parish Councillors past and present for their support, enthusiasm and commitment during my term of office with Nunthorpe Parish Council.

I have to sadly report that John Harrison a long time Parish Councillor and active Nunthorpe resident has passed away. John is missed by the Parish Council and his friends and neighbours in Nunthorpe. The Council is speaking to Pauline and John's family to determine a way to recognise his work for Nunthorpe. It is also sad for me to report that Bob Mullen, Parish Council Advisor, also passed away during the year. Bob was a larger than life figure who had an inexhaustible energy and ability to write and advise the Parish Council on a wide range of Nunthorpe issues. Bob was the energy behind Nunthorpe Design Statement and a great enthusiast for environmental matters. Bob's impact is presently being missed and this will, sadly, continue for many years.

During the year, David Leyland and Dave Tate resigned from the Parish Council. David Leyland, a long standing member of the Council, made a very significant contribution to Nunthorpe affairs and represented the Parish Council, with his wife Doreen, at a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in May 2019. In response to strong representations by Dave Tate, for new equipment at the Avenue Play Park, NPC money was set aside, but in the meantime an initiative from former Councillor Lesley McGloin led to some new equipment. I would like to welcome Ros Davy to the Parish Council and wish her well in contributing to our work. Mieka Smiles rejoined the Parish Council following her election as a Ward Councillor and she is providing an invaluable link with the Executive of Middlesbrough Council. The recent appointment of Wade Tovey to the Parish Council will strengthen links with the Community Council, Middlesbrough Alternative Planning Partnership and OurGreenways. I would like to thank Jo Turner for her work on our website before resigning due to pressure of work and Angela Livingstone, our Parish Clerk, who keeps us informed and undertakes our administrative work so well.

The Parish Council has had a very active year and has kept up to date with issues that affect Nunthorpe residents. We have worked constructively with Middlesbrough Council and several meetings to put forward Nunthorpe views have been held starting with Mayor Dave Budd and more recently with the present Mayor Andy Preston. Tony Parkinson, Chief Executive, has attended these meetings and the Parish Council can now call on Tony and other senior officers to resolve outstanding issues. This dialogue has led to a better understanding by Middlesbrough Council of our problems over a wide range of matters and led to a better outcome for Nunthorpe residents. As an example of this newfound cooperation, Richard Horniman, Director of Regeneration, organised a meeting with the Parish Council and other Nunthorpe groups to discuss 'A Vision for Nunthorpe' for 18 March 2020. Although the meeting was put on hold due to coronavirus, this co-operative work is continuing and a Webex meeting will be held, with Simon Clarke MP attending too, on 12th May. The aim of this meeting – the first of a series of meetings – is for Nunthorpe residents and organisations to put forward their vision for future developments in the area. The output of these meetings will flow into our Neighbourhood Plan (see below).

I have outlined below some of the further areas of activity covered by the Parish Council in the past year:

(i) Grey Towers Farm development – this is an on-going development and is at the stage where almost 150 houses are now occupied which will trigger additional funding to the local community, the so called S106 money. Additionally, the Parish Council was disappointed when the Planning Committee approved the addition of over forty new dwellings on the site, despite Mayor Andy Preston’s moratorium on development on green land in south Middlesbrough and the Parish Council’s well-argued objection to the proposal.

(ii) The Dixons Bank / Stainton Way Highway Improvement Scheme – the Parish Council strongly objected to this development and along with residents await with interest the outcome of the “before and after” traffic analysis of the scheme. The Parish Council is pleased with the number of trees planted in the area as part of the reinstatement work, though it will be a long time before the same level of maturity is reached.

(iii) Local Plan - the Parish Council made representations on the 2018 Local Plan and we are pleased that it was withdrawn. We are now awaiting a reconsideration of the Local Plan by Middlesbrough Council, which will have a major impact on developments in Nunthorpe.

(iv) Road traffic safety – the Parish Council is taking part in an ongoing series of meetings with Middlesbrough Council with the aim of improving road safety in Nunthorpe. Concerns have been expressed regarding speeding in a wide area of Nunthorpe and car parking near our schools. We believe Middlesbrough Council has listened to our concerns as the Parish Council understands speed limit changes will shortly be adopted to cover the Dixons Bank, Poole roundabout and Nunthorpe Village areas.

(v) The green environment – the Parish Council wishes to maintain and enhance the green and leafy nature of Nunthorpe; with this in mind the Council has drawn up a Tree Policy for Nunthorpe and we expect it will be adopted by Middlesbrough Council in the near future. The formation of OurGreenways as an environmental group in Nunthorpe, and adjacent south Middlesbrough, and its links to the Parish Council, will lead to better awareness and use of our local area. The Council recently put forward objections to a possible change to a footpath within the Parish, which brings into focus the need to review all aspects of our pleasant public footpath network.

(vi) Community Centre – it became apparent during the year that there will be restricted use of The Institute as a community facility for residents and Nunthorpe groups. Nunthorpe Parish Council is aware of this loss to the community and is working with other groups to find an alternative location. The need for a Community Centre in Nunthorpe will be an important part of ‘A Vision for Nunthorpe’ discussions.

(vii) Neighbourhood Plan - the Parish Council has started to work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Nunthorpe. This is a Plan, with a legal basis, carried out by the Parish Council in conjunction with Middlesbrough Council. It requires considerable input from residents and organised Nunthorpe groups and we are developing arrangements to do this, building on our experience of surveying residents (and publishing results to all) of their important issues. When completed the Neighbourhood Plan will enable the community to influence how Nunthorpe will be developed in the future. It is estimated that the Plan will take about two years to complete and supplement the Nunthorpe Design Statement, completed by the Parish Council some time ago.

(viii) Planning - the Parish Council is consulted by Middlesbrough Council on planning proposals in Nunthorpe and comments on these proposals on behalf of Nunthorpe residents. We also seek to

influence planning issues in neighbouring areas which will have an impact on the lives and infrastructure of Nunthorpe.

(ix) Covid Virus - NPC members created a volunteer scheme to help those self-isolating during the virus crisis, with food and medicines delivery, as well as phone calls for support. A leaflet was produced and delivered to all the homes in Nunthorpe, with the NPC covering the costs of the leaflet and delivery. Some 30 plus volunteers have been recruited to date, and already several dozen 'tasks' have been carried out by willing helpful volunteers. The scheme has been set up carefully with protections and safety in mind.

The Parish Council has regularly been involved (as evidenced in our Minutes of our monthly meetings) in many issues. These include; Nunthorpe Grange, the Doctors Surgery, the Avenue Playpark, tree planting, speed limits, and parking on grass verges.

[Note Parish Councils are required only to have 4 meetings per year, and NPC has 11 per year. There has been a great deal of work outside of these meetings with hundreds of emails and correspondence, with a pre meeting for the Chair and the Parish Clerk, oversight of finances and planning, representations and attendance at other events, the NMPFA and more being part of the Chairman's duties].

The Parish Council has once again supported a number of Nunthorpe groups with grants; these include; Nunthorpe and Marton Knitters, Friends of Chandlers Ridge, OurGreenways and Nunthorpe and Marton PFA, and has set aside money for Nunthorpe in Bloom. The Parish Council Summer Silverwood Band event was again a success. Of particular note, though, is the development during the year of an increasingly close relationship between the CC and NPC, which now extends well beyond the allocation of grants towards fireworks and a series of social events. Considerable credit for this must go to Pete Spaldin, who unfortunately found the role of Chair became incompatible with changing work commitments.

Again, I would like to thank the present Councillors for their support during my time as Chair and wish the Parish Council every success in the future.

Ken Tomlinson