

# Parish Council Briefing

Parish Clerk, John Willcox, rounds up the PC's activity in December

The Parish Council met in the Reading Rooms on 6th December. The meeting was attended by our County Councillor, Mr Bill Parks.

The meeting was chaired by the current Vice Chair, Dr Neil Carpenter and the first item of business was the election of a Chair, this post being vacant since the resignation of Mike Butler. Neil Carpenter was elected Chair and David Ball was elected Vice Chair.

Mr Parks advised that the Council had recently published material relating to the Queens Platinum Jubilee, which he had noticed was on the agenda for this meeting (the meeting subsequently agreed to defer this item and pick it up in January.) He also spoke about the ash dieback survey that the Council is undertaking, the Council have engaged Wessex Rural Crafts to inspect along A and B roads, but for all other routes the expectation is that Parish Councils will be doing this (by the way, there is no budget for this or for the felling of any trees affected!)

## **Co-option**

Wiltshire Council had advised that there was not a requirement to have an election to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation. It was agreed that the Parish Council would seek a co-optee to fill the vacancy and would follow the same procedure as adopted previously. Details would be published in The Bridge, put on the village Facebook page and notice boards around the village (see notice elsewhere in this edition for details).

Following further discussion it was also agreed that, beginning in January, the PC would meet every two months and would trial starting meetings at 7 pm rather than 7.30 pm.

## **Planning Applications**

It was reported that the planning application for the further development of the Baytree Close site – PL/2021/07575 - had been withdrawn. It is understood that a revised application will be submitted in due course.

There were two planning applications that were considered;

### **PL/2021/10341. Dye House Farm, variation of a previous application to allow the introduction of fish to the wildlife pond.**

The PC had no objection to this application.

### **PL/2021/05441. 1 Heathway, Amended plans to a proposed extension had been submitted.**

The PC had no objections and repeated their previous observations regarding this application regarding the implementation of the national planning policy relating to light and privacy.

## **Streetscene**

David Ball, the PC rep for streetscene reported that he would be attending a meeting, to be chaired by our MP, Dr Andrew Murrison, along with officers and members of Wiltshire Council, representatives of Chapmanslade and Maiden Bradley parish councils and the Maiden Bradley Weight Watchers Group. The subject of the meeting is the increasingly vexatious problem of overweight lorry traffic through the villages. The discussions with Wiltshire Council regarding the speed limit review through the village are ongoing.

## **Equine Road Safety and Rights of Way**

Lavinia Mitchell took the meeting through the main issues affecting equine road safety in rural areas such as ours. There were several actions which would make the village safer for horses, riders and pedestrians which the council will look to take forward. In addition, the British Horse Society, who are actively working to improve road safety with their 'Dead Slow' campaign, have offered guidance and will also support the initiatives with the provision of training, signage and other materials

Lavinia also reported on some problems that riders have with access issues on local bridleways. She drew attention to the importance of off-road routes, to protecting our historical rights of way, and making sure that they are available and in good order for everyone to continue to use and enjoy.

## **Finance**

The deadline set by Wiltshire Council for details of the precept claimed by the Parish Council is 18th January 2022. The precept is the amount that the PC needs to fund its duties and responsibilities and is raised by Wiltshire Council via Council tax. The PC sets its budget each year, usually in December. It should be noted that Corsley has a lower precept than other local villages despite being made up of a number of hamlets leading to significantly greater road lengths.

At the meeting it was agreed to defer this task to January when it was hoped that we would have more certainty regarding some significant cost elements, both those falling in the current financial year and those which should be budgeted for in the following financial year. Additionally it was felt that the Parish should be aware of areas where significant expenditure may fall in order that feedback can be obtained;

- **Kissing gates**

Many in the parish are in various states of disrepair and need replacing. Should they be replaced like for like or should they be replaced with metal ones? (It is known that many of the gates were 'donated' by organisations and individuals in the village, it would be useful if any donees could advise on their views on replacement by contacting the Parish Clerk)

- **Village gates at either end of the village**

These have been shown to slow traffic in other villages

- **Speed indicator signs**

Again these have been shown to slow traffic in other villages.

- **Contributions to Wiltshire road safety** initiatives eg road signage and road markings.

- **Equine Safety measures**

Signage and training

- **Verge cutting**

Parishioners will have noticed that there has been a reduction in the frequency of verge cutting by the local authority. This has led to many complaints and the PC have considered 'doing their own thing'.

The PC agreed that they would continue to make grants/donations to village organisations. Details of the criteria and how and when to apply will be confirmed early in the new year.

Once again, the PC would welcome input from residents as to how they feel we should be using the precept in supporting the village.

## **Dates of next meeting**

Monday 10th January (as currently planned)

*Meetings are held in the Lower Room at Corsley Reading Room and begin at 7.30pm*