

**PADBURY PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2017
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Introduction

The aim of this report is to update and brief the village on the activities of their Parish Council over the past year (the first full year in which I have been Chairman). I will also suggest issues that might need attention in the near to mid-term.

Policy and Governance

A lot of effort has been expended in ensuring that our policies and governing documents meet required standards. These are hosted on our website (itself a requirement of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities), and have been recently reviewed and updated.

Of course, we are only the first tier of Local Government. We also work closely with our colleagues at both County and District Council level, and are very fortunate in the continuing support we enjoy from our Ward Councillors over a wide range of issues, and we are very grateful for that. We should take this opportunity to congratulate Cllr Sue Renshall in her new appointment as Chairman of AVDC. We will also hear from them a little later.

You will be aware of the discussions towards modernising and simplifying Local Government in this area, in terms of forming a Unitary Authority. As a Parish Council, we have been involved in numerous meetings, seminars and consultation exercises over the past year. Whilst there is little doubt that change is necessary, we have been disappointed (to say the least) in the largely confrontational way that the County and District Councils have carried out this review. The decision now rests with the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, and that is expected soon. Both 'sides' have frequently repeated how important they regard Parish Councils to be; it will be interesting to see how that will be played out in practice.

Routine Business

Being a Parish Councillor means rather more than attending a meeting for most months of the year. We receive an enormous amount of correspondence from other Authorities and from the people of this village asking for our action. These range from the reporting of issues regarding broken street lights and the state of footways and roads, to (this year) asking for permission to land a helicopter at Springfields!

We are involved regularly with consultations on a wide range of issues that might impact the village, and frequently these mean attendance at briefings and meetings. In any event, we are represented on a number of committees and fora where we can meet colleagues, discuss issues of mutual interest and concern and (in many instances) produce collective responses to County and District Councils.

Two new Cllrs have joined the Council over the past year, and we continue to identify courses to train them in their role.

Equally important is the physical work done by Cllrs when things need to be done, from repairing broken benches to maintaining the Play Area.

This is all very time-consuming, and I am grateful to all my fellow Cllrs who give up so much of their time in these activities.

Our previous Clerk stood-down last July, and the lack of someone in this key post could have been disastrous for us a Council. Deborah O'Brien was very dedicated, did an enormous amount for Padbury and was likely to be a hard act to follow. Fortunately, Jo Bonney successfully applied for the post, and has been most successful as our Proper Officer. I know I speak on behalf of my fellow Cllrs how very grateful we are for all her efforts.

Infrastructure and Environment

Over the past year, Padbury has resembled a large building site for extended periods. Nevertheless, we were awarded a 'Highly Commended' Certificate of Merit in the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition. As always, the Churchyard and the area around the War Memorial received special praise. As an important aside, the memorial has been included in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for the District.

Most of the side roads, lanes and ends have been repaired and resurfaced after many years, and we are grateful for Cllr John Chilver in championing that work for us.

Western Power Distribution (WPD) upgraded the overhead electrical supply network throughout the village. This work should mean that this aspect of infrastructure will be more resilient to damage. However, BT Openreach failed to remove a number of their redundant poles, and we are still in conflict with them over that. As a consequence of this work, some of the old street lights were damaged, and have had to be replaced at some significant cost to us, although WPD installed them for free. There was a considerable delay in obtaining the new lights from the supplier, and we apologise for that.

Of course, the major construction work involved that of the A413 Cycleway, which caused major disruption over many months. The residents of Springfields were especially affected, as they 'hosted' the Depot which appeared at very short notice. During construction, we bore the brunt of complaints from residents throughout the village about this scheme, which we still regard as being poorly and unsympathetically managed and being less than 'rural' in design, although such concerns and grief were generously 'shared' by us with those directly responsible. However, we recognise that many in Padbury (and elsewhere) are in favour of the scheme, and we need to respect that.

Planning

We have continued to be actively involved in the consultation process towards the Vale of Aylesbury Plan. This process has involved attendance at many meetings at various levels, and scrutinising and commenting on the Plan and its supporting evidence as it has developed.

We have still made no progress towards making a Neighbourhood Plan of our own and are also examining the option of a Community Led Plan in its place. Either type of plan will need a large degree of community engagement and involvement if we are to have any chance of success.

We have, of course, had the usual large numbers of planning applications within the village, ranging from relatively simple alterations to existing houses to (for a village of this size) significant developments. Of most significance was the decision to defer and delegate to Officers for approval following the completion of a Section 106 agreement (which has still to be finalised) for the Bloor Homes site.

