

Grandborough Parish Council Newsletter

June 2019

Chairman's Annual Report 2018/2019

An extract from a report given at the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 1st May—note that some of the content has been overtaken by events since

Elections

It was pleasing to see that there were 5 nominations for the 5 places on the Parish Council for the 2019 – 2023 term, and I am pleased to welcome Jeff Clarke to the Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Matt Bullen for his contribution over the last 4 years.

Planning Issues

Once again the local planning issues have been a major element of our work. The Inspector's rejection of the Lodge Farm proposals was excellent news, though the delay in finalising his report has created further issues. The report now having been published, we anticipate that Rugby Borough Council will adopt their Local Plan in June.

The absence of a Local Plan, and the changes to Planning Regulations made by the Government have resulted in planning permission being granted for a total of 13 new homes in Church Road and off Sawbridge Road.

One big positive was the decision of the Planning Inspector to reject the appeal against the refusal of permission for a pig finishing unit at Grandborough Fields.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee has met monthly through the year. Having been given grant aid we appointed Neil Pearce as our consultant. He advised that a supplementary survey be carried out, and this was completed in July. We arranged drop in sessions in the Village Hall on a Friday evening and Saturday morning to share details of the evidence collected to date and to consult on next steps. It was disappointing that only 23 parishioners attended the sessions. Nevertheless we have moved on to developing a set of draft Policies for inclusion in our Plan. Unfortunately when these were assessed by Neil Pearce he raised significant doubts as to whether such proposals would be workable within the National Planning Framework. We are now considering next steps. (See Over)

Lengthsman

We continue to fund the Lengthsman scheme with the same schedule of work as last year. The work included digging out blocked gullies and verge grips, cleaning signs, clearing vegetation around signs, weed spraying path edges and kerbs, and so on.

Council Meetings.

The Council met on six occasions for its normal bi-monthly meetings. Additional meetings have been called to deal with major planning applications, audit procedures and tenders for contracts. A number of planning applications received between scheduled meetings were dealt with by using e-mail and the Rugby Borough Council Planning Portal.

Chairman's Annual Report 2018/2019 (cont)

Council Meetings(cont)

Representatives of the Council have attended meetings of the Rugby Area Committee of Local Councils and a number of consultation meetings with Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council.

Public attendance at Parish Council meetings is usually small. We would encourage all electors to come along and observe your elected representatives in meetings. There is always an opportunity to raise any matter of concern at these meetings.

Finance

At our meeting on 6th November we reviewed the budgeted and actual expenditure for 2018/2019 to date, and then considered a projected budget for the following year. Projected expenditure was £10670 and projected income was £7978, producing a projected deficit of £2692. We have used accumulated balances to cover deficit budgets for several years now, and our projected balance available in 2019/20 would barely cover the deficit, and there would be no cover for any contingencies. We therefore decided to increase the Parish Precept by £750 to £6000. (The first increase since 2007).

This increase will amount to about 10 pence per week for a Band F Council Tax payer.

Management of Assets

The ditches along Sawbridge Road/Hill road were cleared, and maintenance was carried out on a number of Parish Council trees and hedges. The grass mowing contract has been renewed including the additional mowing of the Aikman Green Open Space. We continue to receive a sum from Rugby Borough Council in return for arranging the mowing of certain areas previously undertaken by the Borough Council. The Council is grateful to all residents who are able to tend the verges bounding their property. This helps to keep down the cost of mowing left to be done by the Parish Council, and thus helps minimise the Parish Rate.

We are very grateful for the contribution made by those villagers who plant and maintain the planters. I know they would welcome extra help if you are interested.

We are grateful for the efforts of those Parishioners who regularly litter pick as they walk the parish roads.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their contributions this year, and offer a special thank you to Kay, our clerk, who keeps us within the proper procedures, and does all the essential day to day work.

