

CHILTON POLDEN PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – MAY 2016

We held our usual number of meetings this year, eleven without any extra meetings. Our **Web Site** maintained by our Clerk contains more information than before and has been used to highlight items under review, asking for feedback from all in the Village.

The most significant activity in the year was the consultation on the **5 Year review of the Local Plan** which controls where development takes place within the Parish. There were a lot of documents to examine and questions to answer from the District Council. A leaflet drop was carried out to encourage Parishioners to attend a Sedgemoor presentation in early December at a local village hall to find out what was involved. The Council made a comprehensive response and the revisions for the Village were minor, logical and acceptable.

There were fifteen **Planning Applications** considered by the Council during the year. Only two raised serious comment. A large extension to 31 Broadway which has access from Barton Rise has a condition that it must only be occupied as domestic premises linked to the use of 31. The other was the change of use of a storage warehouse at West House to a gym. This was approved with a limitation on opening hours as it is in a built up area. Clarification was also provided on the legality of a large development on the Broadway which had consent valid dating back to 1991.

We have also undertaken a major project of **Flood Alleviation** for Goose Lane. The Council outlined a potential scheme and has obtained a grant of £30,000 from the County Council for the scheme. As is usual the effort and cost needed to implement the scheme has been great for a Council our size and we are fortunate in having important skills within our ranks. It now has detailed engineering input and should be carried out in 2016/17.

One contentious event has been the relocation of the **Post Box** for the west end of the village caused by the closure of our own post office. The original site identified on the Broadway could not be used and no other site on that road could be found that satisfied the Post office criteria. We now have afternoon collections from the post box off the Broadway in Church Lane.

We have had the normal amount of problems with our **Highways** this year. Our contact with W.S. Atkins the County's contractor means that response is good on specific potholes, but we have more problem with getting drains cleared. We have made detailed assessments and keep the pressure up.

We were able to nominate a stalwart of the village Keith Ulliyatt for an award from the County Council as a **Somerset Star**. This was successful and he attended the ceremony in October down in Taunton. He retired from the Council early in the year after 28 years of service 6 of them as Chairman.

A continuing matter of discussion for the Council has been whether to sponsor a **Defibrillator** attached to our Hall. The ability to use these devices effectively in such a location is still being investigated.

We continue to support our **Playing Field**, which is held in Trust by the Parish Council, by arranging its mowing programme each year. It had a most successful year with great attendance on Bonfire night benefitting from a clear night.

One area where there has been no progress this year is with the **Village Hall** becoming a full Charity. After making its views known last year the Council has waited to see what sort of Lease was proposed by the Diocese. Nothing has happened and it is still the view of the Council that the users of the Hall would be best served by an arrangement similar to the Playing Field, our other Community Asset.

I have not referred to the threat to our Bus service in this report as it falls in our new council year for report in May 2017, but you do know the result.

This has been an active year and all the councillors have contributed practically as well as intellectual to the proceedings of the Council. We hope in the coming year to fill our vacancy so that this commitment is shared by another Parishioner but in any event I wish to convey your thanks to our present team. We have been ably supported by our clerk who has had to sort one or two unusual problems in his normal positive manner.

ARLC 11 May 2016