

## **SOBERTON Parish Council – Annual Report**

Chairman's Annual Report for the year 04/17 – 03/18

20 March 2018.

Soberton Parish Council meets eleven times a year, on the third Tuesday of each calendar month except for August. The Parish Meetings alternate between Rookesbury Hall, Church Road, Newtown and Soberton Village Hall, West Street, Soberton. The meetings start at 1930hrs, finishing at 2045hrs, these are public meetings where a standing agenda item for Public Participation allows matters to be raised by members of the public at the meeting, the remainder of the meeting runs to a published agenda is debated by members of the Council.

There are eleven seats on the council, allocated 3 to 8 between the North and South of the Parish. Members are elected every 5 years, the next election being in May 2018. Forms for those interested in becoming a Parish Councillor will be available from the Clerk in mid-April. Members are drawn from those who live in the Parish of Soberton (or close to its boundary).

For the efficient running of the Parish Council, activities such as open space maintenance, planning consultations, roads, Transport, finance and specific projects (i.e. St. Clair's Meadow, the Lytch Gate at Holy Trinity Newtown) a series of sub-committees are formed by members.

Members of the Parish Council have been involved in the following during 17/18:

Select List;

- **Planning Consultations and the Village Design Statement (update):**

The Planning sub-committee comment of planning applications made in the parish to Winchester City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority. Generally where an application complies with Planning Policy the Parish Council will not comment, however should neighbours object the Parish Council will listen and make comment on the merit of the applications to the Planning Authority.

VDS, the Village Design Statement is a dynamic document in that it is constantly updates as local and national planning policy changes and is required to stay relevant. The Parish Council will be consulting in the late spring following a working party groups conclusions. You would like to Join the VDS working party please speak to the Clerk or a Councillor.

- **The Recreation Ground and Children's Play Area:**

The Parish Council's largest financial ongoing commitment.

The Recreation Ground locate on Heath Road, Soberton Heath is a formal public open space and provided a series of facilities, these being: Football Pitch and Pavilion used by Soberton United and occasionally by youth teams, skate park (which we are reviewing with a view to either upgrading or removing) and the Children's Play area which is continually upgraded and managed. Generally items such as benches and signage are added/changes regularly.

- **Roads, footpaths, bridleways and transport:**

Generally the Parish Council monitors the condition of roads and footpaths, involving the appropriate authority where repairs or other work needs to be carried out. It is possible for everyone to register pot holes and the like on the HCC website. Ongoing matters such as the Church Road Newtown where traffic at the school and speeding traffic in the residential area is causing safety concerns the Parish Council is leading discussions with the highways authority to seek possible interventions to slow traffic.

- **Other Projects:**

St Clair's Meadow an inactive with HIWWT where the Parish Council had a leading role in both the process and the match funding to assist in the purchase of the land. The Parish Council has an ongoing advisory role in the management of the land by HIWWT. The success of this exercise was ensured by the active support from a few individuals from the Village in time and donations from many. A great example of working together to cease the moment and the Parish Council thanks everyone for their support.

The Lytch Gate Newtown, this is a registered war memorial and following a structural survey which established there was movement of the entire structure action is required. The Parish Council is able to access a grant to assist in the reconstruction of the Lytch Gate from the War Memorials Commission, this requires both a detailed specification and three quotations. This is being progressed hopefully we will begin the work this coming financial year the Parish Council have made a budget provision for match funding for this project.

- **Other Matters**

Finance: Annually the Parish Council receive a precept which represents its entire funding; 2017/18 the Precept received was £31,532.00 which is the same as agreed for year 18/19. 50% is received April and 50% in September. This represents £62.37 (£1.20/week) for a band G house.

Last year the Parish Councils outgoings were –

A Budget guide to spending is as follows:

1. Running Costs open spaces, grant funding £33,215
2. Administration, printing, hall rentals insurances, audit fees £2,606
3. General management staff costs and expenses £4,697
4. Section 137, grants £1,500

Total spend 17/18 approximately £42,018 this was met by £30,500 precept £11,518 saved from previous years. The Parish Council is required to maintain a reserve fund equal to one year's income this fund currently stands at about £30,000.

**Crime Statistics;** These statistics have been provided by Hampshire Constabulary

|                                   | LAST YEAR | THIS YEAR |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Anti-Social Behaviour             | 15        | 11        |
| Assault                           | 14        | 10        |
| Burglary other than in a dwelling | 1         | 8         |
| Burglary in a dwelling            | 2         | 1         |
| Criminal Damage                   | 2         | 1         |
| Suspicious Incidents              | 23        | 18        |
| Theft                             | 9         | 5         |
| Theft from vehicle                | 1         | 4         |
| Theft of vehicle                  | 0         | 1         |
| Theft of a pedal cycle            | 1         | 1         |
| Drug offences                     | 2         | 3         |
| Public order                      | 10        | 1         |

