



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
April 2010 to March 2011

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

When I was privileged enough to be elected as the Council Chairman, I took on the role for two years. Well, my two years are now up so I shall stand down as the Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 19th May but will hopefully be returning to the “backbenches” after the local elections. During my tenure, there have been times when the Council has achieved all that it has set out to but others when frustratingly, we could envisage what was needed but were unable to fulfil our hopes.

One particular achievement is the new drainage across the Recreation Ground which has linked into the main storm drain that serves the surrounding area of housing. Hopefully, this will resolve the flooding that has affected the Sports Pavilion in previous years. There are also plans in the pipeline to revitalise the Sports Pavilion as it is now looking rather tired and if not maintained properly, will not be there in 10 or 20 years for the benefit of future generations.

My last report followed a terrible winter and the early part of 2011 proved even more disruptive. The Parish Council is allocated a small number of grit bags to be located around the village but I understand that this was not enough. The Parish Office will continue to liaise with Horsham District Council and West Sussex County Council to increase the number of drop off points for the bags to try and make the grit accessible to as many of you as possible. We will also hope that the winter of 2011/12 may be a little kinder!

As many of you will have seen, the development at the old Oddstones site, opposite Sainsburys is now under way and the development of the Arundale School site will start during 2011. Furthermore, consultation is currently underway with regard to another new development between Stane Street Close and the railway line. The new accommodation at Green Meadows is moving forward and the residents of Allfrey Platt will be moving across shortly if they have not already done so. Please remember that all planning applications come before the Parish Council and are considered at the fortnightly meetings of the Planning & Services Committee. Please do feel free to come along and should you wish to speak about a particular application on the Agenda, notify the Clerk by noon the day before the meeting.

As you will have noticed on your recent Council Tax Demands, the Parish Council has had a zero percent increase for a second year running. The Parish Council has continued to try and obtain grants wherever possible and has successfully applied for funding from the Planning Obligations Panel for projects including a new basketball/football practice area, lighting for the children's play area and sheds for the new allotments site. All of these projects should be completed before the Autumn although we are sometimes subject to third parties timescales for things such as the street lighting so please bear with us.

The Pulborough Community Partnership has continued to be active in the Parish and I'm sure I convey all your thanks to them for their efforts to organise the Harvest Fayre back in September. A great day was had by all and thankfully the sun shone. The Partnership continues to be involved in the Lower Street Regeneration Project and has also organised the new visitor information signs at Swan Corner and Lower Street car park as well as the plaque to commemorate the World War II gun emplacement at Park Mount.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the Parish Council, our District Councillors Brian Donnelly and Roger Paterson, and County Councillor Pat Arculus for all their endeavours. I would particularly like to mention Cllrs David Boulton, John Denison, Ivor Kiverstein, Robbie Roberts and Katie Watson who, having served our community so well over recent years, decided not to stand for re election in May. They will be sorely missed but it does mean we will welcome 7 new Parish Councillors at the first meeting of the Council on 19th May, namely Elaine Kipp, Christine Mortimer, Jane Roach, Graham Spillane, Andy Tilbrook, Liz Wallace and John Wallace. I would also like to thank all members of Parish Council staff including the Parish Office for all their efforts over the last 12 months – the support they have given to me in my time as Chairman has been of the highest quality- and a special thank you to the Parish Clerk, Sarah Norman, who is always cheerful. May I wish my successor my very best wishes for their term in office.

David Jolliffe
Chairman

PLANNING & SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

During the past 12 months the Planning Committee has met on average every two weeks – it has been noticeable that there have been fewer planning applications for our area than in previous years and this is most likely because of the nationwide financial situation. However this does not mean that the Committee has been idle – far from it – we still have to look at the plans which do come to us and we still have to make site visits if this is necessary – particularly if there is a proposed alteration or extension or new build which could become controversial.

Developers are now making presentations to the Planning Committee before submitting an application to Horsham and the Committee members find this most helpful. The developer then has a better idea of needs or alterations in a particular area. The most recent example of this has been the potential developers of the site between Stane Street Close and the railway line. The Parish Council has, amongst other things, been able to stress the importance of a recreational public space for all to use in the northern part of the village and hopefully this will be considered should an application be submitted.

It is very helpful to the Committee when they (via communications to the Parish Clerk) are informed of views by members of the public and other village organisations (eg the Pulborough Society). The Committee is also very happy to have presentations by members of the public at the Planning Meetings to either support or disagree with any planning application. We would like to think that Horsham District Council actually listens to the views of Pulborough Planning Committee – sometimes it seems that they do not.

