

# Kelvedon Parish Council

## ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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### Chairman's Report

And so we reach the end of another year in the life of KPC. I think it can probably be best summed up as a year of drowning in paper. At this stage I really must pay tribute to Pippa and Sue, in particular, for their enormous hard work and dedication in keeping the wheels on the bus and still turning. They have, too, been very ably assisted by my fellow Councillors. Their expertise in a range of diverse matters has been very evident and has greatly contributed to the work that has been done through the year.

### Finance

No annual report would be the same without a mention of finances. All councils, at whatever level, are being required to provide ever more services and facilities with ever decreasing amounts of money from London. KPC is absolutely no exception. You will not have failed to notice that your council tax has had to rise yet again. Believe me, KPC does its level best to keep increases to a minimum and in an ideal world increases would not be necessary. But that happy world ceased to exist quite some time back. True, the council does have reserves, but they are only really a sticking plaster. Once they are gone, they are gone and in any event all councils have to keep certain levels of reserve intact. That leaves a difficult choice – increase council tax or cut down on what the council does. The classic 'between a rock and a hard place' scenario.

### Planning

Potential development (housing in particular), continues to dominate the planning agenda. We know that there is outline planning permission for the land off Coggeshall Road behind the station and we will anticipate a more detailed application in the fullness of time. As you will be aware, there are a number of significant issues which need to be addressed with this site, not least traffic using Station Road, inadequate footpaths, unsuitable access across the railway line...

Then we have outline applications for other sites – off London Road, Cranes Lane and the other side of Coggeshall Road. That's before we even consider potential development at Feering, not to mention West Tey.

I would just like to touch on the situation regarding the proposed waste management facility at Rivenhall. This idea first started out some years back, and, at the time, KPC stated that it did not object in principle to a facility but that it did object to a number of facets of the proposal. Since then, a number of amended applications have been made, so much so that what is currently being proposed is markedly different from that which was originally suggested. In KPC's view, this represents unacceptable planning 'creep' and hence, the view was that it should be considered to be a brand new application – a point that we have made on several occasions, but to no avail. Having revisited the issue at our recent Parish Council meeting, KPC have clarified their view that they now object to the facility in its entirety.

Aside from all the above, we still have to consider the proposed widening of the A12 and a new stretch of the A120 between Braintree and the A12. There is very general agreement that proposed housing development on any scale cannot happen without appropriate infrastructure (and not just roads, but facilities as well, such as medical services). A suggestion was made last year that any work on widening the A12 should start at the southern end with work further north (near us!!) being deferred. The A12 proposal had previously secured a Government funding commitment, though it now appears that the likely start date may now fall into a new funding cycle, so the commitment will need to be restated. As to the A120, there is no funding currently in place, though everyone seems confident that this will happen. Realistically, even assuming that funding is received, work is unlikely to start before 2023. Unless major infrastructure work is agreed and put in place, these potential housing developments are likely



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to create a traffic nightmare (and likely other nightmares too).

### Paperwork

I mentioned paperwork at the beginning of the report. You probably won't believe the amount of paperwork that has been generated this year to develop new policies and procedures to comply with relevant legislation. As you might expect, health and safety has figured prominently, but so too has data protection, with the imminent arrival of very complicated new requirements. How Pippa and Sue have actually found time to do any real work amazes me.

### Offices

Enough of the doom and gloom. I'd like to finish on a more positive note – KPC successfully moved into new premises in the High Street, which gives greater visibility and access to residents. More importantly, the old offices were simply not fit for purpose and would have required significant public expenditure to bring them up to scratch.

### Conclusion

The year has been very challenging. I would like to think that the coming year will offer an opportunity to do more 'real' work.

### *Some of what we do .....*

- *Maintain: Playgrounds, Recreation Ground, Brockwell Meadows, Benches*
- *Grass cutting/leaf sweeping*
- *Service litter and dog bins*
- *Litter picking*
- *Provide car parking*
- *Working to produce the Neighbourhood Plan*
- *Respond to planning applications*
- *Liaise with Braintree District and Essex County Councils to maintain the village and surrounding areas*
- *Provide grant funding to village groups*
- *Provide advice and assistance to residents*

### *Projects we are working on ....*

- *Replacement of toddler playground equipment at the Recreation Ground*
- *Refurbishment of the Pavilion and other facilities at the Recreation Ground*
- *Enhance and promote the Local Nature Reserve at Brockwell Meadow, continuing to encourage flora and fauna here and across the parish*
- *Recycle money from sale of the old Parish Council office building to improve other Parish assets*

### Financial Reports

#### Draft Accounts 2017/18

#### Statement of Balances as at 31 March 2018

Current Account	54116
Deposit Account	52641
Building Society Account	30390
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>137147</b>

#### Accounting Statement 2017/18

Balances b/f from 2016/17	128384
Annual Precept	96047
Other Receipts	25352
Loan Repayments	15603
Other Payments	97498
Balances c/f to 2018/19	136682

*The accounts will be finalised and prepared for audit, at which time, they will be available for public inspection. The dates of inspection will be publicised on the High Street noticeboard and on the website, along with the Annual Return.*

#### Contact Information:

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