

**ETCHILHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (MAY 2019)**

1 Meetings

The Council has had five meetings in 2108/19 together with the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting the minutes of which have been tabled.

2 Councillors

Mrs Elizabeth Bridewell; Mr Tim Holgate; Mr Jon Nash (Treasurer & Responsible Financial Officer, unpaid); Mr Ralph Smith (Vice-Chairman) and Mr Mervyn Woods (Chairman & unpaid Clerk).

Mr Woods has been mandated to attend the Devizes Area Board, the Devizes Community Area Partnership and sub-Committees and ad hoc meetings.

No councillors have received any payments from the Council for work done or expenses incurred. Their pecuniary interests have been notified to Wiltshire and declared at relevant Council meetings.

3 Accounts

The Council's accounts for 2018/19, tabled, have been presented to the Annual Parish Meeting by Mr Jon Nash, the Responsible Financial Officer. These have been vetted by the Internal Auditor, Mr Peter Hanson, and approved by the Council. The new external auditors are PKF Littlejohn.

4 Broadband

It is understood that those who wanted high speed fibre have now been connected.

5 BT Phone Kiosk

The Council continues to vigorously oppose closure of the kiosk in the light of the totally inadequate mobile phone coverage in the village.

We have asked BT to repaint the kiosk or tell us where to get the correct paint to do it ourselves.

6 National Scheme for WWI Commemorations

a Beacon – The Beacon Bonfire in November preceded by nibbles in the Village Hall proved very popular and successful. The Chairman has thanked Messrs Frank and Alec Edwards for use of their field and Alec also for collecting wood and building a magnificent bonfire. The Social Committee has also been thanked for laying on the nibbles and thanks, too, to all those who helped people travel up the Hill to the Beacon.

b Commemorative Tree Planting - The Council has planted some native trees just outside the fence on the west side of the playing field.

7 Street Lights

Wiltshire have agreed to mend the street light outside Church Farm after repeated requests.

8 Play Equipment and Furniture

Mr Dave Roberts continues to conduct health and safety examinations of the playing field equipment.

9 The Playing Field Entrance

The entrance slope has been tarmacked as a safety measure with help from a grant from the National Lottery.

10 Devizes Area Board

This forum run by Wiltshire Council continues to discuss local issues with Devizes Area residents and Devizes Community Area Partnership and Transport Group.

11 Playing Field

Mr David Stevens has cut the grass in the playing field very thoroughly and will continue for 2019/20.

The sloping goalpost was kindly raised by Mr Marcus Bridewell to make it level. Any further action will need to be considered as appropriate.

A hose pipe will be purchased to facilitate watering and kept in the new wooden shed.

12 Highways

The Parish Stewards have been asked to focus on potholes, gullies, grips, grass cutting at blind spots and verges particularly on the C60 and on the Coate Road.

The broken finger post on the Coate corner is on Wiltshire's action list as is the bent village sign on the Coate Road near Whiterig.

The stile near No 5 Church View has been repaired.

13 Governance

The Council has registered under the new GDPR national rules.

14 Planning Applications

A number of routine applications have been approved during the year. In addition:

- a Lydeaway – possible new railway station – Nothing new has recently been heard about this, which lies in Stert Parish. Particular thanks to Mr Peter Hanson for his continuing help.
- b Tinkfield Waste Site – Councillors will continue to report whenever plastic and other material blows from the site onto Etchilhampton Hill using the "My Wiltshire" contact on the Wiltshire website. All parishioners are urged to use this contact point to report any A342 road safety hazard to Wiltshire. The more members of the public using this contact point to show widespread concerns the better.
- c Silage Lagoon and Pad (18/05984 & 18/05990) – Despite over a hundred objections, including the Council, many Parishioners and outside bodies such as the North Wessex Down AONB, CPRE, Wessex Chalk Stream & Rivers Trust, Wiltshire Wildlife and Rowde PC the matter has still not been resolved by the planning inspector. Further action depends on his decision.

15 Subscriptions and Donations

St Andrew's Churchyard maintenance fund has been given £250 and £50 for green bin collection. Subscriptions were made to Wiltshire Association of Local Councils, CPRE and Community First all of which provide local support for parishioners.

16 Defibrillator

Subject to confirmation of the costs the Council has agreed to take over the maintenance funding of the defibrillator housed on the Village Hall wall.

17 Crime alert

Suspicious persons have recently been seen lurking around the village and Parishioners are advised to be aware and vigilant and to report any suspicions to Parish Councillors and the Wiltshire police on 101/999 as appropriate. Our PCSO is Georgina Dodd – 8229@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

18 Thanks

The Chairman would like to take the opportunity of this report to thank the Treasurer, Councillors, Mr Peter Hanson as Internal Auditor and everyone who supports the Council's activities in many different ways.

Mervyn Woods, Chairman, Etchilhampton PC. May 2019