

Background report for Pitton & Farley PC meeting June 2017

63.17 Co-Option, Pitton ward

I understand that Stuart is happy to be co-opted back onto the Council, and this can be done in his absence. If he is co-opted, this would leave two vacancies in Pitton and one in Farley.

66.17 Reports

a. Pitton Village Hall – at its recent meeting, the Management Committee agreed to the replacement and resiting of the oil boiler, which will give more space in the kitchen, and will be more efficient to run. The next meeting is at the end of August.

d. Clerk – I attended the most recent Area Board meeting in Winterslow, and the most recent SLCC Wilts branch meeting in Wilton. Carlton Brand, the senior WC corporate Director updated those clerks present with Wiltshire Council's view of the future, which I reproduce below from the branch minutes: Carlton gave a short presentation on the way forward for Wiltshire Council following the elections, followed by a short question and answer session. He noted that there had been a good intake of new, younger councillors, of high calibre, capabilities and talent. Baroness Scott had been re-elected Leader, and two south Wiltshire Councillors, Bridget Wayman and Richard Clewer had entered the cabinet. A new business plan covering the 350 services delivered and associated staff would be in place by July, and the Council would undergo a full Local Government Association peer review in the autumn. With regards to finances, the Council has to find £45m in savings over the next four financial years, with nearly half, £19m, required in 2018/2019. In order of the priority, the following were the issues Wiltshire Council faces.

- a. Adult Social Care* – nearly two thirds of the budget is devoted to this.
- b. Housing* – the price of a property in Wiltshire is approx. 11 x average income, and the Council intends to build more affordable homes over the next 25 years.
- c. Economic/Business Growth* – Wiltshire only has 0.5% unemployment, but the main problem is lack of skills. School attainment is good, one of the best in the country, and both Dyson and Boeing have invested in the county.
- d. Town Centre regeneration* – Wiltshire is lagging in this respect, and Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham all need support and upgrading.
- e. Leisure campuses/hubs* – Wiltshire Council still owns some 3000 properties, with a £76m maintenance backlog. This estate portfolio will continue to decrease as the Council sells off property and land, most of which is non-controversial. There will be increased emphasis on amalgamating with other services, perhaps co-locating in the hubs.
- f. Road/Streetscene/Litter* – this was a huge local election issue, but contrary to popular belief, Wiltshire is not as bad as some areas of the country for litter.
- g. Integration of Children's and Social Care* – child exploitation in all its forms continues across Wiltshire, with social media being a particular issue. Fortunately it occurs in isolated incidences rather than in gangs, such as in Rotherham, Oxford and elsewhere
- h. Transformation from paper based to digital records* – and increased emphasis on automation.
- i. New waste collection contract* – this will be delivered entirely by external contractors by the end of 2018. Flytipping of commercial waste remains a huge problem, costing £2.5m pa to clear up. Wiltshire Council will prosecute those caught doing it, although identification is a problem. The owner of the tipped stuff will also be prosecuted, as they are obliged to ensure their contractor has the appropriate waste licence.
- j. Asset transfers* – pushing forward with this project, and a revised policy will be submitted to the Cabinet in July, as the existing method of negotiating with Salisbury had proved very expensive, and was not sustainable. He was very aware that the

backlog was in the legal department, as officers were very risk averse, and needed to change their mentality and approach, and if parishes contacted him directly, he would try and clear the blockage. However he noted that they could take vulnerable children into care and protection within hours, if necessary. Carlton also confirmed that council housing stock, which was mostly in the south, would not be transferred to housing associations.

- k. *Parish Council performance* – Carlton noted that half of the complaints received under the Code of Conduct were from clerks who were being bullied. He felt that the quality of meetings/debate/transparency was sadly wanting. Clare felt that Wiltshire Councillors need to understand how Town and Parish Councils work, and what they can and can't do. Deborah noted that the branch had offered to help with training particularly the new Wiltshire Councillors, and asked if it had happened – sadly not. Carlton acknowledged the lack of understanding and the communication issues, and offered to host and pay for a joint WC/TC/PC one day conference to help try and overcome these issues. It was thought that circulating information about this via the Community Engagement managers would be a good idea.
- l. *Ward Boundary review in 2018/2019* – this was required by the Boundary Commission to take account of the size and spread of the population which the ward sizes needed to reflect. The number of unitary councillors would be reviewed as well, and halving it to 50% was certainly an option.

Q. Can you cope with all the projects you have in hand?

A. Yes, because it was mostly outside agencies that were dealing with them, eg Stonehenge tunnel, redevelopment of The Maltings in Salisbury.

Q. Will Wiltshire Council be able to deliver the 40k new homes required in the Core Strategy

A. Yes, over the next 5/10 years to 2026 – but do get your Neighbourhood Plans in place.

- e. *Area Board* – this took place at Winterslow Village Hall. Those present learnt of the Community Tree planting project to provide a memorial for those killed in World War I (this will be an agenda item in July), confirmation that the fly-tipping prevention camera has now been deployed following magistrates consent being obtained, and the police reported that 10 Special constables were being recruited to cover the Southern, Salisbury and Wilton community areas. Online reporting of crime was also being considered and tested. Cllr Richard Britton had been elected as Chairman, and Cllr Richard Clewer had been elected as Vice Chairman. Various grants were considered, but none of them received the full amount requested. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 27th July at Coombe Bissett VH.

67.17 Flood Amelioration scheme

Cllr Coppock has received a response from Danny Everett to his letter originally sent in January, and will update members at the meeting.

The next Wilts Council Flood Ops Group meeting will be held at 11.00am on Wednesday 14th June in Bishopstone VH.

69.17 Footpath matters

Brian Cudby has bought more tools for path maintenance, plus a shed and base in which to store them. I am investigating insurance and will include them on the asset register.

70.17 Highways matters/parish stewards

The parish steward next visits the parish on Thursday 22nd and Monday 26th June, and also Thursday July 20th and Monday 24th July. Please let me know of any tasks that the parish steward can do.

71.17 Concerns about Farley Play area at the Coronation Field

Cllr Latham will give a verbal report on this.

72.17 Finance

d. Quotes for grass matting – I have obtained two quotes so far, one from Wicksteed in the sum of £10,000.00 and one from Charles Mant Leisure in the sum of £6440.00. At the time of writing, I am awaiting a third one from Kompan Ltd.

I am currently obtaining quotes for repair and for a new notice board in Pitton and for the fencing in the Close.

73.17 Ongoing matters

a. *Internal Audit Report 2016/17* – all actions have been completed. The 2015/16 Eon VAT will be included in the 2017/18 VAT reclaim in March 2018.

b. *Farley defib* – no further news.