

# Chairmans Report

This year we have been actively working with Swindon Borough Council on several projects this year with the help of our 3 Ward Councillors that cover the Parish. The agreed plan to re-surfacing of New Road / Hodson Road was cut back due to lack of funds, and they only repaired the area next to the Patriots Pub (twice!) but working with our Ward councillors we are keeping up the pressure on SBC to resolve.

New projects. This has included 20mph speed restrictions in parts of the village, investigating the possibility of a crossing near the roundabout also at the Patriots Pub, increasing the number of dropped curbs, and the possibility of traffic lights at the New Road/Marlborough Road junction.

Work on the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan is progressing and we are currently in Regulation 14 consultations, which is a major step forward. The plan is urgently required, as the failure of SBC to have a borough wide plan, puts us at the risk of inappropriate developments in the parish. Can I please pass on my thanks to all those involved with compiling the plan.

We are currently short of 4 Parish Councillors and would welcome volunteers to join us. If unsure, please feel free to contact me or the Clerk, as the public are always welcomed at our meetings, you can also come a watch a meeting to see how it goes.

Over the last few months, we have been in discussions with SBC along with all the other Parishes in the borough, as SBC has decided from October it will stop providing several services and expects the Parishes to take over their provision. Currently we are unsure which services they are including, other than more grass cutting, however apparently, they cost the borough over £900,000 a year. Once we get more details, we will be able to cost how much it will cost the parish to provide the devolved services, and there are several options how we might do that. However, whatever happens, it will result in an increase in our precept (Council Tax) next year.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Matt Harris for his contributions over the years as a member and especially as Chair. I would also like to thank my fellow councillors for the time and effort they put into the role, our Ward Councillors that make our job easier by fighting our corner in at SBC, and lastly (and most importantly) our Clerk, RFO and Handyman.

Cllr Ian Kearsy