Finally, as Chairman of the Planning Committee may I take this opportunity to thank all the Committee members for their help, hard-work and thoughtful deliberations this past year. In particular I would like to thank Hazel Black, who resigned from the Council back in October last year and has now moved onto pastures new in Lincolnshire. Hazel's dedication and commitment to the Parish Council and the Planning & Services Committee will be sorely missed and we all wish her well in her new home.

Katie Watson - Chairman Planning Committee

RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE REPORT

This year the Pocket Park Association has been wound up after many years of caring for the area and is therefore now the responsibility of the Parish Council. It is hoped that Brinsbury College together with their students will be helping us with the ongoing endeavours to preserve and maintain this little haven for wildlife. The drainage at the main recreation ground has been upgraded which should alleviate the flooding problems experienced during times of heavy rain. The area has now been reseeded by our Groundsman, Fred Bushby, who continues to work hard to maintain both the main ground and the top recreation ground behind Cousins Way. The Parish Council has secured funding for two projects at the main recreation ground; new lighting in the children's play area which will hopefully prevent problems there on winter evenings and a new basketball/football goal practice area with all weather surface which will be located adjacent to the Multi Sports Facility (MSF). Could we ask all dog owners to clear up after their pets especially on the main recreation ground where the football teams, including the children's teams, have to clean the pitches each week before they play. It is an offence to allow dogs to foul in public places in the Horsham District and offenders may receive a fine of up to £1,000. Finally, volunteers have continued to work at Nutbourne Common Recreation Ground throughout the winter and a new footpath is now well used. Work is in hand to erect an interpretation board telling the history of how the parish came to own the area with photos and information regarding the flora and fauna.

Christine Barnett – Chairman Recreation & Open Spaces Committee

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Following this written report is the draft Income and Expenditure account for the last financial year. As in previous years these are subject to final audit. Specific matters to which I would draw attention are as follows;

Whilst the precept for the year ended 31st March 2011 was increased in monetary terms from £150295 to £156532, the council voted for a zero % increase in the amount paid by each household with the additional amount being raised through additional properties within the Parish. Other Income was similar to the prior years and various rents increased with inflation. This year saw Capital spending of £16000 on improvements to the surface water drainage at the Pavilion and Recreation Ground. Overall expenditure for the year was around 15% lower than the previous year. There was a surplus of just over £46000 between Income and Expenditure. This amount went to increase overall reserves and earmarked funds, the latter being approx £24000 towards projects including the future refurbishment and improvements to the Pavilion building, the resurfacing of the MSF and improvements to the Top Rec at the rear of Cousins Way.

Turning to the current year, your Parish Council was of the view that in the current financial climate residents should not be asked to pay an increased precept and for the second time set a zero % increase to the precept. Accordingly this has been maintained at the same level as 2009/10. Because of this we are not budgeting for any exceptional expenditure but nevertheless expect a balanced budget. The replacement of certain playground equipment was carried out last year and further expenditure is planned in the context of the three year rolling forecast plan. The Public Loans Board loan secured in connection with building the new village hall was repaid last year but the amount formerly repaid annually has been ring fenced and paid into the fund destined to help pay a portion of the refurbishment of the Pavilion. This project is currently being scoped with the architects and we expect to seek funding during the 2011-2012 financial year.

Paul Clarke - Chairman Finance and Policy

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

(Awaiting Audit)

Current Yr ended 31 st March 2010	Income Summary	Current Yr ended 31 st March 2011
150,295	Precept	156,532
150,295	Sub Total	156,532
	Operating Income	
934	Administration	228
0	Capital	0
62	Loans and Finance	76
2,808	MSF	2,072
4,144	Discretionary	7,339
1,209	Allotments	1,277
4,510	Bowling Club	4,622
9,523	Other Recreation	11,167
173,484	Total Income	183,313
	Running Costs	
12,708	Administration	14,941
551	Advertising & Publicity	0
0	Capital	0
12,098	Loans and Finance	0
7	MSF	988
64,803	Staff Costs	63,516
21,604	Discretionary	22,488
2,429	Highways	3,165
2,839	Street Lighting	1,623
5,591	Allotments	1,314
5,191	Bowling Club	5,999
4,033	Grounds Maintenance	1,412
19,131	Pavilion	11,696
9,913	Other Recreation	9,378
160,898	Total Expenditure	136,521
	General Fund Analysis	
81,734	Opening Balance	94,320
173,484	Plus : Income for Year	183,313
255,218		277,633
160,898	Less : Expenditure	136,521
94,320		141,112
0	Transfers TO/FROM Reserves	0
94,320	Closing Balance	141,112

COUNCIL MEMBERS

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2 x Vacancy

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