

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Village Meeting was held at Pulborough Village Hall
on Thursday, 10th May 2018 at 7.00pm.

Present:-

- Parish:** Cllrs R Quested (Chairman), A Bignell, T Caplin, P Clarke, R Court, I Hare, Henly, B Kay, E Kipp, A Lawson and J Wallace
- District:** Cllr B Donnelly (NB Cllr Clarke is also a District Cllr)
- County:** Cllr P Arculus
- Public:** 17 members of the public
- In Attendance:** Heather Knight (Clerk)
Carol Boniface (Neighbourhood Warden)
Vanessa Green (Neighbourhood Warden)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of Council, Cllr Quested, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chairman and Members of the Council introduced themselves to residents and identified which committees they sat on and/or were chairman of. Unfortunately, the Chairman of the Planning & Services Committee was unable to attend due to ill health.

2. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING HELD ON 11TH MAY 2017

Copies of the Minutes from the meeting held on 11th May 2017 were circulated for all. These were noted and approved as a true record and the Chairman of the Council signed them.

3. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL, INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

The Chairman referred all those present to the Annual Report which was circulated to all and is attached as Appendix 1, and gave a summary of the report. This included reports from the Chairman of each Committee plus the Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2018.

The Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee, Cllr Clarke, presented his report, highlighting that increased staffing costs were principally as a result of the continued Neighbourhood Wardens scheme and other staff promotion. He reported on the Council's ongoing proposals for rebuilding the sports pavilion, which it was intended to fund partly from Section 106 developer contributions as well as from Council's own reserves.

The Chairman of the Recreation & Open Spaces Committee, Cllr Henly, referred to her report in the Annual Report, highlighting the continued improvements to Pocket Park and Rivermead.

The Chairman of Council gave a report of the Planning & Services Committee, in the absence of the Committee Chairman. The new initiative of forming a Pulborough Community Land Trust (CLT) was highlighted, as a way to provide affordable housing for the community. Posters were on display detailing a public meeting on 13th June 2018 to find out more and get involved with forming Pulborough CLT.

In response to queries from residents, the Chairman advised that more information would be available at that meeting and that CLTs could include social housing, private housing or a mix, depending on how a CLT chose to set arrangements up. Some discussion took place on social housing provision generally. It was noted that a CLT is

not a replacement for the normal social housing provision scheme or responsibilities of principle housing authorities.

4. TO RECEIVE A STATEMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

The unaudited summary of the Parish Council's accounts to 31st March 2018, showing income and expenditure and general fund analysis, was noted. This formed part of the Annual Report previously circulated and delivered to all households. The statement of accounts was also part of the Annual Return, which would shortly be audited and available for public inspection.

5. TO RECEIVE OBSERVATIONS OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS FOR THE DIVISION OR WARD IN WHICH THE PARISH IS SITUATED

District Cllrs Clarke and Donnelly spoke about the forthcoming Government White Paper on Housing, which would introduce a new formula for assessing housing requirement. This was likely to increase the numbers Horsham District Council would need to provide. Neighbourhood Plans remained a sensible way for communities to address local housing need. The District Council also had a duty to co-operate with other district planning authorities on housing provision. D Cllrs Clarke and Donnelly reported briefly on other district wide matters, such as funding cuts facing all councils; the new waste collection system that had been introduced as a cost saving measure; the rural car park charging scheme brought in a year ago and any effect on Lower Street shops; a Boundary Commission review which will mean from May 2019 a third district councillor for the new District ward for Pulborough, Coldwaltham, Amberley and Parham.

C Cllr Arculus reported on WSCC severe funding shortage and discussions with the Government regarding shortfalls in school funding for the county. Unlike many counties, WSCC was not closing libraries but was looking at how they can diversify. Cllr Arculus apologized for the situation with potholes and emphasized that if recalled for poor work, the contractor bears the cost. She urged public to report potholes using the Love West Sussex on line reporting system. As minor roads are only inspected once a year, the County Council relies on people reporting issues. The WSCC grant funding process has changed and a crowdfunding platform was now in place for community groups to apply for funding.

6. TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

None had been received.

