

Coberley Parish Council Annual Assembly May 2021

Chair's Report

Review of PC's key activities from May 2019 to May 2021.

The **COVID pandemic** has meant that the Annual meeting and Assembly of 11 May 2020 had to be cancelled and all subsequent council meetings have been via Zoom or Microsoft Teams per Government legislation. Currently, the Government intends that, from 7 May, meetings will revert to face-to-face.

Personnel

In September 2019, **Cllr Jo Thurnham** decided to step down from the Council due to other commitments, which was a sad loss. Council still has a **vacancy for a 5th councillor**. To provide a balance of geographical community representation, candidates would ideally come from Coberley village or Upper Coberley.

At the end of March this year, **Claire Mann** resigned from the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer due to other commitments and the Council was delighted to appoint **Deborah Cook** to the position.

Planning & Environmental issues

PC has continued to represent parishioners' views on planning and environmental matters with a balanced approach.

Written submissions have been made against consultations in cases where parishioners have contacted the PC with concerns or where councillors have had concerns.

These include **Hartley Lane Traveller Site (Appeal), Badger Wood Forestry School, Westbury Barn, Stables at Greenway Lane, Land Parcel at Ullenwood (The Paddock) A436/Coberley Road, Ullenwood Court tree removal**

Affordable Housing

Following the Housing Survey conducted in the Parish in November 2017, when a need for 6 affordable homes was identified, investigation was carried out with the aid of GRCC into options available in the Parish. This proved unsuccessful.

Coberley C of E Primary School – community hall

Discussions had taken place regarding the possibility of the PC working with Coberley School to develop the hall, so that it may become a **community facility** outside school hours. A community consultation was the first step. The parish survey rendered only 25% response of which a majority was opposed to the suggestion. The project will not therefore proceed.

Parish web site www.coberleyparish.co.uk Work was commissioned from web site designer to ensure compliance with the new Government regulations on **web site accessibility**

Village green. PC has confirmation from GCC that **ownership of Green was vested in PC** in absence of any other owners. PC has arranged for **Mark Beard to mow Green** on regular basis. **Green wheelie licence** will be obtained from CDC for cuttings. Council's strimmer will be housed at the school in future.

Future events. PC had resolved that it should host a Parish event each year to bring our community together A VE75 event had been under consideration for May 2020 but the pandemic brought those considerations to a halt.

Sundial structural survey – PC arranged a professional structural survey of the sundial monument to assess condition and stability. While there has been some loss of section at the base of the pillar it is not at imminent risk of collapse, but remedial works are recommended to ensure the long-term integrity of the memorial. This will be to recast a new base up to the underside of the joint between the pillar and the plinth.

Highways & Road Safety issues

- **The Parish Council continually monitors parish roads (maintenance & safety aspects). Working with GCC Highways** to achieve solutions. A **Highway Actions Report** is forwarded to GCC for updates ahead of each PC meeting. Reports are listed on the Parish Council website [here](#). Key areas of attention have been **A436 (Seven Springs and Ullenwood/Cowley crossroads), Hartley Lane, Coberley village** (surface water drainage).
- **NO CRASH Road Safety group.** Cllr Piggott continues to represent the PC on this group which is chaired by Cllr Hodgkinson and focuses primarily on the A436 and adjoining roads.
- The PC remains involved with the **A417 Missing Link** progress to keep the issues it has raised to the fore. (See PC's submission against Highways England consultation [here at Appendix 2](#)). Key areas of concern raised: New Ullenwood junction roundabout; Leckhampton Hill Road; A436; Ullenwood/Cowley crossroads; Noise pollution; Design of Crickley Hill bridge;
- **Winter resilience:** GCC Highways practice is to replenish grit bin stocks each Autumn and make available additional bags of grit to PC to hold as back-up during winter months when GCC priorities focused on gritting primary routes and dealing with seasonal issues such as fallen trees etc. **Back-up stocks** currently held at Hartley Farm. For practicality of accessing stocks across parish, PC is considering whether stocks might be held in different parts of parish. Contact Parish Clerk if a bin is noticed to be empty, damaged etc. **The parish no longer has a snow warden** since David Carlton stepped down. The PC is extremely grateful to David for fulfilling this role over many years. **Council's gritting machine** will in future be housed at the school.
- Council has recorded that it will not support classification changes to public rights of way or highways

Finance

- **Parish Council finances in healthy state**
- **2019/20 expenditure exceeded budget**, mainly due to a) use of professional services to present Council's case in Hartley Lane traveller site appeal and b) professional survey and report on sun dial memorial.
- **2020/21 expenditure below budget**, no requirement for professional services, no event
- **Precept for 2020/21 and 2021/22 held at £6,500** (as in 2018/19 and 2019/20).
- **Budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22 maintained at £6,500**
- **Significant financial activity:** Principal expenditure Clerk to the Council salary, insurance, purchase of new laptop and related IT support, compliance of web site with Government web site accessibility regulations, professional services at planning appeal, sun dial survey and report.
- **Full set of Accounts and Transparency Code documentation** will, upon completion, be available on website [here](#) or by request to Clerk at info@coberleyparish.co.uk .

Parish Emergency Plan: The content of the plan remains relevant but new contacts are required. It had been intended that volunteers would be sought at the 2020 Annual Assembly.

Polling Stations: Council successfully opposed a proposal to reduce parish polling stations to just the one at National Star College. Note that due to COVID, neither the school nor NSC are available for elections in May 2021 and the Cotswold Hills Golf Club has kindly agreed to be the venue for this year.

New Leckhampton School Catchment: Council lobbied unsuccessfully on behalf of parishioners to get Coberley included in the catchment area of this new school. Coberley is currently only in the catchment of Cirencester Kingshill.

Facebook: Council has agreed to set up a Facebook account to encourage parishioner participation and awareness.

Cllr Duncan McGaw

Chair – Coberley Parish Council

2 May 2021