

## **Annual Report Burton Overy Parish Council 2014/2015**

The aim of this report is to cover the areas of responsibility of the Parish Council, to show how we have met the challenges of the past year, to mark our achievements and to outline plans for the coming year.

### **Financial**

The precept was increased last year by £1000 and has been increased again for the current financial year by £500. This has been necessary to help meet our budget requirements including managing and preparing for the on going changes to the way Parish Councils work, employing a clerk, meeting the increased cost of services and the funding of community projects. To put this into context however with other Parish Councils, the amount attributable to the precept within the council tax for a band D property in Burton Overy on a precept request of £4,000 (our current precept figure), results in a charge on that property of £26.70 per annum. That is up from £23.35 last year. The national average band D rate for the current financial year is £54.12.

The way the council's accounts are audited is changing and we took part in the consultation on the Transparency Code for smaller councils. From 1 April 2015 smaller councils with an annual turnover below £25,000 will be subject to the new Transparency Code introduced by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. From 1 July 2015 we have to publish all items of expenditure over £100, end of year accounts, governance statements and internal audit report on a website available to the public. The clerk is in the process of structuring the Parish Council website to comply with this and has begun to enter the relevant information. From 1 April 2017 smaller councils will not be required to obtain an external audit report.

### **Planning**

A surprisingly large part of our time is spent responding to planning applications and it is rare to have a meeting without a planning application on the agenda. Harborough District Council (HDC) refused this year we had yet another wind turbine application (14/00880/FUL), we responded in some detail to this and the application. It is now the subject of an appeal.

We continue to get a large number of applications relating to work to trees in a conservation area. HDC now employ an arboricultural expert to report on such applications and this helps to inform our response.

The Parish Council has registered on the on line planning system run by HDC. The benefits include more timely email notification of applications, increased available information, facility to respond as a consultee on line and reduced paper work. As councillors can check details of applications for themselves on line, physical circulation of papers is no longer required.

The Parish Council has responded to a number of consultations relating to the new local plan being developed by Harborough District Council including the consultation on important local green spaces.

A lot of work has gone into gathering information and researching Neighbourhood Plans. Experts on the process have been invited to meetings with the Parish Council. The Council has consulted the village through newsletters, and a meeting held in the village hall attended by speakers from Harborough District Council and RCC (Leicestershire and Rutland). The meeting was well attended and following that and a questionnaire circulated to the whole village a positive response to a parish Neighbourhood Plan has been received.

### **Community Projects**

A grant was obtained from the district wide new homes bonus fund towards the cost of a new notice board for the use of all village organizations.

Leadership and financial support was given in respect of the WW1 commemoration. This was a very successful and well-supported event.

A Good Neighbour and Resilience scheme has been consulted on and a questionnaire circulated.

An additional dog waste bin has been purchased for use in Carlton Lane.

An additional Grit bin has been purchased and installed on the corner of Main Street and Carlton Lane

### **Parish Council Website**

This is being used as an important tool for communication. It is kept up to date and will be a legal necessity for compliance with the Transparency Code.

### **Roads, drains and fly tipping**

Pot holes, blocked drains and fly tipping provide a constant stream of problems to report to the relevant authorities and persistence is required in chasing up and trying to get action. Fly tipping and littering seems to be on the increase. Following our complaints to HDC about the state of the lay-by on Maynes Lane a warning notice about fly tipping has been installed.

### **Councillors**

Robert Lloyd resigned in June 2014. Michael Broughton and Simon Barre did not stand for re election in May. Thanks are due to them for their time and work on the Parish Council.

### **Plans for the coming year**

The Good Neighbour Scheme will be finalized and it is proposed will include an up dated village directory and community emergency plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan process will begin including declaring the Neighbourhood area and forming a working group to take the Plan forward.

There will be a review of street lighting and cost.

We will keep up to date with developments and consultations surrounding the new local plan

We will continue to streamline processes and have systems in place to help the clerk and councillors cope with the volume of work.

Fran Brown  
Chairman  
20 May 2015