

# OUTWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT – FINANCIAL YEAR 1.4.2017 TO 31.3.2018

This Annual Report to Councillors and Parishioners is intended to summarise the Council's activities and to provide an insight into future planning. The Report is sub-divided under various headings – as follows: -

### (a) Council Meetings

Council meetings have been reasonably well attended by Parish Councillors. Since the Elections in May 2015 our District/Borough Councillor is Mr H Humphrey and Borough Councillor Mr. Chris Crofts. Both combine Borough Council duties with other elected posts. Both Councillors' have attended as many of our Parish Council meetings as possible. One member of Council has resigned Mr. Paul Smith, he was thanked for his time and work on the Council. Attendance by parishioners has remained spasmodic, only on occasions, when issues affecting specific areas of the village are due for discussion, does the number attending rise above 1 or 2. Councillors continue to take this as a compliment, believing that most parishioners are content with the way in which the Council conducts its affairs. Council does start the New Year with two more Councillor's having to resign. Both Mr. Dale Boyce and Mr Allan Mould are thanked for the hard work they have carried out during their terms as Councillors.

### (b) Committees/Representatives on village committees

The eleven members of the Parish Council have specific responsibilities and report in detail at each Council Meeting.

**Councillor Tara Rust** represented the Council as the Liaison officer **with Beaupre Community Primary School**, she takes an active interest in school affairs providing a detailed report on the school's activities to Council Meetings. **Councillor's John Holland and Dale Boyce** report to the Council on **Cemetery** matters, the Parish Council providing the finance to keep the Cemetery clean and tidy. Here Council is again indebted to Mr and Mrs David Rayner for their devotion to keeping the grass cut and tidy and cutting back trees and hedges. **Councillor's Paul Brenchley, and Tara Rust** represents the Council on the **Playing Field and Village Hall Committee** and their monthly reports enable Councillors, who are all Trustees of the field, to keep abreast of the ongoing fund-raising activities. **Councillors John Wake, Dale Boyce, John Watts, Mrs Jill Gooch and Mr Fred Keer** form our **Planning Sub Working Party**, tasked with examining every planning application received from the Borough Council, and making decisions and representations on all planning matters. They are empowered to make decisions in respect of many applications (small extensions, outline planning applications etc) to allow the Clerk to meet Borough Planning deadlines for reply but bring any that may be controversial to the attention of the Full Council before recommendations or representations are made to the Borough Planning Authorities. **Councillors Peter Cutting and Dale Boyce**, form our **Allotment Sub-Working Party** overseeing allocation of tenancies and conducting an annual inspection. The parish is fortunate that all allotments are occupied. The Garden Allotments have now ceased due to lack of interest and location. **Councillors Paul Brenchley, John Holland and Allan Mould** form what is known as our **Village Committee**, they keep an eye out for any road defects, damaged road signs etc, and the general well being of the village. **Finance Committee consists of Councillor's Mr. John Wake, Mrs Jill Gooch and Mr. Fred Keer** whom ensure that Council keeps within the budget. The Council employs a Village Handyperson to keep the village centre clean and our thanks go to Mr M D Ellington whom does small tasks when required and keeps the Council informed of any matters they need to know.

### d) The financial picture

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 Council financial holdings were as follows :\_

Business Premium Account .....	£7004.38
Community (Current) Account .....	£1698.13
Petty Cash .....	£3.19
<b>Total :- .....</b>	<b>£8705.70</b>

The end of year figures are lower than this time last year therefore the Precept for 2018/19 has been raised the 10% allowed from the previous year to accommodate the projects proposed for this financial year. Therefore, budgeting and looking at the forecast each month has been necessary. Council is grateful to **Councillor Fred Keer** for ensuring that spending is within the budget .

The Annual Precept for 2017-2018 was £13,300.00. There was a government grant allocated to the Parish of £669.00. This assuring the parishioners that the finance committee with the guidance of the clerk continue to manage the finances efficiently. Parish Council annually pay £250.00 to Borough Council for the maintenance and upkeep of the Community Car Park at Townley Close Surgery, and energy costs that keep rising. The Council is grateful to Mrs Emma Bateman who audited the books with great attention.

#### **e) Social Housing**

The Parish Council are still fighting to get the road adopted in both St. Andrew's Close and Birdbeck Road. Promises have been broken. The Council have done their utmost to try and get someone to be responsible for the topping of the road, but they get no support from Hastoe Housing, Oceanview Developments, NCC or BCKL&WN.

#### **f) Garden Allotments/Allotments**

The Allotments are a major income for the Council from the Rents. Allotment tenants have been notified of a £25.00 per acre rise as from April 2019.

#### **g) LDF Site allocations development- Neighbourhood Plan**

This year, again the Borough Council has requested sites to be allocated for building and asked for Parish Council's input. They have in the past ignored sites that Parish Council feels are significant. Reason primarily being in a Flood Risk area of which Parish Council continually tries to prove otherwise that flooding can occur within the Parish. Now several areas have been put forward by local developers and land owners to gain permission to build on land that is considered potentially brown belt. Government have now bought in a new policy for self builds on Countryside. Outwell Parish Council are now embarking on a Neighbourhood Plan. Upwell are leading the way, tried to do combined meetings but that is not viable. **Councillor Mr. Fred Keer** agreed to form a steering committee along with **Mrs Jill Gooch, Mr John Watts and Mr Dale Boyce**, they started by sending questionnaires to get a feel for what the parishioners think about the village at this time.

#### **h) Outwell Parish Council WebSite**

This has become popular with visits. In turn the Council has been contacted in this manner and been informed of mistakes and old notices. Sadie Forth was very helpful in creating the Website to be attractive and informative and she has now trained the Clerk to keep it updated, to cut back on costs. It's a necessary part of the Transparency plan that every Town and Parish Council must have in place to publish their finances and assets. The link is [www.outwellparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.outwellparishcouncil.co.uk).

#### **i) Highway Issues.**

Parish Council have constantly been in contact with NCC highways due to the pot holes that have appeared in the village and re- occur. The other issue is speeding in the village. In 2017 a new group was formed in the village called Upwell and Outwell Neighbourhood Watch. These volunteers have now become a Speed Watch Team whom regular are out on the roads in Outwell, Upwell, Three Holes. Parish Council have tried their utmost to get a safer crossing near the Crown Public House across the busy A1101.

#### **j) Amenities in the Village**

The Village of Outwell is a very busy village with various shops, Public house, post office, hairdressers, Methodist Chapel and St. Clement's Church, Garages, several businesses and a recreational building called Fenrock whereby this has grown according with the village's needs. The Village Hall and Playingfield is popular with it being run by a management team and they have plans to extend the building. Parish Council endeavours to ensure that the Parishioners enjoy living in the community and their needs are looked after. There is a spirit in the village that when events are put on they are usually well attended. Council wants to ensure that all these amenities thrive and the growth of the village is not to great that the infrastructure cannot be sustained.

1<sup>st</sup> May 2018..... Parish Clerk

NB. If the Parish Council approves this Report at the A.G.M. on 1.5.18 it is proposed that it is published on the WebSite.