

Councillor Chris Cullen – Activity Report.

A year ago today I had just completed 2 weeks crash course as a Councillor and had my first Full Council meeting, now a year on it seems like a lifetime, I'm definitely older.

Upon taking up my post I had 10 cases to attend to before I even got my official email. So added to that I have had 163 individual cases in my first year, along with community council issues and local group issues.

In my first year I have had many accomplishments aside from individual constituent issues. I worked with Kincaidston Action Group to help them reform as a new more active community group, who are now thriving.

Within my first month I had addressed the problem of speed signage in Kincaidston, organising the remarking of the 20mph signs and junctions on the road surface, the filling in of the ramps and potholes. I also was out with the ARA on 3 separate occasions to monitor the speeding situation.

Glencairn Park pathways were prone to flooding as the area was originally a curling pond and the main catchment area for rainwater from Castlehill Woods and surrounding areas. Just last month this was finally resolved with the areas prone to flooding being resurfaced with new higher tarmac.

At the same time as this was reported a number of abandoned vehicles and damage to the cemetery wall were brought to my attention. These issues were resolved within the month.

One of my biggest challenges was to get the pavements at Forehill Shops resurfaced and the parking spaces re-marked, this was continuously requested for over 11 years and was always put on the backburner, with quite a lot of site visits and emails. This work was carried out within a number of weeks and additional lighting was also added to the area. Plans for a public consultation on restructuring the parking for this area are in place and I await a date for this.

Kincaidston has also benefited from new play equipment installed this year, replacing the old tired frames. In addition to this a new skate ramp will be installed hopefully in May with some grinding rails as well to give a play area for the older kids of the ward. This should offer more protection to the Play park from the open spaces of the football pitches adjacent.

Working with Forehill Holmston and Masonhill Community Council I arranged for the supply of new surface material and the labour of the Community Payback team to kick-start the reinstatement of the Castlehill Woods pathways as part of their community project which has now seen them raise almost £2500 from Participatory Budgeting to re surface the paths further. In addition to this I have successfully asked the Council to match the quantity of aggregates and again the work will be carried out by the CP team.

Kincaidston residents and the Primary School raised a safety issue of parents blocking off Cranesbill Court during School times so after a while of parents not co-operating, new bollards and double yellow lines have been installed to increase the free flow of traffic and leaving people infringing on this liable to be ticketed for traffic violations. The safety of the children is priority here over adults not wanting to walk. To alleviate the parking issue I have requested the original car park to the side of the flats to be reinstated as a priority for School term after summer to allow both resident parking and a safe access and drop off point for children going to and from school.

Along with this I have been working with the police and community groups to promote and improve community safety especially around Kincaidston Primary where recent vandalism has elevated along with increased underage drinking in the brighter nights. The police have increased patrols along with other measures.

Finally it is hoped that by December 2018 we can have a new Campus Cop at Queen Margaret Academy and this will mean that every secondary School will have a designated Officer for their school.

With litter being one of the top 5 complaints i receive, I took it upon myself to join with Belmont Kincaidston and St Leonard's Community Council on their Litter Pick day last Saturday, I managed to get the use of 4 council employees, a tractor and trailer and a skip for the day, while the community team cleaned the surrounding area of litter, I braved the Burn and passed out all the litter, debris and waste to the council guys who skipped all the scrap and dumped all the bags of rubbish at the Walker Road Depot. From the surrounding areas we collected a confirmed 93 bags of rubbish, and from the Burn itself I lifted out -

11 scooters, 4 bicycles, 2 prams, 1 wheelchair, 1 electric wheelchair, 7 shopping trollies (1 from presto!), 9 bits of palisade fencing, 4 concrete lintels, 1 hoover, 3 carpets, shelving, 2 council bins, 3 mattress's, 1 couch, 6 bags of cider bottles, a tv, an ironing board and a motorbike.

That was from 10.30am - 4pm when we finally closed the skip after wading the entire length of the Annfield Burn from Dalmellington Road bridge to the Railway Bridge.

My new campaign is to ensure we, as a council, build a surplus of 4 bedroom houses to free up the housing waiting lists which will in turn create more 3 & 2 bedroom availability.

That pretty much sums up my year of work as your Councillor.

As ever I'm available via email or phone anytime, chris.cullen@south-ayrshire.gov.uk.

Yours for Scotland

Chris

