

Chair's Summary Report 2015/16

Welcome:

Change to this year's format to focus on the PP, published May 2015. The PC followed this by producing an Action Grid (November 15). The PC now has a clear plan, mandated by residents, shaped by the PP.

This is a really helpful tool and supports the PC in its work for the village, although it has to be recognised that, as with anything, funds are limited as it is dependent on raising the precept, which for this year is an increase of approx. 3%. Most of the precept is used to maintain existing costs (street lighting, pavilion, grass cutting, auditor, clerk, training, stationery, room hire, dog & waste bins, etc), and to build some reserves for projects identified in the PP. Some projects can be financed by grants but we have to be mindful that many stipulate match funding.

Day to day work of the councillors is very varied and covers attending Passenger Transport forums, workshops on the SNDP local plan, meetings with the Police, Crime Commissioners and MP on motorbike noise along the A32, consultations on boundary review; Conservation Appraisal & Management Plan amongst others, attendance at HALC AGM, trips to see social housing schemes.

We have been pro-active in recruiting residents to support the PC in monitoring local footpaths and stiles, cemetery and carrying out inspection reports for the play equipment for which we are very appreciative. However, all offers of help are welcomed. We would particularly like someone(s) to volunteer for approx. 8 days annually to support the PC in managing the lengthsman and identifying tasks (keeping the village tidy, cutting back on overgrown trees, footpaths, ditches) and for Landscape watch: monitor changes in land use over time which helps HCC identify areas at increasing risk of problems such as destruction of wildlife habitats or vulnerability to flooding.

Items of note over the last year include:

- Broadband – Wave 2 due for roll out December 2017, approx. 95% coverage
- Ward review – District Cllr Caroline Dibden standing down, Vicky Weston to stand at the elections in May. Boundary now incorporates: Swanmore, Hambledon, Soberton, Droxford, Waltham Chase
- Councillors – Departed: Jason Toman, Pietro Acciari and Louise Withers acknowledgement of their contribution and thanks for their time and effort. Recruited x 3
- The PC is looking to draw up a hire contract for the Parish Green, as we are being asked on a more frequent basis for the space, specifically for weddings.

- Projects and consultations are now underway which will require your input, particularly the village logo, the play equipment and the potential for additional car parking.
- The PC will have a table at the Country Fair on 4 June and hold a surgery on Sat 11 June. These will offer opportunities for residents, who are not necessarily here tonight, to have their say, make suggestions, ask questions, volunteer and choose a logo that they will have designed.

Looking to the longer term:

- Redesign of Parish Green being mindful of the CAAMP report, which advises protection and enhancement of the conservation areas. Your ideas and suggestions are welcome.
- Cemetery – Planting of wild flowers and bulbs on the west side to give a sweep of colour.

Communication: we have stepped up to the challenge of trying to reach out to all of the community. The website is regularly updated and maintained, we are trialing an e-newsletter and a facebook page. We welcome all contributions, please email the contact on the newsletter for newsletter items or for items on the website via the contact page.

Barbara Chandler
21 April 2016