

Bradpole Civil Parish Annual Meeting

Thursday 5th April 2018

Report from Bradpole Parish Council Chairman

It has been another challenging but successful year for Bradpole PC tinged with sadness at the sudden accidental death of our Chairman Steve Spear.

Councillors attended the celebration of Steve's life and acknowledged his dedicated service to the community.

Due to ill health, Councillor Hudson resigned.

Two vacancies have been filled and Councillor Dunn & Councillor Schuster were co-opted to the council during the year.

Councillors are constantly looking at ways of being open and transparent. We have embraced the use of social media; the community website has been much improved and is more user friendly. The web site is kept up to date with local news items as well as meeting our statutory obligations to publicise meeting dates, agenda, minutes and finances. We make good use of Facebook to communicate issues of local interest and importance; our audience of followers continues to grow steadily with posts regularly reaching between 300 and 1000+ views.

Councillors have considered 22 planning applications and 3 tree orders. All planning applications are advertised on the community website and Councillors encourage residents to make them aware of any concerns they may have.

As requested by residents in our Parish Plan we continue to maintain, improve and protect from development the green spaces owned by the Parish Council.

Gore Cross is registered with Fields in Trust and is protected for future generations.

To celebrate this, during July 2017, we hosted a well-attended community picnic and we hope to hold similar events in the future.

At the suggestion of some of the local community, we increased the frequency of seasonal grass cutting to ensure grass is kept short and in a good condition.

The council is pursuing registration of Pageants Close play area and field with Fields in Trust and hope this will be completed during 2018.

Plans to improve the Gore have been in place for a few years, unfortunately progress has been hampered by unauthorised cutting out of various trees and shrubs by persons unknown and more recently the bad weather has further delayed planned scrub tidying works. The council have invited local residents to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss working together to improve this space.

The Railway Gardens are maintained as a green area and the adjoining allotments continue to be productively used to capacity.

Councillors monitor tree stocks, which are regularly maintained by a professional Tree Surgeon. Unfortunately, it has been necessary to remove several diseased trees from around the Parish but all of these have been replaced with new saplings.

The use of the local lengthsman scheme operated by Bridport Town Council continues to represent good value and enables the council to respond quickly to issues reported by the public as well routine works. Examples of services carried out include hedge trimming, drain clearing, fly tipping removal, routine emptying of dog fouling bins, repairing fences and stiles etc.,

Bradpole's participation in the wider Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan continues to be monitored by Councillors to ensure Bradpole resident's views as identified in our Parish Plan are represented, the final plan document is acceptable to the Parish and is finalised within the current timescale (April 19).

There are 2 matters of particular importance to residents and the future of Bradpole Parish:-

The Local Plan review: - Councillors responded to the Local Plan review and we await publication by WDDC of the results (expected September 18). The results will inform if any of the areas assessed within the civil parish boundaries are to be included for development up to 2030. Reports will be added to Facebook and the community website as and when they are available.

Unification: - West Dorset District Council will cease to exist in April 2019 and our area of Dorset will be served by one newly formed central council to be known as Dorset Council. Unification will have a direct effect on the delivery of public services at parish level. WDDC have stated it 'may in future cease to fund discretionary services '. Bradpole Council have asked to be supplied with a definitive list and cost of these services. Bradpole Council understands that all services have to be paid for somehow and if the residents of Bradpole Parish wish for these services to continue there will be financial implications. Inevitably residents will be asked to pay more via the precept.

Bradpole Parish Council together with other local councils will be monitoring this process through a series of Parish Liaison meetings led by BLAP.

The next 12 months will be an exceptionally challenging time for Bradpole Parish Councillors as the unification of local councils takes place and many of the organisational and financial burdens traditionally borne by salaried staff and Councillors of West Dorset District & Dorset County Council are passed down to them.

Councillor Tricia Dendle

Chairman - Bradpole Parish Council

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