

KINLET PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT Year Ending 31/3/2021

Little did we realise a year ago quite how challenging the forthcoming year would be when the full effect of the Coronavirus pandemic became apparent. As we were no longer able to hold face to face meetings, we held no meetings in April, May and June, but with the delegated powers previously granted to the Chairman and Clerk this ensured that the business side of the council continued to operate. It was also encouraging to see how the community worked together to help each other.

We started to hold our monthly meetings via 'Zoom' in July and once a few technical problems were sorted out these meetings proved to be different, but successful for dealing with parish matters. Thanks are due to S.A.L.C. for their initial help and to the councillors for embracing this new technology to enable these meetings to take place.

No Annual Parish Council meeting was held in May due to the government restrictions and also no Annual Parish meeting, so Mr P. Kirton continued as Chairman with Mrs J Rowley acting as Vice-Chairman. Representatives on other organisations also continued in office.

A considerable amount of time has been spent in discussing highway matters, in particular the state of the roads and the unsatisfactory manner in which potholes have been repaired so that they recurred after a short time. Despite the re-organisation which took place in the Highways Dept. at Shropshire no great improvement has been noticed. It is a continuing wonder why proper repairs are not undertaken initially, thus avoiding the cost of having to keep on returning to rectify matters. This is an ongoing problem, although in fairness we are aware of the financial situation at Shropshire Council and the shortage of staff on occasions due to sickness or isolating of workers.

During the year we have thoroughly discussed and then sent our recommendations to Shropshire Council on 16 planning applications. It should be emphasised once again that the Parish Council is only to make recommendations in respect of planning application – the final decision being made by Shropshire Council .

The recent increase in the amount of litter around the Parish has also been cause for concern and once again we have been pressing Shropshire Council to attend to this matter. It appears that the Council do not have an actual schedule of regular inspection at present, so it is necessary to keep on reporting 'black spots' to enable these to be put into the system. Thanks are due to Button Oak residents who regularly go out and collect the litter around their area.

We have recently appointed a new Lengthsman and this should enable the more routine matters to be attended to quickly without the necessity to refer them to Shropshire Council.

The updating of the Parish Plan has now been completed with the final results published on our website. This will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to make any necessary alterations and also to assess whether there are any items which need to be included in the Cleobury Mortimer Place Plan.

Ms. C. Fell moved out of the area in August and we co-opted Mr R. Oakley (Tricky) on to the council in her place in October. Mrs M. Quick resigned in November and it was decided not to make any co-option at this time in view of the forthcoming Election in May when all nine seats on the council will be contested.

Mrs Madge Shingleton has served as our County Councillor for 12 years and previously was our District Councillor but she is now retiring and is not standing for re-election this year. Our thanks are due to her for her sterling work on our behalf over the years – always giving useful advice when it has been needed and also championing our cause when we needed some help and we wish her well in her retirement. We are also grateful for the help, advice and interest that Mr Gwilym Butler has given us during the year and for his attendance at our meeting.

During the year we have made donations to Kinlet School and Playgroup/ Midlands Air Ambulance/ Severn Hospice and Severn Hospice at Home/ Highley First Responders and S.A.R.A and we will be making a donation to the Village Hall when they have a costed project.

Our 4 year accreditation at Foundation level of the Local Council Award scheme expired at the end of last year and we are currently preparing a new presentation for its renewal.

At the present time the regulations are such that we can no longer hold remote meetings after the beginning of May and we shall, therefore, be looking to return to face to face meetings in the Village Hall, whilst observing all the regulations relating to such a move. It is said that there is 'light at the end of the tunnel' - which is great news - although no doubt there will be some hiccups along the way, however we are sure that with the continuing co-operation of everyone this can become a reality.

Such a report as this can only highlight some of the many matters dealt with during the year and these have been wide and varied. We hope that any parishioner who has come to us for help has been satisfied with the assistance we have been able to give within the boundaries that our remit allows – it is always our wish to serve all the community to the best of our ability.

Please do not hesitate to contact a councillor or the clerk or attend the specially allocated parishioners' time at the commencement of our meetings.