

# Chairman's Report 2018-19

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At the start of the year there was some uncertainty about how things would work out as a result of the Council deciding to stop partially funding PCSOs. In terms of policing issues, I am pleased to say that we have not noticed any difference and hopefully this will remain the case. There was initially some confusion about which officers would be covering Rope. In July we found out that Tim Clarke would be our PC and in September Vicky Moulton returned from maternity leave and resumed as our PCSO.

The drop off car park at Berkeley Academy came into service and has reduced the parking problems around the school. Unfortunately a year later we are still waiting for Highways to extend the zig-zag line at the front of the school. The parking situation has been further improved by the new staff car park.

We have had a frustrating year with Highways not doing things but we were pleased that the flooding on Gresty Lane was finally fixed.

Another frustrating project has been the proposed improvement to the area surrounding the Rope and Wistaston war memorial at St Mary's Church. It has taken far longer than expected to get this done. The current situation is that the faculty (church planning permission) has been approved but the Cheshire East planning application has only just been submitted. If all goes well, it should be decided by the end of June. Assuming that it is approved, hopefully it will still be possible to get the work completed before this year's Remembrance Sunday.

The defibrillator which I mentioned in last year's report was installed outside the Spar store and they have assumed responsibility for maintaining it. I would like to thank Spar and Graham Tressider for their contributions towards the cost of the project.

As usual the Council has supported local organisations and we are pleased to have supported the Wistaston Memorial Hall and the Wistaston Sports and Leisure Association. It is also pleasing that we did not need to increase the precept for the present year.

During the year there have been no major planning issues for Rope although residents have been affected by all the developments which already have planning permission in surrounding areas. Hopefully there will be some progress with the regeneration of Crewe soon but it is difficult when high streets across the country are struggling. Separate from this but obviously linked, a plan is being drawn up for the area around Crewe station in preparation for HS2. Neither of these is likely to affect Rope directly. Shavington are now finalising their neighbourhood plan and that is more about controlling development, not further expansion. Hopefully the strategic green gap policy in the Cheshire East Local plan will prevent new speculative developments between Rope and Shavington or between Rope and Willaston.

We have just had elections. As I have moved to a different house outside Rope, I did not stand for re-election and so there is a new chair for the new council. It was a privilege to be Chairman and I thank you for giving me that opportunity. There is also a new Borough Councillor. I wish you all the

best for the future. I will be joining Wistaston Parish Council on Thursday so it is a new beginning for all of us.

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their help and support not just as councillors but also for the extra jobs they have taken on. I could not have continued as chairman for as long as I did without that support. Thanks also to Robert Dodd who has continued as a Trustee of the Parish Council charity and as our representative on the Wistaston Memorial Hall committee. Thanks to our former Cheshire East Councillor Sarah Pochin for all her hard work throughout the year. Finally my thanks go to our Clerk Sue Togay for her help to me over the years and all her work on our behalf.

Bob Squirrell

13<sup>th</sup> May 2019