

## **Ward Councillor Report to Nunthorpe Parish Council - September 2023**

### **1. COUNCIL ACTIVITIES.**

#### **1.1. Council Meetings**

There have been no meetings of the full Council since my previous report. However, there will be a meeting on Monday 18th September, the day before the Parish Council meeting. The agenda includes the most recent critical report from the Council's auditors, with responses required on the financial prospects for Middlesbrough Council and the need for cultural change. One of the actions required is a revised Council Constitution, approval of which is also on the agenda, and I have submitted some feedback on the draft Constitution to the Director of Legal and Governance Services. There is a proposal to increase the allowances of Councillors, which I intend to oppose. I have also given notice that I wish to ask a question about excessive delays in completing mechanical repairs, which have had a significant impact on Nunthorpe residents over the summer.

#### **1.2. Planning Committee**

In line with representations from residents and the view of the Parish Council, I informed the Planning Committee that I would oppose erection of exercise equipment so close to the pathway between The Resolution and the shops in The Avenue, and therefore I would not sit on the Committee for consideration of this item. In fact the proposal was sent back for further consultation before I had the chance to make my speech. The only other item on the agenda was construction of a Lidl store on the site of the former School of Arts in Linthorpe, but the decision on this was also deferred.

#### **1.3 Overview and Scrutiny Board.**

At a meeting of this Board, Members were reminded that the first stage of the review of Middlesbrough's ward boundaries is making a recommendation on the total number of Councillors required. Once this has been decided, there will be an opportunity for all interested parties to make representations about where the ward boundary lines should be drawn. So soon after the boundary alterations for Nunthorpe were agreed, the process has begun again, and if the Parish Council still thinks that the current boundary is drawn appropriately, the case will need to be made one more time.

#### **1.4. Nunthorpe and Marton Playing Fields Association.**

Although I was appointed as one of Middlesbrough Council's two representatives on the NMPFA Management Committee, I have not yet been invited to a meeting.

## **2. NUNTHORPE DEVELOPMENTS**

### **2.1. Public Rights of Way in Nunthorpe Village.**

There have been no developments since my previous report.

### **2.2. Bus Timetables.**

The period of me lobbying hard against Arriva's proposed timetable changes concluded with preservation of the bus connection to Nunthorpe Village.

### **2.3. Grey Towers Village**

The site visit to review the unfinished state of the public areas took place as planned, but we still await a response from Middlesbrough Council's offer to act as intermediaries with the developers. Meanwhile residents from two other parts of Grey Towers Village drew my attention to their difficulties getting the developers to resolve their issues, which has also necessitated me liaising between residents and Middlesbrough Council Officers.

### **2.4. Speeding.**

Our lobbying for prioritisation of expenditure on traffic projects agreed between Middlesbrough Council and Nunthorpe representatives has not yet been successful. Funding saved from replacing speed cushions on Clevegate with flashing warning signs will not be allocated elsewhere in Nunthorpe, and the comprehensive redesign of the junction at Stainton Way / Gypsy Lane is progressing largely as initially proposed by Officers, despite our case for diverting part of this funding for arguably higher priorities.

### **2.5. Parking.**

Inconsiderate and/or illegal parking near schools continues to be a concern which I will be taking up again with the PCSO now that the new term has begun.

### **2.6. Anti-Social Behaviour**

Some instances of ASB have taken place, which have been reported to the PCSO and Middlesbrough Council's Community Safety Team. A positive development is the demolition of the Farmhouse on the Nunthorpe bypass, which has recently been a magnet for anti-social behaviour.

### **2.7. Area Care**

During the summer, I have been pressing Council Officers and the relevant Executive Member to resolve the problems faced across Nunthorpe relating to grass-cutting, emptying of green bins, emptying of bins in public areas, and controlling dangerous ragwort on Council land. All have been attributed to the failure at the same time of several vehicles and/or items of equipment, taking many weeks to repair. I will provide an update at the Parish Council meeting.

### **2.8. Pavements**

When Council Officers were tardy with providing a response about the concerns of pedestrians walking along Guisborough and Stokesley Road, I asked the Mayor to take a look for himself, which I hope will lead to action.

## **2.9. Nunthorpe Grange Development**

Using my Facebook page, I alerted residents to the unexpected proposed sale of Council land at the part of Nunthorpe Grange closest to the Poole roundabout. It seems that the location of the site being negotiated between Middlesbrough Council and the Plymouth Brethren Church has changed from the previous plan to construct a Church on Church Lane. Clearly the Parish Council will need to take a position in due course on whatever proposals are submitted to the Planning Committee, but meanwhile the Parish Council may wish to consider the implications of the change for the Nunthorpe Neighbourhood Plan

## **3. INDIVIDUAL CASE-WORK - *where relatively few residents report an issue.***

### **3.1. Barking**

Most of the residents previously suffering sleep-disturbance have reported a lower level of barking, although some problems remain. Council Officers have reiterated to me that they will provide noise-monitoring equipment as an alternative to asking residents to keep diaries of incidents of disturbance.

### **3.2. Road safety**

In addition to the issues mentioned in 2.4 and 2.5 above, residents have contacted me about road safety at the junctions of Guisborough Road / Stokesley Road and Guisborough Road / Brass Castle Lane. I undertook to raise these with the Parish Council to determine the best way forward.

### **3.3. Wildlife**

I have interceded in attempts to achieve compromises between the Council, residents wanting to control the growth of bushes / undergrowth, and residents wanting to protect wildlife - particularly the habitats of hedgehogs and the natural food supplies of birds.

## **4. OTHER NUNTHORPE ACTIVITIES.**

### **4.1. Nunthorpe Institute**

I was sorry to play a small part in helping to pack up the equipment of the Nunthorpe Institute as we paused offering a community facility after more than 100 years of service by the Institute, first at Connaught Road and latterly at premises shared with the Academy at The Avenue. We are particularly grateful to Rosemary Billington for her dedication in supporting the Institute over many years.

### **4.2. OurGreenways.**

After marking the successful development of Triangle Wood with the opening by the Mayor, I look forward to attending a meeting of ourGreenways on 27th September to plan the next stage of development.