We continue to be frustrated in our dealings with AVDC Planners, and with Enforcement staff in particular. Whilst we realise their lack of resources, their lack of responsiveness is poor. We are attempting to improve this via the Aylesbury Vale Association of Local Councils, but our confidence in the whole planning process is shaken.

Devolution

We have managed a contract with Lynch Garden Services to provide devolved grass and hedge cutting services. This has been successful, and the standard achieved last year was very good. Financial support from BCC to cover these services will decrease year on year, and we have made provision for this in our budget.

It is likely that further services may be considered appropriate for devolution in the future, and we should be prepared for that.

Speed Monitoring

Speeding through the village continues to be a problem, both endemically along the A413, but also along Main Street. The speed detection device owned by the Parish Council has been used at a number of locations on rotation. Unfortunately, Padbury Speedwatch has been suspended for a year, due to a lack of volunteers.

Playing Fields and Play Area

The playing fields, MUGA and pavilion continue to be regularly used by a number of village related sports clubs, the youth club and also to host a range of social and other events such as Play around the Parishes. Henry Paxton's efforts as groundsman are considerable and effective, for which many thanks.

The Pavilion is beginning to show its age, and indeed failed a water regulation test in 2016. Necessary remedial works to meet statutory standards were undertaken, and the opportunity was taken to carry out appropriate safety and fire risk assessments, and to upgrade the electricity supply.

Yet again, there have been incidents of vandalism/anti-social behaviour resulting in costly damage to this important community asset.

Bob Gough has also taken up the position of part-time Caretaker, for which we are very grateful.

We are in the process of examining costed options to ensure an appropriate pavilion continues to be in place.

The Play Area on Main Street is well-used, and the Parish Council puts a lot of effort in to ensuring that it is a safe and attractive environment. Our most recent Safety Audit indicated that we may need to improve some of the equipment on site in the mid-term.

Millennium Wood

The Parish Council remains responsible for the maintenance and management of this village asset. Coppicing was undertaken recently by a contractor, and regular maintenance takes place. We

continue to be grateful to our anonymous benefactor who provides regular donations for this work to take place.

Unfortunately, even this asset is not immune from vandalism, and a bench was broken up and burnt a few weeks ago.

We had hoped to mark the Queen's Jubilee with a bonfire, but this had to be called off due to poor weather conditions. The occasion was, however, marked by distributing a commemorative coin to all children in the village.

Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

Generally, Padbury remains a safe and largely crime-free community.

I have already mentioned vandalism in the village, but the age-old problem of dog fouling continues. This is really inexcusable given the provision of disposal bins (the emptying of which has to be paid for) and as a basic requirement of dog care. It is at best disrespectful of fellow villagers and at worst a hazard to health especially for children. It has already proved to be a problem for our grass-cutting contractor. Those continuing to act in this way need to be reminded that dog fouling attracts a fine of up to £1 000.

Finances

A full report from our Treasurer follows. It will be noted that we have had to raise the precept as a prudent measure to ensure that we will be able to support those services that have been (and those that might be) devolved to the Parish Council.

Conclusion

It has been another busy year for the Parish Council, and I am extremely grateful for all that my fellow Councillors have done (including those who have stood-down over recent months) to help make Padbury such an attractive and pleasant place to live in. They do so in many different ways, and their efforts are often overlooked, but not by me.

On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to record my thanks to all those residents who have attended Parish Council meetings over the past year, and for all those who give up their time and talents over the whole range of village activities. We will hear about some of those a little later.
Annual Parish Meeting Minutes

Pre-school report for PC AGM

This has been another busy and successful year for the pre-school. As is usual with the running of any organisation we have experienced challenges but have worked together to overcome these and are now looking ahead to another exciting year.

Staffing

This year has seen several changes in the staffing at pre-school. These changes have been due to a number of circumstances which have included the conclusion of a temporary contract, maternity leave and a resignation due to a family relocation. All these changes have actually had successful outcomes for the pre-school, enabling the committee to reduce staff contracted hours to suit the fluctuations in attendance we have during the school year

and also to adjust our adult - child ratios to make us financially sound without detrimentally affecting the education of the children. We have also recently appointed a new member to join our talented team of practitioners. I think I speak for the parents and the committee in praising the staff for coping so admirably with the various changes that have occurred. They have proved that they really do all work magnificently as a team and are willing to go the extra mile when the need arises. We are all very grateful to them for this. In particular, a mention must go to Lindsey Howard who is our manager. Not only is she an exceptional practitioner, but she puts the children's and the staff's needs before her own. She has and continues to work tirelessly to achieve high outcomes of learning for all the children. The committee are very aware of the many additional and unpaid hours she works each week to achieve this. This has been particularly so during the periods of staff change of late.