7. TO DEAL WITH ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items were put forward.

8. PRESENTATION BY PULBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

Pulborough Neighbourhood Wardens gave a short presentation about the past year of work using a graph illustrating their activities and data around those. They were now fully embedded in the community. They were currently engaging with the Dementia Alliance and encouraging traders to be dementia friendly. They will also be working very closely with the new Social Prescriber. The new 'walking bus' they had initiated for St Mary's School was proving very popular and helping to address congestion/parking and health issues. Work with volunteers helping to improve Pocket Park continued and the wardens also help to recruit volunteers for various clubs and organisations in Pulborough. With access to funding resources via the District Council or Sussex Police, they could help organisations find funding for some projects. Various sports opportunities had been organised by the wardens during school holidays, which had proved very popular. The wardens act as the 'eyes and ears' of the community, working closely with the police and other agencies, particularly in targeting antisocial behaviour issues. Community engagement is key and they would be continuing to raise awareness, especially around crime prevention. The wardens then asked if anyone had any questions.

Questions were asked about whether there were enough dog waste bins in the area and the dog waste spray scheme. The Neighbourhood Wardens advised that there were about 40 dog waste bins, however, bagged dog waste can also be placed in ordinary litter bins.

The wardens were asked if they can stop people parking on the pavement, especially near the schools; There were still people driving straight into the school driveway. The wardens advised that they would talk to the school, and that public can also report via Operation Crackdown (Sussex Police). District and County Cllrs spoke about enforcement by principle authorities: New School Safety Zones are being introduced, which will make it illegal to park right outside schools.

9. SPORTS PAVILION REBUILD PROJECT – BRIEF UPDATE

The Chairman gave a brief update on matters and drew attention to outline proposals displayed in the room. The Council had got as far as it could until such time as full funding was in place, as it was crucial to ensure sufficient funding was available to complete the project. The Council had so far engaged with its pavilion tenants, being the various sports clubs and social club. As a result, some amendments had been made to the proposals and the size of the building had been increased. In reply to a question, it was confirmed that the new building would be directly adjacent to its current position.

10. PULBOROUGH PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – BRIEF UPDATE

The Chairman updated residents with the current position. The Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had had to revisit earlier efforts and would have to go back from Reg. 14 (public consultation) again. A further Call for Sites had been undertaken and all sites had now been visited. An independent consultant had been working with the Steering Group (free support) to ensure a robust process was in place. It was explained that neighbourhood planning nationally had moved on from the early 'light touch' approach, principally as a result of developer challenges, and now involved a much stricter regime. It was hoped that the village would be able to vote on the required referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan early in the following year.

11. A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST FOR PULBOROUGH

As this had been discussed earlier in the meeting under Annual Report, it was agreed that the subject had been covered and no further discussion was needed.

12. QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLORS / PRESENTERS

The Chairman asked if there were any other questions from the floor.

A member of public asked what could be done to progress the planning application at the railway station, as the parking situation was very poor. In response, it was advised that the District Council had approved the planning application for Stopham Road. Unfortunately, the railway authority was being slow at signing agreements and the developer was experiencing problems. The District Council was actively working to expedite matters and a deadline had been set. A meeting was taking place the following week to review matters.

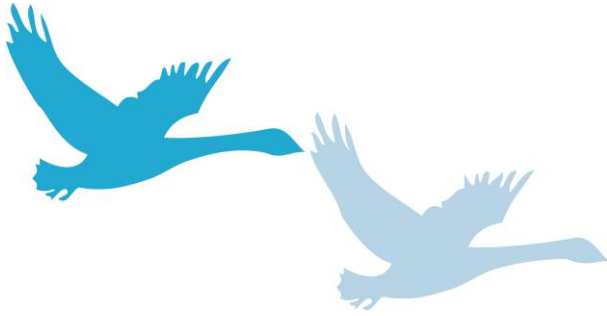
Several members of the public raised issues regarding the delapidated appearance of some premises such as the Spice Boys and Swan Corner, and the poor impression this gives of the area. District and parish councillors gave an update of various planning permissions either approved or in progress which may alleviate some problems.

There being no other questions or business, the Chairman closed the meeting with an invitation for those present to join the Parish Councillors for Fairtrade tea and coffee, reflecting the Parish Council's support of the village Fairtrade status.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

..... **Chairman**

..... **Date**



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
April 2017 to March 2018

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This past year has been somewhat frustrating once again in that very little headway has been made with either the Neighbourhood Plan or the new Sports Pavilion. However both of them are ongoing and I hope that by this time next year I will be able to report better progress.

The Neighbourhood Plan is now going through its final stages and hopefully we will be able to go to Referendum before the expiry of the current Council term. MacConvilles Surveying have been appointed as our preferred main contractors to see the Pavilion through to a conclusion. All the potential users have been engaged in the final design process and much work has been done in getting to that stage. However, we have still not formally identified all the financing sources and until that is done the future development is still on hold; we are working with the District Council to seek additional grant funding alongside the funds that we already have in place.

