

Evenley Annual Parish Meeting, Monday 3rd April 2017

EPC Chair's report and Financial Statement

This was our first year with our new Clerk, Cathy Knott, who is also the Clerk for Westbury PC where she lives.

Cathy has had a big impact on our effectiveness, as she is recently qualified and is training in new areas which are relevant to the Parish Council in 2017. Some of these training costs are shared with Westbury PC.

In late 2015, some local residents - including James Crawley, Chris Hart, Barrie Morgan and Jeff Peyton-Bruhl - worked with Mike Baul on the first draft of our **strategic plan up to 2019**. The aim was to get down on paper what we wanted to do as a parish council, so everything was clear for all to see.

The Strategic Plan was agreed by the PC in early 2016, and is the basis for what we are doing. It now includes an action plan - and regular updates - and is on the website. There is no mystery about this!

Copies of the Strategic Action Plan are also available tonight - the last version was discussed by the parish council at the end of February.

In the Strategic Action Plan, you will see that we have 5 categories, and I will run through some of the actions under each heading - I promise this will be quick!

- 1 Under **SAFE**, we have worked on road safety and street lighting, and supported Chris Hart's defibrillator training;
- 2 Under **GREEN**, we have maintained trees around the village, planted bulbs donated by Evenley Matters, and are working with Brackley Allotments Association to get the allotments fully used;
- 3 Under **WELL-SERVED**, we are supporting VHMC in their new role, and publicizing events in the village via the website;
- 4 Under **VIBRANT**, we supported the queen's birthday party, as well as SPLAT last summer on the Green, and are finding out if we can have an electricity supply on The Green;
- 5 Under **BEST IN CLASS**, we have improved the website, appointed a Hs2 warden - Brian Sinclair - and registered for the Quality Award for local councils. Job descriptions and risk assessments are in hand for all wardens.

Everyone in the room will be aware that the **PC increased the precept by 42% for 2017/8**, after consultation with local people at the end of 2016 via the newsletter and in PC meetings.

Only two people were concerned about the idea, and a third person contacted us after receiving the Council Tax statement from SNC, asking if 42% was a misprint - we assume this person was away during December, January and early February.

The **Financial Statement** gives more information about the Parish Council's income and expenditure during 2016/17. Copies are available tonight, and will be on the website.

You will see that there are several areas where we have increased expenditure - including street lighting, tree maintenance, and administration.

In 2017/18, we intend to really get to grips with the lighting situation, once we have the full survey on condition. Much of our lighting dates from the construction of Lawyers Close and Church Leys in the early 70's and 80's, and may well need replacing in the next five to ten years.

We are pursuing traffic calming on Broad Lane and throughout the village, including supporting Speedwatch and maybe getting funding for a chicane, as we heard from Helen Howard earlier.

We want to replace the paving around the War Memorial, and work with the Friends of the Pocket Park to improve facilities there. We will continue to keep The Green, and other spaces in good condition. There is now a planned programme of tree maintenance, and we will pick up the mown grass on The Green whenever necessary so it is a great place to wander, to laze and to picnic, as well as to play cricket.

Outside the parish, everyone needs to be aware of **HS2** - we can rely on Brian to keep us up to speed on progress, thank you Brian - and the **South Northamptonshire Council Local Plan** for the whole district, which will be published for consultation in July. This will allocate sites across the whole District for development. There is also the **expansion of the Croughton Base**, which we heard about earlier from Mark Galler.

Some dates for your diary - these will be added to the calendar on the website:

There will be a Village Spring Clean on **Monday 1st May** - the first Bank Holiday in May - with a BBQ lunch on The Green afterwards, weather permitting - please bring food and drink to share. Meet outside the Village Shop - details to follow.

On **August Bank Holiday Sunday, 27th August**, there is a cricket match with personnel from the Base - please get in touch with me if you are interested in helping to organise this or want to take part. And a return baseball match at Caversfield.

Finally, the Village Dog Show and Fête will be held on **Saturday 2nd September**, hopefully with Fish and Chips on The Green afterwards, as last year, weather permitting. Contact Nic Hamblin or Lisa Proffitt if you want to help.

And finally finally, a huge thankyou to everyone here for doing all you do to make this community vibrant and welcoming. We do not always agree, and debate is a sign of a healthy community that is not afraid to talk about difficult questions.

Jean Morgan, Chair EPC
3 April 2017