**Finance, Risk & General Purposes Committee Report**

Throughout the past year, we have continued to work through the tasks which have been on our maintenance plan.

Prior to building the budget for the coming year, a full Risk Assessment of all Parish assets was carried out by myself, the Chairman of the Leisure & Amenities Committee, Councillor Gatward and Councillors Weitzel, Gillbanks and Holdsworth.

Any works deemed to be urgent have been carried out and non-urgent works have been built into next years' budget. We use the services of Paul Marshall our Village handyman where possible, and use outside contractors for larger jobs.

The Parish Council must budget for all works undertaken in the villages. As such these works are included after consideration by the councillors using feedback from the wider community, so if you feel there is something being missed or contractors that you feel should be put forward for consideration then we need to have our attention drawn to it.

The Parish Councils’ repair and replacement funds continue to build. After identifying future major works, we have increased the amount of project funds we have. This was given careful consideration, but we felt we needed to reduce our risk for major works having to be financed unexpectedly. For example, the pond on the Millennium Green at some point will need maintenance work carried out. After looking into potential costs it was felt it would be unwise to ignore this, hence a new fund to gradually build up, rather than a costly surprise.

The recreation ground continues to be a well-used asset. Offord football clubs both adults and youth teams are still playing strong, with their training sessions being well attended by all age groups. The MUGA (multi-use games area) continues to be well used, with the possibility of starting a tennis club starting up.

The Millennium Green continues to be a great asset to the village. Maintenance works carried out have included specialised grass cutting to support the wild flora and fauna. Works have been carried out to repair the adventure play area, and the fencing and gates on the young children’s play area.

Regular inspections are carried out by the Parish Council to check the play equipment and surrounding area, along with an annual paid inspection of the play equipment. We are still looking at the possibilities to replacing of the safety flooring in the small play area. If anyone has any ideas on surfacing or can help with this, please get in touch.

The allotments and cemetery continue to provide a safe and pleasant environment and with only annual maintenance to undertake together with the usual risk assessments associated with the area the committee is content that both areas are functioning as they should.

The Parish Council is responsible for the land around St Peters and ground works to improve the area continue and the whole site is looking well cared for. Once again, a lot of these works have been made possible due to many hours of volunteer work by a few Parish Councillors along with our handyman.

The Parish Council has received part funding from Cotton Wind Farm Community Fund to place another automated external defibrillator (AED) in Offord Darcy, which is placed on the Church Rooms. The Parish Council have a set of resuscitation dolls for village groups, organisations or individuals to use.

The Parish Council also helps support local groups which have included, Neighbourhood Watch, The Harry Potter Club at Offord Primary School, Offord Brownies and Guides and St Neots museum which entitles all Offord residents to enter for free.

This year the Parish Council has decided that although there is an increase in the budget to £57,885, there will be sufficient carry forward from last year, meaning that there will be no increase to the Parish Council precept for 2017/18.

The villages continue to benefit from work carried out by volunteers. This includes things which seem to be deemed to be simple yet not very pleasant, for example emptying bins, including dog waste bins which to have contractors do is costly and may have meant in the removal of them. Instead new bins have been purchased to replace some of the old deteriorated ones.

New recycled benches have been purchased and will be installed, hopefully before you receive this.

Tina Dawson
Chairman Finance, Risk & General Purpose Committee

April 2017