

## **Chairman's and Council's Annual Report, 2025-2026**

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Annual Town meeting of Cotgrave Town Council. It is my pleasure to present my report of the past year as Chairman.

Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow councillors, our staff and those within the community who support the work of the Council. Your dedication and interest shown continues to make a significant difference to our town.

Over the past year, the Council has faced both challenges and opportunities and I am proud of the way we have worked together to serve our residents and delivered on our responsibilities. The various challenges have been overcome without interruption to the service we provide; and the opportunities have been embraced to obtain the best possible results and effects for our community. This evening, I will take the opportunity to reflect on some of the key activities, challenges and development over the past year.

Included in the summer event, as a specific attraction and as a trial we hired a pump track which was set up on the green. This was in continual use throughout the event and was thoroughly enjoyed by all the children of our community and many of the visitors. Because of the evident success of this trial, Council are in favour of purchasing a pump track for the community once a suitable site can be agreed with Rushcliffe Borough Council.

The other events of the year that your council arranged or took part in, were the Remembrance day service and the laying of the wreath at the war memorial in the cemetery. Again, we were honoured to have His Majesty's representative, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Mrs. Christine Goldstraw, join us.

The next event of the year was the popular Annual Firework Display held on the Cotgrave Club playing field. The numbers attending this outstanding firework display increases year by year and its popularity has spread beyond Cotgrave which makes it an event the town can be proud of. It is necessary for safety measures to be kept under constant review without impinging on restrictions that could affect the movement or enjoyment of visitors attending the event.

This has been achieved year by year thanks to the work of the Town Clerk and the Admin Manager.

As usual, the Pensioners' Christmas Party took place on 18<sup>th</sup> December, when 160 Cotgrave residents enjoyed a delicious three-course lunch followed by a raffle and time to socialise and catch up with old friends. This remains a valued and much enjoyed event for the retired residents of Cotgrave and thanks must go to Councillor Healy for making all the arrangements and ensuring the event went without a hitch.

Finally, Council is currently in a strong and positive position and despite additional employers' taxation being introduced during the year, managed to set the precept required to provide the service expected by Cotgrave's residents, to be increased by only 3.1% which, in monetary terms, equates to 25 pence per month.

During the year Council has invested in renewing the ground staffs' grass cutting equipment and has added a new 'walk behind' mower. Furthermore, taking advantage of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments received, Council are considering some new projects for the benefit of the village and details of the projects will be announced as progress is made in the near futures.

One of our long standing members of the ground team, Paul Howitt, has made his decision to retire at the end of June. In preparation for Paul's departure, a new staff member has been employed as his replacement. He will be working alongside Paul during this period in order that he is fully trained and conversant with the requirements of the job. This will allow for a seamless change of staff when Paul retires, ending his twelve years of service to the residents of Cotgrave. I am sure that at the end of Pauls time with Council there will be suitable and well earned commendations made recording the major efforts he has made over the years to 'go the extra mile' in carrying out his duties and beyond.

As we reach the end of the Council's year, we begin a new one financially strong and with a strong team of staff and councillors working together to provide the quality of service expected by our residents.

Ian Shaw,

Chairman.