

I would like to start my report as chair for Edgmond Parish Council by thanking all our residents for their patience, fortitude, and good humour, during the unprecedented period of social engagement curtailment known in modern times, due to the pandemic.

I am grateful to all those people that have contributed by working hard to maintain services to enable our residents to have some semblance of a normal lifestyle, which in a rural location is harder to achieve due to the remoteness of essential goods, etc.

The parish council has managed to keep on track with local issues and keeping the community engaged on matters of concern through the use of “zoom” public meetings, such as this one this evening and when we were permitted by face-to-face meetings.

We have utilised local social media accounts, the parish website and Facebook pages to engage people on issues in the community. We have also been able to tell people in print through our Parish Noticeboards at various locations and the ‘Edgmond Echo’ newsletter, hand posted throughout the village, ensuring that those that are not digitally engaged, that their views are valued and being sought too.

The past year has been a roller coaster of high’s and lows and canvassing people’s views has been paramount to enabling good governance and decision making by our councillors, especially in respect of planning applications affecting the character of our village.

These matters are still on going, especially in respect of the asset of community value, The Lion Inn public house and the proposed building development. Then equally there is the smaller proposed development scheme in the conservation area to the rear of ‘Egremont House’ that needs monitoring too.

The real high for me as chair to the council this year was being presented with an award on behalf of the parish by the High Sheriff, Tony Morris-Eyton. The organisation Community Foundation for Shropshire created a competition to establish Shropshire’s Outstanding Community. I made a submission for the parish and was really pleased to hear that Edgmond had achieved first place in the “Shropshire small village” category and received an award of an inscribed plaque, with an accompanying certificate and a cheque for £1,000.

The Shropshire Outstanding Community award money has been allocated equally towards the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations scheduled in June and the Shrewsbury Road children’s play area, equipment refurbishment fund.

This nicely allows me to thank our clerk Mrs Katrina Baker MBE for the outstanding work that she does in support of the community and council and whose guidance allows us to progress local matters effectively and efficiently to fruition.

Throughout the year we as councillors are engaged in our various committees and look to spend our precept budget where ‘value for money is key’ to ensure your support for those decisions being taken on your behalf.

To this aim, our replacement programme for LED streetlights in village is due to conclude this year, with the final 8 units out of 128 streetlights being swapped out. Good timing given the recent increase in electricity costs and more increases in the future.

We are always vigilant with regards to our community and road safety issues and to this aim we have a confirmed programme of work with the Highway Department of Telford and Wrekin Council for the installation of the speed indicator devices (SID) post holes around the village ready to position the SID’s to monitor and improve driver behaviour.

The Parish Council has actively supported the Community Speed Watch programme, which during the lockdown observations were curtailed, however we have sought newer members and training for these by West Mercia Police. This training is shortly to take place and people will soon see the community speed watch crews out with the newer speed gun devices at various locations around the parish.

I would like to thank my fellow councillors and ward councillors for their support throughout the past year and their continued support as we go forward into another year of future unknowns.

As a parish council, we make a good team through our respective contacts within our community. We especially appreciate the support of our residents on issues. This engagement enables us to make informed decisions on their behalf, whereby we are able to maintain Edgmond as a great place to live.

We currently have three vacancies on the parish council and would be very pleased to be able to fill these seats on the council from interested parties in the parish, so please put yourself forward.

The parish council is extremely pleased to see the revival of our community groups and activities and particularly wish to thank the village hall team for all the work they do in supporting our community.

I would also like to put on record our appreciation for the support we receive from Harper Adams University during the year too, especially in the ad hoc matters that make things work smoothly, like the disposal of vegetation waste for recycling when we have cleared parish flowerbeds. Then there are the more structured engagements with our interest groups on projects taking place in the village, on the campus or on the grounds of the university, eg the fruit tree avenue, re-hedging and the supply of an oak tree for planting in commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Finally, I would like to thank Councillor Yvonne Brunger for her work in the community since joining the parish council and highlight the fact that she has recently been presented with the prestigious High Sheriff's Award, in recognition of her great and valuable services to the community of Edgmond. I am sure that these thanks expressed by the High Sheriff Tony Morris-Eyton are echoed by all those residents in the parish, especially those vulnerable people who were shielding throughout the pandemic.

I would like to conclude by wishing everyone a good evening and thank you for taking the opportunity to listen to this report which will be published in due course in the parish council records.

Allan Wilson
Chair to Edgmond Parish Council