On the plus side, both our clerks have settled into their new roles extremely well. Heather Knight, our Clerk has now come to terms with running a Parish Council, having previously worked for a Town Council, and she is proving to be more than capable of keeping all councillors on the straight and narrow. Lisa Underwood, who is now the Deputy Clerk moved up from Assistant Clerk, is also taking on greater responsibilities. Fred Bushby, our Groundsman continues to keep the main recreation ground looking in pristine condition, along with all his other duties, now that he is working full-time. Our cleaning staff- Ben, Lisa and Alan also help to keep the village in a tidy state.

We have continued to keep the Outside Gym Equipment and the Children's Playground in the best possible state and it is pleasing to see that both areas are being well used.

The new development has finally commenced on the west side of Sopers Hill with the inevitable disruption as a result but the contractors appear to be making good progress.

Finally, I would like to assure all residents that your Council continues to use its best endeavours to serve the Parish as a whole and our office staff are always willing to listen and to help where they can.

Ray Quested
Chairman

PLANNING & SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

Again, very few permissions for new build houses have been granted in the last year so this report will follow on from last year's on planning for the future. In the last year more data has become available, partly from the DCLG and partly from local sources. A DCLG report showed that house prices in W Sussex were around 11.5 times the median wage in the area, and that this county was among the most expensive areas to live in the country.

Also, in real terms, the median wage for work done in this area has continued on an erratic falling trend. This shows very starkly that too many people who live and work in the area do not, without a visit from the money fairy, have a cats chance in hell of being able to afford to buy their own property in the area. At the same time the drastic rises in land prices over the last decade make it virtually impossible for housebuilders to construct affordable houses for people working locally to rent. The only vehicle available to us to act locally to alleviate this problem is to form a community land trust (CLT), and a meeting to seek volunteers to participate in this will be held in the village hall on 13th June. Please make every effort to both attend and volunteer. A CLT has to be a network of local volunteers and is not something that can be run through the parish council or the community partnership so your help is vital if this venture is to succeed.

Data concerning our aging population has also become available, showing that the proportion of people aged over 65 will increase by around 60% of the 2011 census figure within the next 10 years. This issue is compounded by recent data showing that as health care improves, people are now needing about twice as much care either in their own homes, or in residential care as they did in 2011.

These two factors mean that we will need over 3 times as much care provision in 10 years time as we do now. We are also a pretty typical area in the S of England, and are not isolated in this problem. Unless we can ensure that appropriate, truly affordable housing is available for people on less than the local median wage to rent, the inevitable outcome is that we have no chance to have the necessary amount of care provision in the village in future years. Aside from people who are directly involved in care provision and cleaning services locally, we also need to ensure that people working locally in other professions can be housed locally - i.e. teaching assistants, workers in local shops etc. Already here care services are being stretched, and some elderly residents are being got ready for bed around 5 pm, and others do not have a long enough time slot with their carers to make much useful (and in fact essential) time with them.

How can the community help address these problems? An obvious help would be the donation of land to the CLT when this forms. Another more subtle help may be to consider what we need to do to build truly affordable housing. There may be a stark choice between preserving the rural character of Pulborough, or building flats in, and adjacent to the existing village centre. A neighbourhood plan is still being prepared, and hopefully will be out for another phase of consultation later this year. Consideration of the question of whether you want to win a pyrrhic victory of preserving the villages character and having woefully inadequate service provision or are prepared to consider what the village needs to maintain essential services and compromise on local character aspects will need careful thought by everyone.

Cllr A Tilbrook (Chairman - Planning & Services Committee)

RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE REPORT

Over the last year various work has been carried out in Pulborough's recreation areas:

Tesco and the Neighbourhood Wardens have organised volunteer sessions to help clear Pocket Park. The Parish Council were awarded £1,000 from the 'Tesco Bags of Help Scheme', which purchased benches and wildlife boxes, which will, hopefully, bring birds, bats and owls to the area.

Eight volunteer sessions have also been organised at Nutbourne Common Recreation Ground, plants and trees have been planted along with the spreading of heather brushings, donated by South Downs National Park Authority.

Clearance work has been carried out at Rivermead Nature Reserve with volunteers and the Parish Council's Groundsman helping to maintain the area. A professional species survey will be carried in June 2018 to ascertain species in the area.

The modular unit in Masons Way play park has been repainted, along with a re-surface of part of the tarmac.

Volunteers from Pulborough's Garden Society have also helped care for the Memorial Garden over the last few months.

Finally, the Parish Council's Groundsman continues to maintain the recreation grounds, play and gym equipment and has recently added some extra seating in the area. A couple of trees have been lost, but hopefully they will be replaced over the forthcoming year. Unfortunately there remains dog fouling in the area, so the Parish Council would ask all residents to clear up after their dogs.

