

OUTWELL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT – FINANCIAL YEAR 1.4.2018 TO 31.3.2019

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. Two members of Council have resigned Mr. Dale Boyce and Mr Alan Mould, both were thanked for their time and work on the Council. Two new members were co-opted onto the Council, Mrs Jane Sutton and Ms Donna Semmens. 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.

(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 John Wake** report to the Council on **Cemetery** matters, the Parish Council providing the finance to keep the Cemetery clean and tidy. Mr and Mrs Rainer retired at the end of 2017, The Council started a new contract with CGM to cover the work required. **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, David Murfitt, John Watts, Mrs Jill Gooch**, 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, Ms Donna Semmens and David Murfitt**, form our **Allotment Sub-Working Party** overseeing allocation of tenancies and conducting an annual inspection. The parish is fortunate that all allotments are occupied. **Councillors Paul Brenchley, John Holland and Donna Semmens** 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, David Murfitt 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. **Councillor Mrs Jane Sutton** is the Council Police and Speed Watch liaison Officer. A new Working party formed for the Neighbourhood plan, consisting of **Councillors Mr. Fred Keer, Mr. John Watts and Mrs Jill Gooch**.

d) The financial picture

As of 31st March 2019 Council financial holdings were as follows :—

Business Premium Account	£5017.28
Community (Current) Account	£5133.03
Petty Cash	£3.19
Total :-	£10153.50

The end of year figures are slightly higher than this time last year, but still not out of the woods yet so the Precept for 2019/20 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 2018-2019 was £14,630.00. There was a government grant allocated to the Parish of £482.00. 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) LDF Site allocations development- Neighbourhood Plan

This year, again the Borough Council is working on LDF site allocations. 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 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.

f) 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. 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.

g) 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. PC Lee Anderton is our Police Liaison Officer who monthly updates Council with Crime news and figures locally in the area. Parish Council are currently negotiating with NCC highways to make crossing the A1122 near the Church bridge safer for those in Wheelchairs and pushchairs.

h) 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, and several businesses. 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.

i) Social media

The Council are finding other ways to communicate with the local Parish. There are three Outwell Sites that are full of local information, these are used by the Council to give information to the Parishioners on Social media.

j) New Cemetery Proposal

This proposal is very new currently and therefore lots of information is required before going ahead. If Council can they will endeavour to provide burial places in the village when the current cemetery is full, which although there are only 4plots available, there are few reserved.

1st May 2019..... Parish Clerk

NB. If the Parish Council approves this Report at the A.G.M. on 14.5.19 it is proposed that it is published on the WebSite.