

Soberton Parish Council: Annual Parish Meeting March 2017

Annual Report

Introductions:

Parish Councillors: John Hyland Chairman, Vicki Weston Vice Chairman, Robert Stranks, Debbie Thomas, Barry Henderson, David Salmon, Tim Pickford, Jane Masterman, Graham Smart and Arabella Turner.

District Councillors: Frank Pearson and Vicki Weston

County Councillor: Roger Huxstep

Elections:

Hampshire County and Winchester District Councillors (part only)– May 2017

Soberton Parish Council – May 2018

Make Up of the Parish Council:

Soberton Parish Council has 11 Parish Councillors (8 for Newtown/Soberton South and 3 for Soberton North of the High Street)

Finance:

Soberton Parish Council's precept provides an income of £28,376.67, this represents a contribution of about £28.00 per annum for a band D house or £0.53 a week.

This precept is managed through a series of statutory protocols, an annual audit and sign off by the 'Office for Local Government'. Internally the finance sub committee control expenditure based on the annual budgeting process approved by the full council.

In the year 2016-17 we funded the following activities:

Open Spaces; the Recreation Ground, the Pavilion, Children's Play Area and the Pond Replacement and refurbishment of Notice Boards – there are 6 in total

Installed new benches bringing the total number of benches to 7 throughout the Parish

Other Funding: Grants to the Churches to assist with the maintenance of the churchyards, payment of annual insurance for SoberNewts and contribution small single one off items such as Paint and materials for the Lengthsmen

Operating Costs include the Clerk's salary, Hall rental fees, printing etc.

This coming year 2017-18 we are committed to fund the following:

Fitting out of the utility room in the Pavilion.

A slide for the play area and benches for the Recreation Ground.

A potential large project this coming year is the repair of the Lychgate at Holy Trinity Church Newtown. This is a War Memorial built by members of the Parish and has been maintained by the Parish Council for almost 100 years. Recently the structure has shown increasing signs of movement. In December the Parish Council commissioned a structural survey; this confirmed that the entire structure should be taken down, a new raft foundation installed and the structure replaced. Grants from the Memorials Commission will be sought and we understand this will cover 50% of the costs.

Other potential projects include working with PINS on replacement finger signs and further equipment for the skate park (should there be a proven need).

Planning:

The Parish Council are consulted on all Planning Applications, both those made to the South Downs National Park Authority or Winchester District Council.

Tim Pickford, checks all these submission and consults locally. The Parish Council's view is based on (i) compliance with Policy (ii) proper consideration of the village VDS and (iii) Local comments.

Each application is discussed by the planning sub-committee and if necessary by the full council. Comments, objections etc. are sent to the appropriate case officer.

Planning Enforcement:

There are breaches of planning policy by unapproved development or activities/uses. Any possible breaches of planning may be noted to the Planning Enforcement team at Winchester City Council who will investigate and action taken when appropriate. This can be a timely and frustration process which is no reason not to report breaches.

Notable enforcement sites:

Long Road multi ownership field, the difficulty was fly tipping and non consented uses. The enforcement team at WCC have erected a new fence which has prevented fly tipping and are in the process of organising a site clean up (this is complicated as all the owners need to be informed). We are advised that this clean up should happen in the next 2/3 months.

There are several other sites where enforcement is continuing across the Parish.

Parish Lengthsman:

Soberton is part of the Parish Lengthsman scheme where we share this resource giving us a number of man days per year. David Salmon for the Parish Council directs the Lengthsman to a number of jobs around the villages, such as the white painting of the posts and railings at Cutts Arch, the clearing of drains at the recreation ground, the cleaning of signs and so on.

Foresters Glade Housing on Heath Road:

This has proved successful and the take up by those with connections to the Parish is very strong. However the Last property 3 bed house is still up for grabs - If you know anyone that would be interested in this house, speak to WCC Housing. if it is not taken up by a person with a village connection neighboring parishes will be offered the opportunity.

JH 19/03/17