

Coberley Parish Council Annual Assembly May 2017

Chair's Report

Significant events

- Following the resignation of Sarah Webster as a Councillor in March 2016, we were delighted to welcome **Joanne Marshall** as a co-opted member of the Council in July 2016.
- We also welcome **Claire Mann**, who joined us as our Clerk to the Council on 1st January this year, following the departure of Verna Spires, due to family reasons.

Planning & Environmental issues

- **Hartley Lane Traveller Sites:** In August 2016, **Cotswold District Council granted the first site permanent status** by removing certain conditions of its, hitherto, temporary permission. The Parish Council objected in writing and by representation at the Planning Meeting, on the grounds of harm caused to the AONB, domination of the nearest settled community, pressure on local infrastructure, the Government's revised Planning Policy for Traveller Sites dated August 2015, and a concern at the potential number of pitches which could become established on the two sites according to assessment reports prepared for CDC in November 2014. The second site with 2 pitches, currently has temporary permission until December 2017.
Cotswold District Local Plan: The Parish Council has commented at each Draft Submission stage of the emerging Local Plan, with specific focus on the **Hartley Lane Traveller sites. The Plan identifies the 1st site as a 'preferred' site and 2nd site to north as 'reserve' site.** We have objected in each round of consultations, the latest being in August 2016, when we challenged the soundness of the Plan, in that it does not adhere to certain, highly relevant National Planning Policy Framework and Department of Communities and Local Government Planning Policy for Traveller Sites statements. We may have an opportunity to be represented at the Planning Inspectorate's Examination of the Plan, due later this year. Obviously, however, the 1st site has now achieved permanent status outside of the Local Plan process, through the normal Planning System.
- **Outline planning permission at Ullenwood Court** (20 residences + replacement riding centre): An application is currently under consideration, for **revision of the affordable housing provision** under the Section 106 agreement, seeking this to be removed based on the most recent National Planning Practice Guidance and the application of the vacant building credit. We have **objected** to this. We also asked that a **condition** be imposed that **no traffic** from the development or the riding centre be permitted to access **via Greenway Lane** and that the **riding centre should remain in current location**. We have recently learnt that Mel Pitt, the owner of the riding centre, has not had her lease renewed and intends to close the stables.
- **Other Planning Applications this year have included:** Conversion of building from offices to a dwelling with external alterations at **Spring Well Barn, Close Farm Lane** (permitted), modifications (all permitted) to **the Cowshed, Hartley Lane, Cotswold Hills Golf Club** and **8A Salterley Grange**. Still awaiting decisions are: improvement works to the course at **Cotswold Hills Golf Club**, revisions to **Severn Springs House**, and various changes at **Five Acre Farm Pegglesworth**.

Consideration of Neighbourhood Plan held in abeyance until Cotswold District Local Plan published. (A Neighbourhood Plan gives more local control over local planning decisions, but will involve considerable time and expense. Cannot override Local Plan or NPPF).

In view of the potential **S106 affordable housing provision** which may become available if the Ullenwood Court development proceeds, Council is considering an **update of the 2015 survey to assess the affordable housing needs in the Parish**. It is important to note that **unless people respond** to our intended survey if they know anyone with parish connections looking for housing, **we won't get access to the funding**.

Sun Dial Memorial on the Green: Unable to obtain grant for repair work. Very reasonable quotation. Awaiting repair work to be carried out.

Ultra-fast Broadband: Coberley Parish now appears to have access to the Fastershire/Gigaclear service, with exception of Salterley Grange and Hartley House. We continue to press Fastershire for provision to this area in the next Phase of roll-out.

Highways & Road Safety issues

- **Continue to monitor parish roads (maintenance & safety aspects). Working with GCC Highways (and Road Safety Hub) to achieve solutions. See separate Highways Report.**
- **Winter resilience:** Finalised programme of upgrading grit bins throughout parish to more efficient lidded bins. Each year we have been successful in obtaining GCC match-funding to enable us to complete the programme in shorter time scale.
- **Road Safety:** Hugh involved in **No Crash campaign** with Paul Hodgkinson; DSM involved with GRCC **CARS** working group. A **Road Safety Hub** was formally launched on 28th October with an aim of being **one-stop-shop** for all road safety issues. The Hub brings together expertise of Police, Highways and road safety experts to ensure optimum solutions and collection of data to support future activity. **Community Speed Watch** group occasionally monitors Leckhampton Hill Road.

Finance

- **2016/17 expenditure (£5,663) marginally exceeded income (£5,578).** Due to necessary repairs to **notice boards**, Queen's 90th Birthday **Beacon Event**, **professional services** on planning application and Local Plan consultations. **Increased spend** drawn from **reserves** which nevertheless remain at **adequate level** (£4,260)
- **Precept for 2017/18 set at £5,500** (2016/17 was £5,000). **Increase** due to decision to acquire a **defibrillator** for the parish, with **match-funding from CDC**. Also, anticipation of an **event to commemorate Centenary Commemoration of end of WWI**.
- **Budget for 2017/18:** slightly higher than precept at £5,684 – Decision to draw additional funds from reserves.
- **Significant financial activity: Principal expenditure (over 40%) Clerk to the Council; professional services** (to assist Council decisions on traveller site application, Local Plan consultation and Neighbourhood Plan consideration); Completion of **winter grit bin** upgrade programme; Council **insurance** and **asset maintenance** (notice board repair, telephone box door, mower & strimmer).
- **Full set of Accounts and Transparency Code documentation** will be available on website upon completion of External Audit, or on request to Clerk.