



ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING – CHAIR’S REPORT - 25 May 2022

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors in entrusting the Chairmanship of the Parish Council to me for a second term, which may be as challenging as the previous year.

What have the Council been doing in the past year.

The Council has been trying its best to fend off unwanted developments, especially those that conflict with our Neighbourhood Plan, and the Planning Committee have worked hard guided by its Chair Cllr Foott. Two sites that are coming forward soon, which are included in the Neighbourhood Plan, will provide housing via the Southern Housing Group on the old Wings Nursery and some of those homes will become available to our residents in association with the Aldingbourne, Barnham and Eastergate Community Land Trust. Another site on land between the Willows Caravan Park and Lees Yard, will also yield further housing for the residents and will have additional allotments. The Parish Council acknowledges the need for new homes, but they should be for those most in need and with all the supporting infrastructure.

The finance committee have progressed several changes that have been implemented and enables the Parish Council to manage its affairs on-line, permitting faster payment methods and provides a clearer picture of the expenditure which is matched against a planned budget and a five-year business plan.

The Full Council which manages most of the Parish Councils business has, as one would expect been active in many ways. A Parish Council development working party in conjunction with the Aldingbourne Community Sports Centre Trustees has been set up to put in motion a scheme for the re-development of the Aldingbourne Community Sports Centre complex and the intention is to bring it into the 22nd century and make it more fit for purpose. Since its inception in September 2021, great strides have been made and a proposed master plan has now been brought forward which was informed by the recent community engagement survey that took place in March 2022. This will be open to further discussion with residents via meetings and social media.

A further working party, led by Cllr Harbord, is looking at the Street Scene within the Parish and ways to enhance the surroundings, for the wellbeing of all residents. Within that working party the bus shelter on Westergate Street has now been bequeathed to the Council from WSCC, and its upkeep will be the responsibility of that working party. When the site is completed at the old Wings Nursery, two additional bus shelters will be erected by the developers immediately adjacent to that site, and those will also be handed over to the Council to maintain. The bus shelters will belong to all residents. An art project is being

worked on by this working party in conjunction with local schools with funding from Arun District Council, a design has been agreed and it is expected to be unveiled in October. You can see this on the Council website and Facebook page.

There are numerous matters that a Council must deal with, so I will just touch briefly on several of them and if you wish to find out more about a particular subject, do please contact us to discuss or attend the regular meetings to advise of your thoughts.

- The allotments have had the fencing completed so it is all secure. There is a waiting list for the allotments, but more will be provided at the site next to the Willows Caravan site and they will also come under the wing of the Council as mentioned above.
- The Parish Council now has an office at the Aldingbourne Community Sports Centre, which is the room to the left of the entrance foyer and residents wishing to see the Clerk can attend by appointment, as the Clerk works from home.
- The footpaths are monitored, and any problems fed back to West Sussex County Council.
- We continue to organize a litter pick twice a year, and there are also regular volunteers that litter pick throughout the year.
- The Council liaises with the local PCSO of the Police force who attends meetings here regularly.
- The children's playground has received substantial maintenance during the past year.

This is a taster of what the Parish Council does and if you wish to participate, we have two vacancies to fill and would be delighted if you are interested in becoming a co-opted councillor. The public are always welcome to attend all council meetings.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the Councillors, who work on your behalf and who have become a cohesive team in their pursuit of a better community and environment.

Last but not least, the Council employed a new Clerk in August 2021, following the resignation of the previous Clerk and several Locum Clerks covering the Councils business, who I am pleased to say has become an integral member of the Council, attending a great number of training courses, and is a valued member of the team and a pleasure to work with.

There are many other aspects that the Council deals with and you, the residents are always welcome to attend the meetings.

Cllr Michael Warden
Chair – Aldingbourne Parish Council

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