Rugby Borough Council Local Plan and Grandborough Neighbourhood Plan

Rugby Borough Council Local Plan

At its June meeting, Rugby Borough Council adopted the Local Plan as amended following the Planning Inspector's Review. The Adopted Plan defines Grandborough as a small local settlement which means that there is a presumption of no development outside the existing village envelope other than in exceptional cases. (The exceptional cases are defined within the Plan)

Grandborough Neighbourhood Plan.

As outlined in the Chairman's Report above, the Steering Committee had developed a set of draft policies for incorporation into a Neighbourhood Plan, subject to consultation. The draft policies were designed to deliver the preferences expressed by residents in the series of surveys and consultations summarised at the drop in event. The policies covered Housing, the Built Environment, the Natural Environment, the Parish Economy, and Community Facilities. The most significant draft policies concerned Housing and Flood Prevention.

House Building

The Steering Committee sought to provide for the organic growth of the village through limited expansion of the village envelope by allowing limited numbers of new houses at 5 year intervals. (Not starting until 2023 to take account of the 13 houses that have been given planning permission during the period that there was no effective Rugby Borough Council Local Plan) We also sought to require a mix of house sizes. (Number of bedrooms)

Our draft policies were as follows:

Add to the Rugby Borough Council Local Plan list of exceptions the following:

1) Small scale developments adjacent to the existing Grandborough Village envelope provided that: i) No more than 10 dwellings under this exception are granted development permission in each period of 5 years starting from 1st January 2023, AND ii) 50% of each development shall comprise a mix of 2 and 3 bedroomed dwellings

Separate from, and in addition to the exception provided above, up to 4 'affordable dwellings' in any period of 5 years commencing 1st January 2019 [Affordable meaning social housing for rent, or shared ownership],

We have been advised that we cannot divide up the plan period into 5 year sections; nor can we delay implementation until 2023. Furthermore we are told that the proposed bedroom mix requirement would be unenforceable.

Flood Prevention

Given the long running issues re surface water and foul water flooding in Sawbridge Road/Hill Road/Main Street we sought to avoid or minimise any additional load created by new developments

Our draft policies were as follows:

1) Any development must make provision to ensure that the run off rate of surface water from the site as a whole is reduced to the lowest practicable level.

2) In areas where fluvial or surface water flood risk is a known issue, proposals will not be permitted unless suitable mitigation is provided which results in lower water run-off from the site than that prevailing prior to development. Where mitigation measures involve cut off ditches, balancing ponds and or similar, proposals should demonstrate the means by which these shall be maintained to ensure their satisfactory performance in perpetuity.

3) Each newly built dwelling must incorporate rainwater capture and storage with a minimum capacity of 10000 litres, and a pumping facility to allow use of stored water for domestic and garden use

We have been advised that these suggestions are well outside National Planning Policy provisions and would not be acceptable.

Our Conclusions

Since we cannot deliver these main issues, which have been central to community thinking for some years, we cannot justify expending any more time, effort, or money on producing a Neighbourhood Plan which has had its main components removed. The Steering Committee will therefore regretfully suggest that the Parish Council at its July meeting halts development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Community First Responders

A new Leam Valley Community First Responders Group is being established, initially affiliated to the Rugby Group.

They would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining their team of volunteers. The commitment is for at least 4 hours per week on call, with additional activities at events, giving talks and fundraising. If you are interested please contact Susan Waddington : 07889532810 or Linda Belgrove : 07943336574..

In addition to the First Responders the Group are also considering setting up an extended group of basic first aid and CPR trained volunteers in each village, called 'Numbers Plus'. If you are interested in joining such a group please contact any of those listed in the Contact Details section below.

Dates of Parish Council Meetings in 2019

Tuesday 2nd July; Tuesday 3rd September; Tuesday 5th November. All meetings are held in the Village Hall starting at 7:45pm.

All meetings are open to the public, and there is an opportunity before the meeting starts for any observer to comment on any Parish issue of concern to them.

Parish Council Contact Details

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