

FARLOW PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on Thursday 25 May 2017 commencing at 8.00pm in Farlow and Oretton Village Hall.

The meeting will be addressed by Steve Tolley on the need to combat poor driving habits blighting the Village.

For the other business of the evening we will invite a variety of speakers to address the audience on a wide range of issues/topics affecting life in this Parish. An opportunity to voice your opinions, raise concerns, make suggestions. **Use it.**

Councillors and Officer

The Councillors and Clerk served throughout the year. Ann Broomhall and Geoff Wadsworth were unanimously elected Chair and Vice-Chairman respectively by their fellow Councillors at the May 2016 Annual General Meeting.

The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the present Councillors and other relevant parties are given on the last page of this report.

This is Election year for Unitary and Parish Councillors. All your Parish Councillors were nominated to stand again and have been elected unopposed.

Shropshire Council

Council Tax has been increased by 2% the maximum limit allowed unless a referendum is held for a greater increase. Central Government has allowed a further 2% increase ring-fenced for Adult Social Care. We reported last year of Parish Councils being invited to Precept for shared services with other Councils to circumvent the need for a referendum which would cost circa £500k with no guarantee of the outcome. There was a poor response to a survey to gauge the mood of Parishioners to this proposal. There were underlying fault lines in the proposition and your Parish Council do not consider we have a mandate to adopt such a policy.

Central Government is maintaining its policy of 'cuts' and Counties finances are continually 'stretched'. The recent autumn statement did few favours for Shropshire's finances.

Lengthsman's Scheme

We regret to report Steve Tolley resigned as Lengthsman, to pursue other commercial interests, and Duane Williams has been appointed to fill the post.

The grant procedure for 2017/18 has been changed. The total 'pot' available remains at £110k per annum and applications had to be submitted by 24 March 2017 after which a panel will review the merits of each application and adjudicate accordingly.

We have already registered our application but of course there is no guarantee of success.

Lengthsman's Scheme (continued)

It is unlikely the grant policy will extend to 2018/19 and beyond and if the Parish Council wishes to continue we shall have to Precept for the cost (currently at circa £16.50 per band D household for a 'grant' sum of £3,000).

Speeding through Parish

There are a growing number of complaints expressing concern about speeding through our village. Only a short area is subject to 30mph restrictions, for the remainder of the road network the National speed limits apply. But because you can drive up to the limits it does not mean you **should**. At all times the law demands motorists must drive with due care and attention. Children are particularly at risk especially near the school and Village Hall play area. All road users are affected by antisocial highways behaviour. In early March there was a near fatal incident down Oreton New Road. This problem will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Housing in Parish

The SAMDev policy was adopted by County in 2015 but already a 'soft review' is already being undertaken. It will have little effect on us and County are not bound by the number of houses we proposed in our submission

It is worth reminding you of our housing policy as set in our SAMDev submission. Our policy is to allow a very limited amount of single plot private housing with the emphasis on smaller properties within the defined clusters. Larger multi-unit developments are not acceptable. In addition we will support Self Build Exception site developments subject to applicants satisfying all the guidelines including the local connection rule.

Planning

We highlighted last year the new rules for Redundant Farm Buildings. A recent High Court decision has determined that a proposal must be a conversion not a rebuild. The case in question was a steel portal framed building open on three sides. The Court considered the proposal a rebuild and thus not permitted by the legislation.

Parish Councils now have a grace period of 31 days to respond to any Planning Application.

Parish Council Web Site

The Parish Council web site can be viewed on **farlowparishcouncil.org.uk** for all Parish Council news. Future Annual Parish Reports can only be viewed on the Web.

Health

The future of an A&E facility in Shropshire has still not yet been resolved. There is still an impasse between Shrewsbury and Telford and Wrekin Hospitals and the Secretary of State is being drawn into the controversy. County prefers Shrewsbury as do the clinicians.

