

# WHITCHURCH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Whitchurch Annual Parish Meeting held in the meeting room of the Swan Pub,  
Whitchurch on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at 7.30pm

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## Report by Chairman Cllr Ashley Bond

We have only had one change in Cllrs this year with the cooption of Cllr Palin to replace Cllr Catz.

There have been a huge number of projects undertaken this year namely:

- 1) Footpath to play area – the previous path had been made of wood chip and it was very boggy and difficult for access. Now there is a permanent hard pavement which has improved the access and eliminated the water problems.
- 2) We have halved our insurance premium by moving to Came & Company this year.
- 3) Mobile Vehicle Activate Sign – we have purchased the MVAS unit with the assistance of the BCC LAF and this will be installed on site over the coming months and should assist in slowing down traffic through all parts of the village as it can be moved to different locations.
- 4) The bus stop outside For Beauty has been reinstated following the concerns raised regarding access to the bus stop opposite the Chapel as there is no footpath. The Council will continue to request funding at the BCC LAF to try and get funding to put in a footpath to this other stop.
- 5) £250 was received from Cllr Netta Glovers Leader Fund to buy a plaque for the Jubilee Tree.
- 6) Meeting location changed from the Church Hall to the Pub following cold temperatures over the winter months making it not feasible to carry on meetings at this location.
- 7) Trenches on the field were filled by community service workers and thanks to Cllr Sanders and Lincoln for co-ordinating this works.
- 8) The case of the claimed footpath across the back of the gardens at Little London was heard by the Planning Inspectorate on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct at a well attended public enquiry. The appeal was upheld and this resulted in the footpath now being made into an official path and added to the definitive map so parishioner will now be able to walk this route again.
- 9) Street Light knocked over in The Meadows – this resulted in an insurance claim and a new light being put in.
- 10) Olympic Torch – the Council was heavily involved in the planning for this event with BCC. It proved a huge success with hundreds of people and schools turning out to watch in Whitchurch.
- 11) Jubilee Celebrations – organised by the village and enjoyed by all. The Council supported this event and made a donation towards the entertainment costs.

I would like to thank Tony Radwell who has had to retire from his role of cleaning and maintenance of the village bus shelters and his daily unlocking of the gates to the Recreation Field over many years for the Council. We are thankful to Betty Rose for taking on the cleaning of the shelters. Also thanks again to Andrew Pain for his efficiency in communicating to parishioners through the website and his emails on a regular basis. Finally thanks to Cllr Foot for his regular inspections of the play equipment and emptying of the bins and general bits of maintenance in the area.

Due to changes in Government funding of Council Tax Benefit we have had to increase the precept this year as the grants are removed and thus parishioners are paying an increased amount to cover this shortfall from the government. In addition we needed to increase as we have not been covering our routine expenditure over the past few years and have been using up reserves. This trend could not continue so there has been a rise of approx 11p per week for a band D equivalent this year, following a reduction last year, and no increases for several years. We will continue to try and keep the precept as low as possible in these austere times.

As a consequence we are not planning to fund any major projects at the moment however we will be undertaking grant application to fund the installation of a new skate ramp at the Recreation Field. We will also be purchasing an Automated External Defibrillator and will again be looking for grants to assist its purchase. The NHS will provide us with free training in its use and basis CPR courses for parishioners who wish to attend.

I would also like to express my thanks to all my fellow Councillors, the Clerk and our minute secretary Michelle Jackson and also to County Councillor Netta Glover who frequently attends our meetings and has been a great help in many County issues keeping us up to date with developments. Cllr Glover has successfully regained her seat on the county council for a further 4 year term and will be working with us to try and get signage on the Oving Road to reduce the number of HGVs using this route.