

County Councillor's Report for Nettleham Parish Council, 18/9/2017

- 1. Deepdale Lane.** I've received several queries about the excess chippings on Deepdale Lane and have asked if they are to be swept. I've been told that the sweep always takes place one day and then seven days after the chippings have been laid. In this case there seem to be more chippings than usual on the carriageway, but a further sweep isn't possible with utility work taking place.
- 2. Obstruction on Mill Hill.** I've received several queries, along with a lot of useful legal information, from residents who are concerned about the parking on Mill Hill and around Vicarage Lane. The feeling is that this is obstruction rather than a parking issue and that it contravenes several pieces of Highways legislation. I've been asked to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner, the County Council traffic enforcement team and the Chief Constable to point this issue out and to establish who will deal with it before an accident occurs.
- 3. Linelands** Kevin Kendall is happy to send an officer out to meet parish councillors on site to discuss future plans for this site.
- 4. Highways Training** By 2020 the Highways contract will have been out to tender and, because this is such a large contract, I asked for training on highways contracts for councillors who will have to vote on the matter. This training took place last week and the complexity of the contracts to be awarded was staggering. The training was excellent and I've asked for it to be offered a second time for those councillors who were unable to attend the first time.
- 5. LALC.** In addition to my role as Chief Whip, Martin Hill has made me the LALC town and parish liaison councillor for the County Council. There are several hundred of these organisations, so it will be interesting to learn what happens elsewhere in the county.
- 6. IT.** There have been major issues with IT at the county council, caused in part by the age and limitations of the hardware. A recent hardware failure has caused considerable difficulty for officers and councillors alike, with emails being unreliable and contact details being lost. I'm satisfied that this is not due to human fault, but I've instituted a Scrutiny Review of the council's IT provision to see what can be done with limited finance. This panel will take place over six months and I will chair the meetings.
- 7. Secure Review.** I represent the council on secure review panels, which take place when a young Lincolnshire person has to be held in secure accommodation for their own safety. These can be held in any part of the country, often at short notice and, next week, I'm expected to spend two days in Exeter for the review of a young person who is being held there. I am querying whether this is a good use of a councillor's time and whether the job can be done by an officer.
- 8. Heritage Services.** The recent, hugely successful 'Battles and Dynasties' exhibition has now finished and, following on from that, I am one of six councillors taking part in a working group to look at the future of heritage services owned by the County Council. No decisions have been made as yet,

but the working group will look at different possibilities and will make suggestions to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

9. **Street-lighting.** A return to previous lighting patterns would cost about £1.5m. This isn't viable, but it is possible to make requests for individual, essential lights to be reinstated.
10. **Grass Cutting and Weeds.** These issues are gaining more attention than potholes at the moment and the council is looking at the possibility of doing the first cut earlier next year. There is nothing to stop people from cutting verges outside their houses and getting rid of weeds. This is happening more and more with online forums having some lively debates about how best to do it.
11. **Fairer Funding.** Lincolnshire suffers from being one of the worst-funded counties in the country, so we are joining with Greater Lincolnshire to carry out extensive lobbying and protest about this long-term deprivation of our rural community.
12. **ACM Cladding.** The county council examined all 900 of its properties and no such cladding was identified.
13. **Damaged Trees.** After receiving information from Cllr Hill I reported a number of dead and damaged trees around Nettleham. I have to say that I find the council's online reporting tool to be unbelievably difficult to navigate and I had to abandon the attempt several times. In the end, I wrote to an officer and am still awaiting a response.