Finance

External audits will end after 2016/17. All Parish councils are required to observe the 'The Transparency Code'. In order to keep parishioners more informed each Parish Council is required to have a web site for the publication of financial information agendas and minutes of meetings and other relevant information. We now have a web site which is available to all (**www.farlowparishcouncil.org.uk**). In order to comply with the new legislation a grant was applied for and received from NALC. Out of the grant we have recently purchased computer hardware and software equipment.

Our Precept 2017/18 is £2,900 (2016/17 same). Our External Auditors are Mazars LLP, The Rivergreen Centre, Aykley Heads, Durham DH1 5TS. We again extend our thanks to Charles Metcalfe, of Hillgate Corner, Silvington, for continuing to act as our Independent Internal Auditor.

Police/Emergency Services

Any incident or suspicious behaviour, however trivial it seems, should be reported to the Police on the **101** number and obviously 999 in a dire emergency. To help the speedy location of any incident quoting your **six digit OS grid reference** when summoning help from the Fire Service, Police or Ambulance is most helpful.

Parish Meeting Report - May 2016

The meeting was addressed by Gwilym Butler, Shropshire County Cabinet Member, discussing the County's financial problems and the ways in which Parish Councils can help.

Ann Broomhall, Chair of Farlow Parish Council spoke about the issues confronting the Parish Council during the past year and thanked everyone for their contribution.

Others who addressed the gathering and reported on their sphere of influence, were Stephen Andrewes (Farlow School Governor), Unitary Councillor Madge Shinton, Mark Daborn Vicar Farlow Church, Pete Brown (on the Parish Plan) Steve Tolley (Lengthsman). James Shier, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, then proceeded to conduct the Village Hall AGM.

Farlow Parish Charities

This is a registered charity, which was set up many years ago, when a property was sold for the benefit of Farlow and Oretton residents in need. Only the interest and not the capital can be spent. The Trustees meet three times a year (February, May and September) and will consider each application on its merits.

Applications must be in writing addressed to a Trustee or to the Secretary.

The Trustees are:

Terry Price (Chairman), Glebe Farm Farlow DY14 0RG, John Derricutt, Neil Sutton (addresses shown on page 6) and Christine Link, The Gobbetts, Farlow DY14 8TD.

Secretary:

Sylvia Jackson 4 Withies Bank Oretton DY14 0TB.

Members of Farlow Parish Council and other relevant names, addresses and telephone numbers (all 01746 dialling code unless stated) are as follows

Chair

Ann Broomhall
Moors Farm
Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 8RH
718643

Parish Councillor

John Derricutt
Middlehouse Farm
Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 8RS
718678

Parish Councillor

Stephen Jones
Well Farm
Farlow
Kidderminster
DY14 0RG
718650

Parish Councillor

Neil Sutton
Little Stocking
Oreton Road, Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 0TJ
718026

Vice Chairman

Geoff Wadsworth
Stone Haven
Moors Lane, Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 8RH
718551

Parish Councillor

Stephen Andrewes
1, Corner Cottages
Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 0TL
718557

Parish Councillor

Peter Brown
4, Summerfield
Oreton
Kidderminster
DY14 0TS
718134

Unitary Councillor

Madge Shineton
2, Ralph Jones Terrace
Cleobury Mortimer
Kidderminster
DY14 8DB
(01299) 271186

Unitary Councillor

Gwilym Butler
Littlebeck House
Lion Lane
Cleobury Mortimer
DY14 8BT
(01299) 270108

Parish Clerk

Derick Bromley
2, Lane's End Cottages
Farlow
Kidderminster
DY14 0RH
718062

Secretary Farlow Charities

Sylvia Jackson
4, Withies Bank
Oreton
Oreton, Kidderminster
DY14 0TB
718291

Parish Watch Contacts

Stephen Tolley (**718447**)
John Derricutt (**718678**)
Stephen Jones (**718650**)
Peter Harman, Endfield, Nr Crossroads
Farlow DY14 0LL (**718293**)

First Point of Call

For all services from missed bins to
difficulties with care packages
08456789044

SEE YOU ALL ON THURSDAY 25 MAY 2017