

Background report for Annual Parish Council meeting May 2016

50.16 Election of Chairman

Rod has indicated his willingness to stand for election as Chairman for 2016/17. He will need a proposer and seconder.

51.16 Election of Vice Chairman

As it is likely that the Chairman will come from the Pitton ward, convention has it that the Vice Chairman should come from the Farley ward.

55.16 Approval of Standing Orders

As the Council has decided not to adopt payment by internet banking (for the time being), I am not aware of any changes that need to be made to the Standing Orders, and recommend that these be approved and confirmed.

56.16 Approval of Financial Regulations

As the Council has decided not to adopt payment by internet banking (for the time being), I am not aware of any changes that need to be made to the Financial Regulations, and recommend that these be approved and confirmed.

57.16 Appointment of Internal Auditor

I recommend that auditing solutions be appointed for the fourth year running, for 2016/17, but that the Council obtains quotes for 2017/18 onwards.

58.16 Appointment of reps to outside bodies

- a) Pitton Flood Action Group – currently Cllr Mariner
- b) Pitton Village Hall - currently The Clerk, Mrs Purves
- c) Farley Village Hall – currently Cllr Latham
- d) Wiltshire Council's Southern Area Board - currently The Clerk, Mrs Purves

I am happy to remain as rep to PVH and the Area Board

59.16 To review the Council's asset register – please see attached.

60.16 To review the Council's insurance policy

The auditor has not raised any concerns about the insurance cover, it is considered adequate for the risks the Council faces. However, the Parish Council might like to consider adding cover for volunteers, as I have been approached about cover for a litter picking event in Pitton. Please see attached.

61.16 Review of policies

I'm not aware of any amendments that are required, and recommend that these be approved.

62.16 Dates and times of meetings for 2016

Wednesday 22nd June, Wednesday 14th September, Wednesday 7th December, all in Pitton Village Hall. Wednesday 3rd August, Wednesday 26th October, all in Farley Village Hall. All meetings start at 7.30pm

63.16 Reports

b. Flood Action Group – Cllr Mariner, the Clerk and the Flood warden attended the most recent Wiltshire Council Flood Ops group meeting in April. There is very little to report, other than the costing Flood amelioration Scheme still hadn't been sent to Ringway for costing, but this would probably be done in May. Both Danny Everett, the Drainage Engineer & Wilts Cllr Mike Hewitt would like to wait until the full costings have been done before coming to give a presentation to the Parish Council and Pitton village residents, as if the scheme proves too expensive, some other solution will need to be found. The next Flood Ops Group meeting is on Wednesday 15th June at Chitterne Village Hall.

c. Pitton Village Hall Management Committee – the Working Group looking at the future offering of the Hall had undertaken a village survey, collated the results, and had reported to the management Committee. The Committee agreed to explore the installation of wi-fi, but felt that the number of responses received were insufficient to justify any action, and that further consultation will be needed. It was thought that the Working Group could run a stall at the Pitton Carnival to do this, and the Working Group will meet again to discuss this further.

f. Parish Clerk's report –

- I have attended the Highways briefing, Flood Group and Area Board meetings in the last month. I've had a number of reports about fly tipping, in Ben Lane Farley, at the Coronation Field in Farley, in Bentley Wood in Farley and along the byway/Clarendon Way in Pitton leading off The Green, and also from the track leading upto Badgers Rest. I have reported them all to Wiltshire Council, and I'm aware that the tyres in Ben Lane have been removed.
- Please note that the annual approval of the accounts and completion of the Governance Statement will be on the next agenda.
- Please note that Wiltshire Council has confirmed that the Parish Council is now able to co-opt to fill the Pitton ward vacancy. At the time of writing, I am not aware of anyone who has expressed an interest in joining the Council.
- Please note I have advised Wiltshire Council of the Farley ward vacancy. The appropriate notice will be displayed shortly.

g. Southern Area Board – the next meeting will take place on Thursday 26th May at 6.45pm at Trafalgar School, Downton.

64.16 Finance

d. Clerk's attendance at the SLCC South Region roadshow at Yeovil – this will cost the same as last year, ie £69.00 plus VAT, but shared 50:50 with Wilton TC. Topics covered will include current issues regarding financial administration, VAT, law, risk assessments, devolution of assets and services and the protection of the historic environment.

Please also note that I have requested a refund of £120 from Eon in respect of the payments for the electricity supply to the Pitton pump control, and the monthly payment has been reduced from £27.00 to £10.00 as from 1st June.

65.15 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters

a. Highways/Parish Steward briefing meeting - The new contractor, Ringway, is now in place, and is starting to deliver. Wilts Council continues to retreat to delivering just its statutory responsibilities. However, the Parish Steward scheme is a discretionary service, which has been reintroduced, as it was effective and popular in the past. However, it will be reviewed in a year's time, and the service will be reduced to parishes which don't use it, and the resources redeployed to those that do. All Streetscene/pothole issues need to be reported via the My Wilts app, and the parish/town councils have the opportunity to prioritise upto five issues each month that need attention. A list of tasks will be circulated shortly. Anyone can report issues via the app - go here: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/report.htm> to download the app to your smartphone or ipad, or to download to your laptop. There will be more comprehensive and detailed information circulated with the next Highways newsletter, which I will circulate as usual.

Longer term, the Parish Council may wish to consider providing a "top up" road cleaning and gully emptying service, especially in the flood prone areas of the parish. The Parish Council may be able to assume the General Power of Competence next May, after the elections, as hopefully all seats will be filled at the election, which will satisfy part of the eligibility criteria, which will give it the legal power to deliver this, if it wishes.

b. Footpath maintenance issues – Brian Cudby & Nigel Welsh of the local Ramblers Association asked the Riverbourne Community Centre in Laverstock to visit and make suggestions as to how the problem of Footpath 27 could be made safer as it drops down the Pitton escarpment to meet The Green. Unfortunately, it seems that it will be more difficult and more expensive than first thought, and we are waiting for Nick Cowen, the RoW officer to give his thoughts.

67.16 Ongoing matters

a. Development of an Emergency Plan – there seems little appetite to develop this, and so I recommend it is put into abeyance for the time being.

b. Registering title – no further news. I will press the solicitor on this.

c. Purchase of a toddler swing – I have not yet received confirmation that the R2 funding can be made available. The Wiltshire Council officer dealing with this retired at the end of March, and has not yet been replaced, but I will press for a reply. The existing swing has been removed.

d. Litter picking – I have been approached by Mrs Sankey with the possibility of organising a litter pick through the church organisations. The Parish Council can provide the insurance cover, and via the Area Board, can also provide litter picking equipment. Wiltshire Council will collect the litter, suitably bagged, at no charge. But eth parish Council may like to buy its own in due course. The idea is to organise a community event to pick up as much litter as possible, and then for individuals to take responsibility for their own small areas, to keep on top of it. I will continue to liaise with Mrs Sankey.