

**Ward Councillor Report (4th Report)  
for the meeting of Nunthorpe Parish Council on 16th January 2024**

**1. COUNCIL ACTIVITIES**

**1.1. Council Meetings**

- Since my previous report to the Parish Council (written on 19th November 2023 and presented on 21st November), there has been one meeting of Middlesbrough Council on 29th November. At this meeting, I challenged the inclusion of **Muirfield Park** on the list of assets to be made available for disposal as a housing development site, and I asked the Executive Member for Regeneration (Theo Furness) to visit Nunthorpe to see for himself why such a sale would be a significant loss for the community. Although he initially declined, immediately after the Council meeting I persuaded him to visit Muirfield Park. (The Parish Council is aware of the frenetic activity which followed, in our attempt to forestall the zoning of Muirfield Park for housing within the first draft of the Local Plan, which was, at the time, scheduled to be published on 20th December. Briefings of neighbours, an Emergency Meeting of the Parish Council, a petition of residents, radio interviews, and then the visit by Theo Furness, resulted in an announcement that Muirfield Park would not be zoned for housing after all.)

**1.2. Planning Committee**

- The only meeting of the Planning Committee since my last report took place on 11th January, when the main item on the agenda was an application for additional class-rooms at **Chandlers Ridge School**. A decision was deferred, by unanimous vote, in the hope that a representative of the School could attend the Planning Committee and provide some information about how a “Green Travel Plan” would help to alleviate the congestion problems experienced by residents at peak hours - a problem which was likely to be exacerbated by the proposed construction of the two additional classrooms on the current location of some staff car-parking spaces.
- The twice-deferred application to provide additional equipment at the **play-park on the Avenue** has made little progress, but I have been promised a drawing indicating where additional lamp columns might be placed. (My report in November referred to this as “Option 3”). When this drawing is received, I will consult with the Police, the Parish Council, and local residents.
- Construction in **Grey Towers Village** continues at speed. I received a report on “Housing Growth Expectations in 2023/24 and Future Years”, which records the Council’s assumption that 68 houses will be completed in Grey Towers Village during 2023/24, to be followed by 57 in 2024/25, 35 in 2025/26, and 6 in 2026/27. I have continued to support residents in their efforts to obtain progress from David Wilson Homes and Barretts towards completion of the public open spaces in line with the completion of house-building. Meanwhile, although the Parish Council Chair and I persuaded the Planning Committee to reject the application to construct eight houses partly in the Conservation Zone adjacent to Grey Towers Farm, an appeal has been launched by the applicant.

### 1.3. Overview and Scrutiny Board.

- Presentations to the Scrutiny Board in recent months have focussed on the Council's **Budget** and related issues. In addition to detailed presentations on the Council's poor financial situation, we saw a draft "Council Plan" for 2024 and beyond, which could provide the framework for the Local Plan and other strategic documents - but everything depends on setting a balanced budget for 2024/25.
- Using my Facebook page, **Morgan McClintock - Nunthorpe Councillor**, I informed residents where details about budget proposals are available, encouraged them to attend consultation meetings, and invited them to provide feedback to the Council and to me.

### 1.4. Executive.

- I attended an Executive meeting on 20th December to register concern that Councillors other than Executive Members were being excluded while Members considered a valuation report on **Nunthorpe Grange**. This agenda item seemed to suggest that the sale of the Council's land in Nunthorpe might be imminent. However, I was informed that presentation of updated valuation reports are always considered in private because they entail estimates which have potential commercial sensitivity. An undertaking was given to me that a range of Nunthorpe representatives will soon be invited to participate in a review of the Nunthorpe Grange Masterplan. My expectation is that this will resume the sort of dialogue which previously took place under the Nunthorpe Vision umbrella, ie discussion on the optimal locations for roads, parks, and houses.

### 1.5. Nunthorpe and Marton Playing Fields Association

- I have nothing to add since my previous report.

## 2. NUNTHORPE DEVELOPMENTS

### 2.1. Nunthorpe Community Centre.

- The numerous budget briefings of Councillors by the Executive provided me with opportunities to regularly ask questions about the preservation of funding for construction of the Nunthorpe Community Centre. My perseverance was acknowledged in two reassuring emails just before Christmas, with a detailed project timeline attached. In accordance with this timeline, I received a diagram on 11th January presenting a **layout for the Community Centre** which the Council believes is affordable. Unfortunately, due to the impact of inflation during two years of delay, the building will be smaller than previously envisaged.

