

## 2021-22 Chairman's Report – 10 May 2022

This is a high-level summary of the Council's activities and events over the past year and apologies in advance if I have failed to meet the high standards, in terms of content and detail, set by my predecessors.

### Routine Business

After a period of having to hold online council meetings, the recent lifting of Covid-19 restrictions has allowed the Parish Council to meet face-to-face, this *new normal* has entailed holding Council meetings in our village church which has proven to be a good choice of venue.

Thank you to Pam Masini for facilitating this by making sure the church is available for the meetings and for switching the heating on when required.

### Councillors & Parishioners

Ian Craigs passed away in September last year after stepping down from the Council due to health issues. This is to recognise and remember Ian for not only his contribution to the Council, but more importantly, for the part he played in bringing Hulcott residents together and his willingness to help and befriend everyone whose path he crossed.

We bade farewell to Ian at the Old Barn in September, and he continues to be remembered with much love and is sorely missed, our thoughts remain with Nick and the rest of the Craigs family.

The Council gained two new Councillors by co-option, namely Bill Garrad and Brendan Dolan; welcome to the Council, it's good to have you on board!

### Infrastructure & Environment

After more than 15 years of dealing with annual flooding in the village, caused primarily by blocked and dilapidated drainage infrastructure, work has finally started on a flood prevention scheme. The work entails clearing drainage gullies and installing new pipework from Hale Farm down to The Green, installing new pipework under The Green, and new pipework and the clearing of drainage gullies from the northwest end of The Green along Cane End Lane. The work started on Tuesday 2 May and is expected to be completed by the end of May 2022.

We should recognise the relentless efforts of Councillors Bill Garrad and Peter Fenton-O'Creevy, and parishioners Colin Rickard and Joe Arnold for making this happen; we should also recognise Unitary Councillor Bill Chapple for his influence and unwavering support.

Ongoing roadside damage continues to be caused by heavy farm machinery accessing the entrance to the fields to the south of Greenacres. This has been raised with local farmers and

Hulcott's Internet supplier, ECom, in an effort to prevent any potential damage to Hulcott's broadband infrastructure.

## Planning Applications

The most significant, and ongoing, planning application relates to the proposed solar farm to the east of the village.

We believe the scale of the proposal to be disproportionate in relation to the immediate environment and this, along with other significant objections, has formed the basis for the Council's objection.

Subsequent to lodging our objection, an independent third party study has drawn similar conclusions to those of the Council. We do not know what the final outcome will be, but one possible outcome could be a smaller and more proportionate project than originally proposed.

The Council's view is that although we fully support the concept of renewable energy, we believe any infrastructure initiatives should be proportionate.

It is interesting and pleasing to note that there has been a noticeable reduction in retrospective planning applications.

## Fly tipping

There has been a significant increase in the number of fly tipping incidences, more specifically along Cane End Lane and Rowsham Road. The mechanism to report, and hopefully have the waste removed, is to log on to the FixMyStreet website <https://fixmystreet.buckscc.gov.uk/> and provide the following information:

- Postcode
- Location of the problem on a map of the area
- Details of the problem; photographs will help

The Unitary Council attended to 23,508 incidents over the past month; as reported on Monday 9 May 2022.

## Village Green

The Parish Council remains responsible for the maintenance and management of the Village Green. It is mowed on a regular basis throughout the growing season. The grass cutting contract has been renewed with Lynch Gardening Services this year as they continue to deliver good value for money.

We have received a Tree Condition Report from Ligna Consultancy Ltd. which has identified potential risks and provided recommended remedial works which will be undertaken over the

next 24 months, with the works comprising the removal of epicormic growth and removing significant deadwood.

A big thank you to Councillor Ian Pleeth for facilitating the Condition Report.

### Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

Feedback from our Neighbourhood Policing Team confirms that Hulcott continues to be a largely crime free area with burglaries in our parish remaining well below pre-pandemic levels in and around Aylesbury.

### Internal Audit

A successful audit was carried out for the year 2020/2021 where all Parish Council processes and finances were independently reviewed. This enabled the Parish Council to declare a Certificate of Exemption with the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn.

### Conclusion

An interesting year during which we have slowly started returning to normal after two years of Covid-19 related restrictions.

On a personal note, I am grateful for the support I have received from the Councillors and residents. I would also like to, on behalf of the Parish Council, extend a big thank you to all Hulcott residents who continue to support the Parish Council in many different ways.