

At the start of the year, we agreed to continue to hold eleven meetings a year. The more regular meetings mean that there is more likely to be a meeting to discuss planning and other matters at an appropriate time rather have to call an extraordinary meeting. At the same time, this has not adversely affected the amount of time that the clerk needs to spend on meetings.

Throughout the year, we have continued to report issues around the village, mostly relating to the highways. With our MP, Robert Jenrick's help, BT were encouraged to clear up debris left behind by their activities. We have held two litter picks and the Council purchased a number of large poppies, which were put up around the village for Remembrance Sunday. This year we have also applied for a grant to put up a village noticeboard across from the hall.

Despite the council voting to retain the precept at its 2017 value, it has been reported as a 1% increase because the base amount on which it is calculated keeps changing. There have been fewer members of the public at meetings - some meetings have had none. In the coming year we should perhaps consider whether there is anything we can do to encourage more participation.

We have had to deal with what seems like fewer planning applications this year. There was some concern about the Park Farm development not following the plans in respect of the windows on one house, but these were resolved. We began with a program of regular reviews for our Council policies, but mid-year decided that we should aim to review them only when new information or regulation required it.

The most important regulation affecting us is the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which comes into effect in May 2018. As a result the Council has registered with the Information Commissioners Office and needs to update some policies to ensure that we meet the requirements of the legislation.

Our clerk continues to work extremely hard to keep us on the right track and is now paid for a fixed number of hours each month. This helps reduce the time spent by the clerk on paperwork and reduces the potential for conflict with HMRC about meeting reporting deadlines. A laptop has been purchased following a successful request for Transparency Code funding. Due to rising charges at HSBC, the Council agreed to move its banking to Unity Bank, which means that our accounts are now accessible online, though still need to be authorised by two councillors.

Last year the Council agreed to undertake a Housing Needs Survey, the results of which indicated, somewhat controversially, that there was a need for some affordable housing in the village. After the minimum number of house was dropped from six to three, the Council agreed to continue with the process, accepting that it could still pull out, if circumstances change or are not felt to be in the village's interest. As a result, there was a walk around the village by representatives of the Council, County Council and Nottingham Community Housing Association to assess what land might be appropriate for building such properties. One or two plots were identified and the next step is to contact the land owner to see whether he would be willing to sell.

The year ended with the resignation of councillor, Jean Clark, after eleven years of service to the Council. We appreciated her passion for the village and wish her well for the future. In March, a new councillor, Melanie McKinnon, was co-opted - her experience of the GDPR requirements is already proving useful as the Council rewrites its procedures.

As last year, I must close with a huge thank you to our county and district councillors for their attendance at our meetings and their efforts to resolve problems on our behalf. And finally, thank you all, councillors and clerk, for your continued attendance and attention.