On behalf of myself and Pulborough Parish Council thanks goes to all the volunteers that help in these areas, it really is appreciated.

Cllr E Henly (Chairman - Recreation & Open Spaces Committee)

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Following this written report is the draft income and expenditure account of your council for the last financial year. As in previous years, these figures are subject to a final audit. The income for the year ended 31st March 2018 of £219,686 is comparable in monetary terms from £220,325 in 2017. There were no one off grants in the year per se. Horsham District Council in promoting the creation of Neighbourhood Wardens is providing seed funding for them. Pulborough Parish Council will also receive this seed funding in the form of a one off reduction in the cost of the wardens for the financial year 18/19 of £22,000. The increase for each band D property for the past financial year compared to 2016/17 was 4.23% per annum or £76.06 per annum. Other income was similar to prior years with various rents increased with inflation. Staff costs saw an increase of 22% for 2017/18. This was due in part to the funding of the two Neighbourhood Warden posts, the well-deserved promotion of the Deputy Clerk after passing professional exams and increases in staff hours.

The project work associated with the refurbishment of the Sports and Social Pavilion continues and meetings have taken place with stakeholders and architects and project management professionals and a scope agreed. The Finance & Policy Committee is now seeking funding and looking to secure it to pay for the project estimated to cost around £2M. The preferred route is via grants, match funding from various sources and the use of S106 funds held on our behalf by HDC, the use of allocated reserves and a drawing down of unallocated reserves to minimise a need to borrow funds if possible.

Allocated reserves at the year end of £149,493 are earmarked for this project out of a total reserves figure of £225,004. Several other projects are planned by your council, for which funds have been specifically budgeted, including improvements to our open spaces such as Pocket Park and Rivermead. Another project the Council supports is a replacement Youth Club but what we have included in the new Sports and Social club centre envelope a youth club space. This may secure some funding from the County Council but no discussions have taken place as yet. The lease on the present youth club building has been renewed to 2020.

Cllr P Clarke (Chairman - Finance & Policy Committee)

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

**INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
(Awaiting Audit)**

Yr ended 31 st March 2017		Current Yr ended 31 st March 2018
	Income Summary	
180,010	Precept	188,882
180,010	Sub Total	188,882
	Operating Income	
4,481	Administration	1,029
0	Capital Grants	0
320	Loans and Finance	106
1,496	MSF	763
5,583	Discretionary	5,673
330	Highways	1,086
1,299	Allotments	1,624
0	Pavilion	9,272
26,805	Other Recreation	11,252
220,325	Total Income	219,686
	Running Costs	
19,912	Administration	21,111
546	Advertising & Publicity	588
950	MSF	0
118,264	Staff Costs	146,909
10,108	Discretionary	8,673
5,535	Highways	5,599
3,988	Street Lighting	4,145
1,193	Allotments	1,160
286	Bowling Club	461
10,372	Grounds Maintenance	12,122
10,651	Pavilion	22,871
41,587	Other Recreation	26,333
223,392	Total Expenditure	249,973
	General Fund Analysis	
350,649	Opening Balance	347,582
220,325	Plus : Income for Year	219,686
223,392	Less : Expenditure	249,973
347,582	Closing Balance	317,295

COUNCIL MEMBERS (as at 31st March 2018)

Chairman Mr Ray Queded		Finance & Policy Committee Ex Officio All Other Committees
Vice Chairman Mr Paul Clarke		Finance & Policy (C) Recreation & Open Spaces
Councillors		
Mr A Bignell		Recreation & Open Spaces
Mrs R Court		Recreation & Open Spaces
Mr C Esdaile		Planning & Services Committee
Mrs J Esdaile		Planning & Services Committee
Mr I Hare		Recreation & Open Spaces
Mrs E Henly		Planning & Services Recreation & Open Spaces (C) Finance & Policy
Mrs B Kay		Planning & Services
Mrs E Kipp		Finance & Policy (VC) Planning & Services
Mrs A Lawson		Planning & Services Recreation & Open Spaces
Mr G Reddin		Finance & Policy
Dr A Tilbrook		Finance & Policy Planning & Services (C)
Mr J Wallace		Planning & Services (VC)
1 x Vacancy		

OFFICERS**CLERK TO THE COUNCIL**

DEPUTY CLERK

Mrs Heather Knight

Mrs Lisa Underwood

Parish Council Office, Swan View, Lower Street, Pulborough, RH20 2BF

Tel : 01798 873532

Email: clerk@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.ukWeb : www.pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9am to 12.30pm