

Nettleton Parish Council: Chairman's Report for the year May 2016 to April 2017

1. Introduction

This report provides a brief overview of the Parish Council's activities during the year. We will be pleased to provide more detail if requested and questions will be most welcome at or before the Annual Parish Meeting (7.30pm at West Kington Baptist Chapel on 13th April).

2. Parish Council

The members of the Parish Council (PC) during the year were:

David Kerr (Chairman); Fleur Shanahan (Vice-Chairman); Stephen Beare; Jeanne Bush; Al Caie; Audrey Flint; Jenny Minney; David Pearce; John Wright.

Clare Fabray was Clerk to the Parish Council until 1st March 2017. Currently there is no Clerk and the post is being advertised.

3. Objectives for the Year

The PC has a Business Plan which is published on the parish council website to assist in the organisation of the Council's business for the year and to establish priorities against which the performance of the Council can be assessed. The main topics are covered in this report.

4. Planning Applications

29 Planning Applications were reviewed by the Parish Council in the year and comments provided to Wiltshire Council (WC).

The applications included:

- The children's play area in Burton which was supported by the PC and received approval from WC in October.
- Applications for conversions and extensions to existing properties.

5. Wiltshire Council Consultations & Meetings

The Parish Council responded to the following consultations:

- Government consultation on funding of local government, parish council precepts.

The Parish Forum, which was set up in 2014 to allow the Parishes in the Chippenham rural area to share experiences and problems and to input to the Area Board agendas, continued to meet every 2 months.

The meetings were attended by a PC representative. Issues addressed included:

- Fly tipping and measures to address it: Wiltshire Council emphasised the importance of reporting fly tipping promptly on the WC app, including any evidence of the source.
- Planning enforcement: Alan Brown, WC enforcement officer, emphasised that he relies on reporting of issues by parish councils and other interested parties.
- Chippenham Gateway proposals were discussed and concerns expressed at the potential traffic issues at junction 17 exit from the M4.

6. Emergency Planning

A Community Emergency Plan for Nettleton Parish, which is required by Wiltshire Council, was approved by the parish council. Emergency co-ordinators were appointed for each village:

- Burton: Jenny Minney.
- Nettleton: David Pearce.
- West Kington: Eddie Akerman

7. Highways Maintenance

Wiltshire Council appointed Ringway as contractor for highway maintenance commencing April 2016, and the new arrangements are now fully operational.

Guidance on the new arrangements has been provided by WC, of which the main points are:

- WC is increasingly looking to the community to report highway maintenance issues such as potholes, serious flooding and fly tipping via the MyWiltshire system:-
- On line at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts. An e-mail address can be left for updates.
- Using the MyWiltshire app on a smart phone; then updates will be provided
- By telephone on 0300 456 0105; the customer services team will provide a log number.

The parish steward can be asked to clear highway drainage grips, road signs, trimming encroaching hedges, cleaning/straightening road signs, weed spraying, etc. The lead councillor for highways, Cllr Stephen Beare is responsible for liaison with the parish steward and the new parish steward arrangements appear to be working well.

Over the past 12 months the PC has continued to work closely with WC to resolve various recurrent and longstanding issues. Outstanding items awaiting resources include:

- Resurfacing of Tormarton road, Burton, from Tolldown Way to Edge Corner Lane.
- Repairing the crash barrier on Tormarton road, from Tolldown Way to beyond Edge Corner Lane.

8. Highways Safety

Highways safety remains a high priority for the parish. Speedwatch continued in Burton, operated by the BCA. A Gateway proposal, supported by the PC in May 2015, was finally implemented by WC in 2016. New warning signage was installed on the hill on Fosse Way known locally as “dead man’s hill”.

9. Flooding

The PC has continued to liaise with the Environment Agency (EA) and WC on flooding issues through attendance at the WC Flood Group meetings. The modelling by the EA of the catchment areas of The Broadmead and the Burton Brook is finally complete. The EA have agreed that upstream storage options - to lessen peak flows in both Burton Brook and The Broadmead - will be now be considered.

10. Communications & Website

Broadband: BT finally installed fibre optic cable to Nettleton in 2015 and most homes in Nettleton now have access to a much improved service. Sadly, this improved broadband still has not reached most of West Kington and the internet service there remains very poor.

The PC uses the website www.nettleton.org.uk, provided and operated by Ray Maddock, for PC documents such as agendas for meetings, minutes of meetings and associated reports.

11. Precept and Finance

The annual precept for 2016-17 received by the PC was £6000. The disposable income, after essential costs are met, is about £3000 per year. Significant items of expenditure in the year included: four new notice boards (£1,136) and contributions to highway safety improvements requested by the parish council and carried out by Wiltshire Council (Burton Gateway £712; Fosse Way signage on dead man’s hill £250).

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds of £2,250 were received and a list of potential uses of CIL funds was agreed and will be kept under review. One of these potential uses is for a footpath on Hillside in Burton, although this would require substantial other funding.

David Kerr, Chairman

April 2017

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