

## **Bradpole Parish Annual Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

### **Parish Council Chairman's Report**

It has been another challenging but successful year for Bradpole Parish Council.

The death of long standing Councillor John Giles Townsend in August 2018 was a sad loss. Councillor Townsend dedicated many years of his life to serving the people of Bradpole.

Councillor Schuster resigned as he moved away and Councillors Dunn & Casey resigned due to pressure of work. Three persons were co-opted to the Parish Council and we welcomed Councillors Wendy Smart, Neil Chilcott and Alan Smart.

Councillors strive to be open and transparent and continue to make very good use of the Bradpole Council web site and Facebook page to communicate issues of local interest as well as meeting the council's legal obligation to publicise meeting dates, agenda, minutes and finances. Our Facebook posts now regularly reach 1500+ views.

Unification has taken place and West Dorset District Council no longer exists. Our area of Dorset is now served by one newly formed central council known as Dorset Council. Unification will have a direct effect on the delivery of public services at parish level and also means we have lost our local West Dorset District Councillors. Bradpole councillors believe this loss of 'local representation' makes the roles of Parish Councils much more important and we continue to pro-actively represent the views of our community where and whenever possible.

The burden of some public services has already been passed to the Parish Council e.g. regular clearing of rights of way, road sweeping, verge cutting and drain clearing. Councillors wait to see if the responsibility for further 'discretionary services' will be passed down to Parish Councils when the new Dorset Council is fully operational.

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.

With the formation of the new Dorset Council comes changes to their web site and internal processes. Of particular importance to Bradpole Councillors has been changes to the system for considering planning applications. Plans relevant to Bradpole Parish are now viewed on line and paper copies are no longer available. There has been some 'teething' problems with this system but councillors and staff are now becoming more conversant with the new systems.

A considerable amount of Bradpole Councillors time has recently been spent monitoring and participating in the wider Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP). Councillors have ensured as much as possible Bradpole resident's views as identified in the Bradpole Parish Plan are represented. The BANP is now reaching the final stages and we hope a referendum will be held later this year. If agreed at referendum the BANP will then become a legal document and will sit alongside the District Plan. Bradpole Parish Council would like to acknowledge the multitudinous volunteer hours spent by members of the community and councillors in composing this plan.

As requested by our residents, in various consultations, Bradpole Council continues to maintain, protect and improve our green spaces including:- regular grass cutting; replacing fencing around Gore Cross Green Recreational Area; Pageants Close Play Area & Field is now protected in perpetuity by Fields in Trust; The Railway Gardens are maintained as a green area; The Allotments are productively used to capacity; The Gore Wildlife Corridor continues to be maintained as a wooded walkway; our tree stocks continue to be monitored ; a shed (funded by a grant) is to be installed at Gore Cross Green and the old notice boards at various locations around the parish are gradually being replaced.

The use of the local lengthsman scheme operated by Bridport Town Council continues to represent good value and enables Bradpole 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, installing tables, benches and notice boards etc.,

During March 2019 Bradpole Council hosted a well-attended informal community get together. Residents were able to meet their neighbours and chat with councillors about any concerns they had. We hope to hold another event in the near future.

The next 12 months will be a challenging time for Bradpole Parish Councillors as the newly formed Dorset Council evolves and new methods of working together become apparent.

Councillor Tricia Dendle  
Chairman Bradpole Parish Council.