

SEALE AND SANDS PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 21st MAY 2018

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 2017 until today.

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

Barrie and Pauline Rimmington carry out 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.

Matt Furniss is 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.

There is no liaison taking place within the Parish and local police, due to government cutbacks.

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 Web Site is currently being updated, noting the new Data Protection rules to be put into place.

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.

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 58 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.

After keeping the same Precept for many years it was increased in 2017/18 and further for 2018/19 to £17,750, the Council Tax element per person was therefore £33.93 per annum. The Parish Council had funds of over £18,000 in the bank. Grant Aid from Guildford Borough Council is a vital necessity for the Parish to function with over £10,000 still available for future projects.

Seale and Sands has been designated as a neighbourhood area and a local forum has been set up to implement a Neighbourhood Plan.

The major issues still facing the Parish are 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 real 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 will take place in Guildford, Waverley and Rushmoor which will have an impact on us all.

Next year the elections are to take place and it is essential that the number of Councillors is fulfilled, especially as more work and responsibilities are passed to the Parish Council.

As Councillors, we really appreciate the support of the local community; especially those who are acting as Tree Wardens, Dog Wardens or Footpath Wardens. The Annual Litter Picking morning was organised in April and many residents turned up to help, which made it a lot easier. The pressure to deliver solutions with no extra funding is always a challenge, and your help certainly encourages the Councillors.

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

Bill Nelson
Chairman of Seale and Sands Parish Council