

## Chairman's Annual Report 2019/2020

In May 2019 six new councillors and a new Chairman were elected to the parish council. Some of the councillors had previous experience of working for a parish council, but most did not. Working with the new councillors was a new Clerk and working alongside the parish council was the new district council of Somerset West & Taunton, which had undergone significant re-organisation.

During 2019 the Clerk and some of the councillors resigned due to other commitments and a new Clerk was engaged in October 2019. At the start of 2020, a concerted effort was made to encourage parishioners to take on four vacant councillor positions. There was a good response to the campaign and the parish council now has six of its allocation of seven councillors. The seventh will be co-opted at today's meeting.

I think it would be fair to say that despite the rather unsettled and newly established environment in which we have found ourselves during the year, all those involved have successfully grasped what is required from them, including most importantly, setting up good working relationships with co-workers and partners.

Cllr Pete Davies, Cllr Woodford and the Clerk met with the Localities Team of Somerset West & Taunton to establish a clear plan of maintenance responsibilities for the village, and to agree a clear invoicing policy for next year. This work includes mowing verges, clearing streams, emptying bins, and maintenance checks of the Community Centre and MUGA. They had a positive meeting and have agreed a work and invoicing schedule for the coming year. They will meet twice a year in January and September.

During the year the parish council carried out two projects for the younger residents of the village. In the spring, mini goal posts were installed in the top field. These have proved very popular. The gazebo on the recreation area was refurbished for use by the teenage members of our community.

A group of energetic and community minded residents formed *Cotford Corners* in November last year. Their aim is to keep the village tidy from litter and overgrown foliage. With the support of the parish council, the group has been busy tidying and litter picking, and has involved a wide range of age groups from within our community. Their plans for 2020 include painting and decorating the village bus stops with the help of children and young people from the village school.

Looking to 2020/21, there are now seven councillors and the parish council is ideally placed to work with the Cotford community to take forward several interesting projects. At the meeting in January, there was enthusiastic support for SW&T to acquire the Crown land on behalf of the village. There are lots of ideas for how the land could be used, including a nature trail, some tree planting, and an arts project. Please keep the ideas coming. There have been several requests from parents to install a safety crossing outside the school. The Parish Council has applied for a grant towards this project and is waiting to hear from Somerset County Council Highways Team regarding a feasibility study.

The Parish Council's presence on social media requires updating and a review of the PC's Facebook page and web site is being carried out.