### 2.2. Public Rights of Way and Footpaths.

- The **footpath on Guisborough Road** between Stokesley Road and The Avenue has prompted more complaints to me than any other single issue, and consequently I have been raising it constantly at the Council. This week, I was delighted to receive an email informing me that some residents of Guisborough Road have been asked to cut their hedges back to the boundary by the end of February 2024, facilitating resurfacing of the footpath in April / May.

### 2.3. Speeding.

- Although I received confirmation from Cleveland Police on two occasions that a “**speed-watch**” exercise would take place on Stokesley Road and The Avenue before Christmas, unfortunately serious incidents elsewhere meant that Officers were diverted at the last minute, and therefore these plans were deferred until 2024.

### 2.4. Traffic and related infrastructure issues.

- So many traffic-related concerns were brought to my attention towards the end of 2023 that I compiled a **report** for the relevant Council Manager. My report and his response are being presented to the Parish Council meeting on 16th January, in the hope that we can reach agreement on potential ways forward, either in the short-term or via inclusion in the Nunthorpe Neighbourhood Plan, on the following -

- (1) Nunthorpe Oaks Junction
- (2) Junction of The Avenue and Marton Moor Road
- (3) Junctions of Clevegate and Mallowdale
- (4) Chandlers Ridge School
- (5) The Avenue School
- (6) Guisborough Road and Stokesley Road - Pedestrian Crossings
- (7) The Avenue between Stainton Way and Connaught Road
- (8) Bus Passenger Support

### 2.5. Area Care

- The complaint which I made during the September Council meeting about poor communications between Council and Councillors has resulted in the establishment of a **monthly drop-in** offered by the Director of Environmental Services. I attended the first two of these sessions, on 4th December and 8th January, enabling me to follow-up specific problems faced by residents.
- I raised with the Director of Environmental Services on 8th January the concerns of some residents about the prolonged unavailability of the Council’s “**bulky goods disposal service**”. I am informed that this was caused by vehicle mechanical issues similar to those which plagued Nunthorpe last summer. I am assured that this should soon be resolved, but I asked for improved publicity on when the service will be resumed.
- Complaints about the lack of Council funding to provide **dog-waste bins** at some locations in Nunthorpe has prompted me to propose a possible way forward to the January meeting of the Parish Council.

### 2.6. Anti-Social Behaviour.

- As noted above under 1.2., my priority has been to find a way to ensure that residents of all ages feel comfortable in **The Avenue Park**. I raised this in November at the first meeting convened by our local Sergeant for the six Councillors from Nunthorpe and Marton. Then, on 15th December, I attended the inaugural meeting of the South Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Action Partnership. This forum enables the Councillors of all Wards in South Middlesbrough to raise with the Police and with Middlesbrough Council Officers their concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour, and I stressed that the relatively low levels of crime and ASB in Nunthorpe did not justify a lack of attention to the real issues present within our community.

### **3. OTHER ACTIVITIES**

#### **3.1. Nunthorpe Community**

- I have written contributions for Greater Nunthorpe News, and have been pleased to attend various community events in Nunthorpe, including the Christmas Fairs at St. Mary's and at the Methodist Church.

#### **3.2. Ward Surgeries**

- Monthly drop-in opportunities, shared with the Chair and/or Deputy Chair of the Parish Council, have continued to be offered, enabling residents to raise issues which are more appropriate for face-to-face conversation than a written communication. Most emails during the two-month period since the previous report have been on the topics identified above (in Sections 1 and 2), but some correspondence has raised individual concerns about which I have tried to intercede with Council Officers.

#### **3.3. Frustrations**

- After 6 months as a Councillor, I asked for the opportunity of a meeting with the Mayor, the Executive Member with responsibility for Governance, and the Director of Legal and Governance Services. This meeting on 13th December enabled me to outline a list of the hurdles I have encountered when attempting to represent the residents of Nunthorpe. A follow-up meeting in six months has been agreed, when I will present my evaluation of the extent to which my current frustrations have been resolved.

Councillor Morgan McClintock

13th January 2024.