

## **Chairman's Report – Parish Council meeting March 9<sup>th</sup> 2020**

Progress is being made on the resolution of the closure of the Portway Play Area. Following the Parish Council's voting in favour of an proposed upgrade Falcon Housing will shortly be submitting a planning application for the changes that they have suggested. Local residents will have the opportunity to submit their comments on the SWAT Planning Portal when the plans are published.

SWAT has confirmed that the Silk Mills development application has been rejected on a number of grounds. Their report can be reviewed online. The Strawberry Field application has also been rejected by the Planning Authority. Both these decisions support the views of local objectors but may well go to appeal. The Parish Council has made representation to the Planning Authority that if a planning application in the local area goes to full Committee then the meeting should be held in Williton rather than Taunton to allow local objectors to be more easily present.

There is a proposal for a unitary Somerset Council being considered. There appears to be very little agreement amongst the separate councils as to how to move forward on this.

There is an ongoing consultation about how the joint council should address the Climate Change Emergency. Please make your views known online at [www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/climate-emergency/](http://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/climate-emergency/)

Legal documentation of the Dog Pound has been confirmed by the Land Registry.

It has been decided that the Parish Council will not ask for street names to be installed in Holford due to some contentious arguments concerning the colloquial vs officially assigned names.

Progress has been made in investigating the 'Quiet Lanes' model for Holford. Councillor Copleston will report on this in the meeting and Councillor Young will give an update on the Community Speed Watch project.

The Chairman has reported the erosion of the hedge bank between the Church and the Triangle to the National Trust and a response is awaited.

Parishioners are to be asked for input on possible grant applications by the PC. This information will be put into the March issue of Holford News and Views.

The Chairman has contacted Natural England to ask for an update on the status of the SSSI sites within our area. Some are currently designated 'Unfavourable' which is a matter of concern. Some of the designations are several years old so an enquiry was made as to when there would be new site visits.

After a prolonged period when the Parish Council has had no representation on the Quantock Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee, an election is to be held in April.

It is understood that an offer has recently been made for the purchase of Alfoxton House. Hopefully once it is sold the deterioration will be halted.