

SEALE AND SANDS PARISH COUNCIL

NOTES FOR CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 15th MAY 2017

A warm welcome to all those present.

This is the Chairman's report for the Annual Assembly of the Parish of Seale and Sands for the year from May 2016 until today.

There are currently three Parish Councillors in office and Margaret Nelson is carrying out the clerking work, on a part-time basis. There are still two vacancies for councillors.

Barrie and Pauline Rimmington have taken over the general maintenance of the Parish, working at both of the Recreation Grounds and other public areas within the Parish, as required. Mr Cliff Parrott continues to monitor the Telephone Mast activity utilising the Council's Microwave Detector Machine. The Council had six footpath wardens, to date two residents have responded and agreed to continue Messrs. Rollins and Cover.

Seale and Sands has been designated as a neighbourhood area and a local forum has been set up to implement a Neighbourhood Plan. The focus is to agree on what potential opportunities there are to develop the two villages within the Parish and start to carry out improvements or planning for major projects, where additional funding needs to be sought. This will also include our requirements from the Parish Plan.

A monthly 'police awareness clinic' is held for members of the public to attend at the Hog's Back Service Station. There is no liaison taking place now within the Parish and local police, due to government cutbacks.

Mr George Johnson was the County Councillor for the Shalford Ward and Tony Rooth is the Guildford Borough Councillor and represents the Pilgrims Ward. Anne Milton is the MP for Guildford.

Nine ordinary meetings were held during this past year, the location alternating between the Sands Room and Seale Village Hall on a Monday evening.

The Parish Council were represented at the Remembrance Day Service and Procession; and a wreath was laid on behalf of the Council.

The Council is represented at the Surrey County Association and collectively, acts as Trustee of the Seale Recreation Ground Charity, which is reported on as part of the ongoing duties of the Parish Council. Mrs Sue Newman a previous Parish Councillor, continues on the Board of Smith's Gift Trust and reports to the Parish Council as necessary.

The Declaration of Non & Disclosable Pecuniary Interests is in place and Councillors declare items when applicable, recorded in the minutes at each meeting.

Meetings are advertised on the Notice Boards, in the Village News and on the Council's web site; these meetings are open to the public. Members of the Council and the Clerk are happy to give

what help they can in council matters, between meetings. The web site includes all the necessary information and contact numbers needed by the community, including copies of all the official documents. It incorporates all of the legislative requirements covering Transparency.

The Recreation Grounds are well used and Rushmoor Saints Football Club have been using the facilities in both The Sands and Seale Recreation Grounds paying the appropriate rent. The Summer Show is held annually on The Sands Recreation Ground as is The Pilgrims Marathon. AGM Landscapes are retained to maintain the Recreation Grounds and work on the maintenance of Long Hill.

The principal purpose of both grounds is to be a place for informal recreation by members of the parish. Seale Recreation Ground Parking is available for the use of other organised village events or Church activities. The gates to the Grounds are required to be locked for security reasons.

The Council considered 38 planning applications during the year. The Parish Council objects to retrospective planning applications on principle. Any Certificate of Lawfulness applications and Arboricultural issues are dealt with by Guildford Borough Council.

The Precept was held for the ninth year running at £15,000. The Parish Council had funds of over £20,968.73 in the bank, included in this are outstanding Lengthsman Scheme and Long Hill funds. Grant Aid from Guildford Borough Council is a vital necessity for the Parish to function, the sum of £8,262 was granted for projects, including defibrillators and the Pavilion renovation during this past year. There is agreed Grant Aid of nearly £5,628 for equipment storage facilities etc., and other projects for 2016/17. Contributions from the Surrey County Councillor's members Allowances were also received and we would like to record our thanks to Mr George Johnson for his assistance of additional funds amounting to £5,846 towards the Defibrillator and Pavilion renovation. Chambers had also donated £500 towards the Pavilion and allowed us the use of their skips free of charge.

The funding from SCC's Lengthsman Scheme has meant that general maintenance work on highways, including ditches etc., has been organised by the Parish, using AGM Landscapes, instead of as previously by SCC. There are no funds left ; we received the initial sum of £8,200 in July 2015, which also included the parishes of Puttenham and Wanborough; this was managed by our Parish Clerk. The scheme has since changed it is now known as the Localism Scheme and we have not been given any funding at present.

Regarding projects and other activities, many items have been dealt with in what has again been a very busy 12 months for the Parish Council. The renovation of Seale Pavilion has taken place, with new toilets, kitchen and recently a new roof with a contribution of funding from SUEZ of £11,200. There are now defibrillators in both Seale and The Sands for use by the public, if necessary. Surrey County Council had created a new lay-by in Manor Fields, Seale. The Annual Litter Picking morning was organised and supported albeit a very wet one last year!

The major issues still facing the Parish is the lack of maintenance by Surrey County Council over Roads, Bridleways, Footpaths and Flooding; site visits were carried out last year by the Highways and Footpath Divisions, but no progress has been made.

The Liaison Group for the Runfold SITA site continues and progress is now being made for the total restoration of the site by 2020.

The plans for Seale Lodge restoration are continuing with consideration for flooding also being taken into account.

The new proposed Guildford Local Plan is a cause for concern as housing numbers are potentially high and with a lack of infrastructure especially in this area; massive development could take place in Guildford, Waverley and Rushmoor which will have an impact on us all.

Many thanks therefore, to all fellow councillors, County & Borough Councillors, and especially you residents, for your help and support during the year.

The support of the local community will be even more vital as many new changes occur and the pressure to deliver solutions with no extra funding available becomes greater.

Regardless of the above, and with the encouragement of the amount of volunteers who are assisting in contributing with the Neighbourhood and Parish Plans, we can now progress with improving the facilities and appearance of our Parish.

Bill Nelson
Chairman of Seale and Sands Parish Council