

Itchen Stoke and Ovington Parish Council

Chairman's Report - 2017/2018

Changes of Note

Councillors David Cook and John Harvey were re-elected as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for the year under report.

One of the key objectives identified last year was to recruit a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer following the resignation of Lisa Lacey. I am pleased to report that Mrs Lorraine Wheeler, who was supporting in a Locum role, agreed to accept the position on a permanent basis. A Contract of Employment was agreed and Lorraine took up her new role on 1 July 2017.

Lorraine is highly experienced and has proved to be conscientious, hard working and highly effective. She is already driving Council forward on a number of fronts to ensure full compliance with a suite of relatively new and emerging regulation. In what has proved an extremely busy year these initiatives include bringing on line:-

- A new Web Site
- Revised Standing Orders policy
- Revised Financial Regulations policy
- Draft Data Protection policy
- New Risk Assessment schedule
- Updated Asset Register
- Updated Insurance Policy schedule

Ovington Village Hall Charitable Trust

To meet prevailing law in respect of Charitable Trusts, the management of the Trust's affairs has been reorganised, recognising it as a single legal entity and the need to clearly delineate it from the general business of the Parish Council. To this end, changes have been made to move from named Parish Councillors as trustees to the Parish Council becoming the Sole Managing Trustee as a Body Corporate. Additionally, three specific appointments have been made as follows:-

Chair of the Trustees, Councillor David Cook
Treasurer to the Trustees, Councillor Philip Cartwright
Secretary to the Trustees, Mrs Lorraine Wheeler

Philip Cartwright has taken over financial responsibility from Councillor Peveril Bruce who for many years did a sterling job on behalf of the Trust.

Road Safety

Itchen Stoke

Speed Watch: The Community Speedwatch campaign has just completed it's fourth year of operation. There are 14 trained and vetted volunteers although most of the operational monitoring and reporting has been covered by a core of 6 people. This year has been less active than in the past due to the temporary unavailability of key volunteers but it is expected that the coming year will resume more normal levels of monitoring.

During the period the following was achieved:-

Monitoring sessions (team of 3 at all times):	38
Man Hours consumed:	292
Number of speeding vehicles reported;	491
Maximum speed recorded (mph):	50

Speed watch advisory signs: Funds have been approved for the provision of Community Speedwatch signs to be displayed at the approaches to the village. Discussions have taken place with a preferred supplier.

Ovington

During February 2017, Winchester City Council's Highways Manager submitted a scheme to improve signage to the village approaches. The scheme was discussed on site with Councillors Cook, Cartwright and Norgate and some minor modifications agreed. Highways installed all new signage in November which was well received by residents.

Broadband

As previously reported, Council identified the technology offered by local company Gigabeam as the best route forward to achieve consistent, high speed broadband within several commercial packages. The main focus has been to roll out a service in Ovington using the Church belfry as the main receiving and transmitting station. Toward the end of 2017 planning permission was granted with professional costs of circa £3300 incurred. It was agreed that this cost be met equally by Gigabeam, the Church and the Parish Council. The Council approved a payment of £1092 using part of the 2016/2017 Boomtown Community Support Fund grant.

The Church and Gigabeam are currently seeking to agree the Operating License and this process has proved excruciatingly slow, predominantly due to Gigabeam. The Parish Council continue to pressure Gigabeam to conclude the Agreement and move on to install the infrastructure in the Belfry. The hope is that the Agreement will be signed within the next month.

Boomtown Community Support Fund (CSF)

Boomtown invited the Council to submit a number of projects which might be deserving of a contribution from the 2017/2018 CSF. I am pleased to report that Council, as a result of it's submission, were granted a sum of £1100.

Miscellaneous

Planning: A number of Applications were forwarded for Council's opinion. There were two Applications with major impact on the Parish. Council's comprehensive position papers on them is on the public record.

The Equestrian centre in Itchen Stoke was rejected by SDNP's Planning Committee. The Applicants resubmitted a revised scheme with a smaller indoor arena and changes to building materials which gained approval. However, the Applicants have since decided to appeal the original application which is currently being heard by an independent Planning Inspector.

The Application submitted by The Radley Partnership for the building of two detached and two semi detached homes on a plot in the heart of Itchen Stoke was withdrawn after receiving advice from SDNP. At the time of writing it is not known whether a revised scheme will emerge.

Summer Meadow Party: The Parish Council has agreed to support a biennial summer fayre for the community to be held on the water meadows adjacent to Water Lane. The support proposed is the purchase of a Marquee which, as well as the fayre, would be available to parishioners for events such as notable birthdays or wedding receptions etc.

Telephone Booths: The Council has adopted (purchased for £1) from BT the booths in Itchen Stoke and Ovington which now become Council's responsibility. During the year the booth in Ovington was completely refurbished by Councillors Philip Cartwright and Barry Norgate who contributed over 70 hours of their time and did a fantastic job. Plans to refurbish the booth in Itchen Stoke will be enacted in the coming year.

Lengthsman: Unfortunately the Parish Lengthsman recently tendered his resignation from HCC's scheme. Search for a replacement is underway.

Important Projects for this Year

- Roll out of broadband.
- Maintenance of verge and central reservation cutting schedules on the A 31
- Restoration of the Itchen Stoke Telephone Booth.
- Installation of Community Speedwatch advisory signs.

Finally, as ever, I would like to thank Councillor Peveril Bruce for allowing Council's business to be conducted at The Lodge, at no cost and offer my personal thanks to my fellow Councillors and Clerk for their untiring commitment to the Parish.

Councillor David Cook, Chairman, Itchen Stoke and Ovington Parish Council

9 May 2018