

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 25th May 2021

(To published on the Website, on the Notice boards and in the Parish Magazine)

As we were unable to hold our Annual Meetings last year this report covers the period June 2019 to May 2021. During this time we met on twelve occasions. Because of the Coronavirus epidemic most of these meetings were held remotely via Zoom.

Liam Bundy, Louisa Sime, Stephen Thatcher Charles Barker and Mark Webster were co-opted to the Council. They joined Sheila Alder, Pauline Bird, Robin Dixon, Alex Dyke Joanna Long, Matthew Tugwell and Sarah McNamara. Liam later resigned due to pressure of work.

I would like to thank them all for their work.

Councillors served on one or more of the Council's Committees.

Finance: S. Thatcher, R Dixon, S McNamara, S Alder

Environmental and Footpaths: P. Bird, L Sime

Health and Welfare: S Alder, J Long, S McNamara

Planning and Highways: R Dixon, A Dyke, M Tugwell

Recreation Ground: A Dyke, M Tugwell

Personnel: S McNamara, R Dixon, S Alder

Complaints: S McNamara, P Bird L Sime

Village Hall Representative: P Bird

School Representative: J. Long

Health and Safety Consultant: Trevor Lewis

IT & Publicity Consultant: C Cutler

Tree Officer: Angus MacWillson

Local Bus Services: Daphne Parris

In addition to our regular meetings the Clerk and members of the Council attended the following:

Parish Transport Meetings,

RCCE Neighbour Hood Plan Meeting,

Mental Health Training

Patient Participation Group Fern House Surgery

EALC Climate Change Conference

EALC Health and Wellbeing meetings

Braintree Association of Local Councils

Our Essex County Council and Braintree District Council Representatives are invited to attend all meetings. District Councillors David Bebb and Charley Dervish and County Councillor James Abbott have attended regularly and we thank them for the work they undertake on our behalf. After many years of service David and James have now moved on and I would like to pay tribute to both of them for the tireless work they have done on behalf of the Parish Council. We look forward to working with Charley Dervish together with Darren White and Ross Playle in the future.

Thank you to our District and County Councillors who have awarded grants to the Parish Council towards new playground equipment, the phone box libraries and a bench for the Ford. Our District Councillors also gave a grant towards asbestos work at Terling Village Hall.

We are always pleased to welcome members of the public at our meetings and thank you for your interest.

One complaint has been received which is being dealt with according to the Complaints Procedure.

Planning and Highways

Twenty-two planning applications were considered during this period.

Mrs L Atkinson from the Rural Community Council of Essex presented a summary of the Housing Survey which councillors found interesting and informative.

With the help of Councillor Abbott, we continued to attempt to resolve highways issues including repair and replacement of directional signs, potholes and problems with surface water and flooding in Waltham Road, Terling and in Fuller Street. 30mph signs were erected in Ranks Green.

We are investigating traffic calming measures and a gateway feature will be installed on Hatfield Road. We have liaised with Terling School to try to encourage parents to park safely.

We have serious concerns regarding the water quality of the River Ter and are liaising with Great and Little Leighs Parish Council and the Environment Agency. I would like to thank Mr Guppy for his help.

The Parish Council are liaising with Longfield Solar Farm who have proposals for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, on land to the south of the villages. During the informal consultation we provided a monthly update for parishioners. The formal consultation period will begin this year and we will continue to keep parishioners fully informed.

We continue to benefit from the Essex County Council winter salt bag scheme so that salt for businesses, the school, and the Nursery is available if needed.

Our Tree Warden, Angus MacWillson is always on hand to give advice regarding the trees in the parish and I thank him for his work on our behalf.

Environment

We are a member of the Essex County Council Parish Paths Partnership to ensure that the footpaths are well maintained and accessible to all. Some of the footpaths have been re-routed and a new footpath map is being prepared.

We continue to work with Eastlight Community Homes, formerly Greenfields, and the Environment Agency to resolve the continuing problem with rats in Mill Lane.

Thank you to the volunteers who attend our regular litter picking sessions, part of our Street Cleaning Agreement with Braintree District Council. I would especially like to thank Sheila Alder, Stephen Thatcher, Sue Poole and Victor Roome who lead the litter picking team in Fuller Street and Ranks Green. There are many people who pick up litter as part of regular walks around the villages. All your help is much appreciated. All issues of fly tipping are reported and dealt with promptly by Braintree District Council.

New dog waste bins and a dog waste bag dispenser were installed in Terling.

We maintain the various benches, seats and telephone boxes in the parishes which are owned by the Council.

The telephone boxes at Ranks Green and in Waltham Road, Terling have been converted into Community Libraries. Thank you to Stephen Thatcher and Jo Long for their work in organising these and to our District Councillors for a grant. Thanks to Robin Dixon and Alex Dyke for refurbishing the Fairstead Phone Box which we hope will house a defibrillator. We are grateful to Vic Roome for looking after the Fuller Street Box.

I would like to thank our Village Handyman, Alan Jiggins, who does so much to keep our villages looking good.

Health and Welfare

Following Government advice, the Playground was closed for part of 2020 due to the COVID situation. The playground is checked weekly and ROSPA carry out an annual inspection.

Thank you to Councillor Abbott for a grant for a new tractor rocker.

The War Memorial posts have been replaced and the memorial cleaned. Thank you to Charles Barker, Liam Bundy and their helpers.

Thanks to Debbie Burns who, each week, checks the defibrillator in the phone box on Owls Hill.

Our only bus is to Braintree on Wednesdays, although, in normal times, other services such as the Shopper Bus and Dial a Ride are available. On the first Friday of each month the Council hired the Braintree Community Minibus for a trip to Chelmsford. This was suspended during the lock down. I would like to thank Daphne Parris for helping to organise this, for attending the Passenger Transport Meetings and for all her hard work in trying to keep our bus services running. I would also like to thank Wayne Purser who offered lifts to vaccination clinics.

Thank you to C Humphreys and Sons who have donated two defibrillators.

The Emergency Plan has been updated and Colin Cutler is our local first aider.

Colin is also the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and I would like to thank him and the team of volunteers who liaise with the police to help prevent crime in our villages.

Thank you to Trevor Lewis, for advising us on Health and Safety issues and ensuring that our Risk Assessments are up to date.

Recreation Ground

We continue to maintain this facility which is used by Trevor Meredith's Veterans Team and a youth team from Hatfield Peverel.

IT and Communications

Thanks to Colin Cutler, our web site is regularly updated and is an excellent source of information.

Thanks too, to the Parish News, The Village Hub, Terling Stores, Owls Hill Tea Room, The Rayleigh Arms and the Square and Compasses who all assist with our publicity.

Finance

We have changed our bank account from Barclays to Unity Trust so that we are able to conduct online banking. The accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2021 will be available for viewing in July, by arrangement with the Clerk. I would like to thank our auditor, Maurice Howard.

The Parish Council continues to pay for the waste facilities at the Village Hall which are also used by the Swimming Club, Tennis Club and the Cricket Club. These include bins for recycled waste.

This is a brief summary of another busy year. Should you wish to know more the minutes of all our meetings are available on the website www.terlingandfairstead.btck.co.uk or by application to the Clerk.

It only remains for me to thank my Council colleagues for their support and for their hard work throughout the year and our Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Frankie Killby, who works tirelessly on our behalf and is always on hand to advise and ensure that all runs smoothly and efficiently.

Thank you for your interest and I hope to see you at a Parish Council Meeting in the near future.

Sarah McNamara
Chairman