

Chairman's Report May 2017 for the year ending 31st March 2017

We have had a very busy year with much going on since the last AGM. We started the year with a full complement of Councillors having welcomed James Sheppard last April. However, Dawn Armstrong resigned in January 2017 and Cllr Nigel Currie was given leave of absence for 6 months, although he has remained active on the Development Fund Committee. We are currently one man, or woman, down and are advertising the Casual Vacancy.

In addition to our monthly meetings we have held 3 public meetings: the annual village meeting and 2 extra for the Local Neighbourhood Plan (LNP). ALL meetings were well attended and at the Annual Meeting we also welcomed Tom Crowley of HDC, Katy Bourne the Police & Crime Commissioner and 2 local police officers. The main topics were the Local Neighbourhood Plan and Kingfisher Farm and its impact on the parish. Pressure was put on HDC to come up with a Gypsy Policy and sites in other parts of the District. We were given the go ahead by parishioners to spend public money on Legal Representation and to this end following an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting in August, we have instructed Ashley Bowes of Cornerstones to act for us. Cllr Sanjeev Joshi continues to facilitate this for us. Cllr Nigel Currie and I went to see Jeremy Quin our MP in December about the situation and the ongoing anti social behaviour

The Steering Group for the LNP very ably headed up by Ian Walker, with Cllr Alan Peers as his deputy, have met monthly and have employed the services of AIRS and Planning Consultants Dowsettmayhew. Focus Groups were formed and there was a 41.3% response to their Parish Survey. Having "called for sites" in December, January and February they are currently at the position of evaluating each site offered, under the guidance of the Planning Consultants. They will give an update at this year's annual village meeting.

Speeding Traffic and antisocial driving was highlighted in the Parish Survey as a problem and a volunteer came forward - Paul Allen, a former Parish Councillor – offering to form a small sub committee to look into this. As a result we commissioned a Traffic Survey to take place in March 2017, the results of which will be announced at the annual village meeting in June, together with recommendations. They have already met with Chris Stark of WSCC Highways to see what is doable and what is not.

Our long awaited gateways were erected in September and October when the ground was soft enough. Thanks go to Darren Rolfe of WSCC and his team for their work on installing them.

We looked at and commented on 47 planning applications – my thanks to Brian O'Connor for heading this up. Twigs in Bashurst Hill has continued to be a problem and at the time of writing the saga is still ongoing.

Operation Watershed was successful for us and the work will be continued this year. Cllr Matt Treasure Jones has taken responsibility for this and in the absence of action from Muntham House School went above and beyond the duties of a parish councillor by installing a pipe underneath their drive to the field opposite to stop excess water running down Muntham Drive, eroding the verges and flooding the Crossroads.

We have successfully managed to retain our local much needed bus route – thank to Cllr Victoria Barrett for co-ordinating the village Response.

We completed 3 Land Transfers during the year – part of the Jubilee Field to the Village Trust to enable the new village car park, which was completed last May - this project was funded from the development fund and s106 money and is now a valuable village resource. The other 2 transfers were Ancient Woodland from Marlands Park and Berkeley Homes. The intention is to join the Woodland Trust.

After many problems with our previous provider, our new website went live in June and is much easier to maintain and update.

We cleaned for the Queen last April and had a good turnout of 25 volunteers. We also gave a commemorative medal of the Queen's 90th birthday to each child at the Playgroup and School. A new and very efficient Litter Warden, Pat Cochran, was appointed in March. The parish is looking good. We are currently waiting for the

reinstatement of our signpost at the bottom of Westons Hill, which was wiped out during one icy spell – the driver has never come forward.

Work has now started on updating our Parish Emergency Plan, headed up by Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Victoria Barrett.

We made grants to the Village Trust, the Village Hall, The Church, the Youth Club and to the Air Ambulance totalling £7,230 and following a presentation by the Development Fund Committee at our March meeting we have unanimously agreed to apply for a 15 year loan of £125,000 from the Public Works Loans Board to enable the Village Hall Extension and the Sport & Social Clubs changing room projects to go ahead. This will then use up all the monies in the Devt Fund and any outstanding s106 money.

Finally I would like to thank the Clerk Jan Critchley for everything she does for the Parish and to make my job easier and of course my thanks to you all for your hard work and support for our community. Also to our County Councillor Amanda Jupp and our two District Councillors Tricia Youtan and Stuart Ritchie.

22nd May 2017