

## FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would firstly like to thank Jeff (Goggin) for the many years voluntary service he gave to the community as a Councillor and Chairman. I would also like to thank all of the Councillors - new and old for volunteering their time to help make our community a great place to live. Thanks also to the staff – booking clerks, cleaners, RFO, caretaker and service providers for doing their part in keeping the Council running smoothly. Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ann – our Clerk. Ann works tirelessly to keep us on the right path and is integral and invaluable to our team. With a wealth of knowledge and commitment to our community Ann is one of the parish's greatest assets.

The past year has been a bit of a roller coaster. From taking up the post of Chair it has been a non-stop journey looking at the short and long-term objectives for the Council. It is a privilege to lead this forward, but it can also mean making decisions that are unpopular. The coming year and years ahead are going to be financially challenging for us all. With year in year out cuts by County and District Councils, changes in the way that the Police force operates, government initiatives and directives, it is the Parish Council left at the bottom of the pile to pick up the pieces.

Our precept has remained constant for several years but it is likely that it may be challenged in the future to pick up the short falls of services cut by those around us. The current climate has seen partnerships and alliances forming with other Councils and organisations to help make savings whilst retaining such things as rural bus services, grass cutting and road & path improvements to name a few. Despite this, the Parish Council is in a good position at the moment. To keep this up we must increase our efficiencies and be smarter in how things are done.

We have had some successes to celebrate over the past year with the opening of the new pavilion at Blackboys recreation ground, which is available to hire for sporting events. An entirely new heating system including pipework has been installed at Framfield Memorial Hall along with redecoration throughout. There are also some new projects underway to improve our other community assets in the coming years.

The monthly Framfield village market is another ongoing success story, with bric-a-brac, plants, cakes, homemade chutneys, arts and crafts to name a few. With Ann Newton and Selina Allen at the helm, it has provided a great contribution to help with the renovations and decorating at Framfield Memorial Hall, as well as providing a place for the community to meet up and have a chat with a cup of tea and bacon roll. So please pop along.

Finally, I would like to raise the awareness of speeding and anti-social driving in our parish. With limited support from other authorities and agencies, it is up to us as a community to be mindful of how we park, especially around the schools. Remember that many of our roads do not have footpaths and that there could be pedestrians and horse riders around the corner, not forgetting the increase in deer that are becoming a daily sight. Please drive carefully and considerately day or night, and help keep our villages safer.

Keith Brandon  
Chairman, Framfield Parish Council  
May 2018