The Committee

As is the nature of a committee such as ours, we have had some changes. Some committee members who are also parents have stepped down as their children have moved on to school and others, whose children have started with us, have joined the committee. We are also lucky to have some members of our team who have been on the committee for many years and we are especially grateful to Claire McHenry who is our secretary and joint treasurer. She has worked tirelessly for the good of the pre-school for many years and we would all like to extend our thanks to her for this. We hope she continues for many years to come. At present we have a committee of ten and are lucky enough to have a wide variety of experience and expertise to bring to the table. This has helped us tremendously as we improve the smooth running of the pre-school and do our best to support Lindsey and the staff.

Relations with the wider community

Since becoming Chair, I have been keen to develop and strengthen relationships with the community. I have been delighted with the warmth of the welcome, I have received from the PC and the Church. Ken Roberts has visited the pre-school and is also keen to increase the involvement between our two organisations. He has been a great help to us on a number of occasions and offered practical help and advice for which I am extremely thankful. Special thanks must go to Steven Dickens (Vice Chair of the PC) who so kindly cut back our overgrown hedge, giving up the large part of a Saturday to voluntarily help us. Thanks to Steven's efforts we can now see and be seen. At Christmas I was invited to attend a special church service and enjoyed meeting Reverend Ros along with a variety of people from the local community afterwards.

Since we share a site with the school it is also vital that we maintain an understanding relationship with them. I have regular, termly meetings with Karen Duckworth (Headteacher at Padbury) and Jo Bursell (Chair of Governors). We do our best to keep each other informed and acquainted with any plans we have and continue to work together for the benefit of all the children. Mrs Duckworth has praised the pre-school for the way it prepares children for full time schooling in all areas of learning. She has told us that she is especially pleased with their attitude and excitement to learn upon starting school. The PFA is another excellent link between the school and the pre-school and this enables us to engage in mutually benefitting fundraising activities. Thanks here must go to Cassie Rigg who is both a member of our committee and the chair of the PFA. Cassie gives up endless hours to support both organisations and helps to ensure that we all work happily together and that we all benefit from fundraising events.

We hope as the school considers becoming part of a MAT (multi academy trust) that the pre-school can continue to thrive as part of the new landscape and look forward to an involvement with the changes.

Busy Fingers

This is our parent - toddler session which runs every Monday afternoon during term times. The pre-school runs this at a loss to provide a meeting point for young families who might benefit from a regular attendance at a group of this kind. We sometimes benefit from the group eventually as many of the families who attend, later choose to send their children to our pre-school. We always extend a warm welcome to newcomers and will help families get to know one another and begin to build friendships too. We feel it is an important feature for young families who are new to our community.

Highlights

Campaign Success

For some time, the pre-school has been keen to develop and improve our outside play area and resources. Thanks to the fundraising efforts of Lucy Read, we were successful in our grant application through the Tesco 'bags for life' scheme. We gained third prize which has given us a large contribution of £8,000 towards achieving our plans. Work should be starting soon to this end. The changes will affect the education of generations of children to come and we are delighted that we can set about achieving our objectives. We continue to fundraise to accomplish all that we set out to do. As a not for profit making business, our fees and staffing ratios are set to benefit the parents and children and any additional expenses such as improvements, purchasing new resources and equipment have to be achieved through fundraising. Our committee works very hard to ensure that we make the funds available for this. We are grateful to any village organisations or individuals that support us in what we do.

New initiative success

The staff have now been using a new system for monitoring and tracking the children's progress for just over a year. This is online package called Tapestry. Although it initially involved extra work and staff training as new initiatives often do, it has proven to be successful on all fronts. It is popular with parents because they can have instant access to their child's progress and also an insight into their daily activities. Staff like it too because they can constantly monitor their children's progress and identify their strengths and weaknesses. The nursery manager, Lindsey Howard can also use it to check all records are updated and to assist in planning appropriate activities. We are using a grant provide by the LA to help update all our IT systems so that staff have their own tablets for maintaining these records.

Parade Prize

We were delighted to receive third prize in the Buckingham Parade during the autumn term. The theme that Time flies when you're having fun was explored and represented by the pre-school. The children, staff, committee and parents that attended the parade really enjoyed the experience.

Attending events such as this is not only good for the children but also helps us to feel part of the larger community and to raise the profile of the pre-school.

Next Steps

We will be spending time and money on developing our outside area. Although the Tesco grant will help with this, we will need to raise additional funds to achieve all our plans. We have created an annual fundraising plan to help us achieve this.

We continue to market the pre-school and have a Facebook and Twitter presence in addition to our website. We also have plans to attach a sign advertising our establishment at the apex of the building which (thanks to Steven) is now visible from the road. We will continue to market the pre-school as an establishment aimed at providing high quality education for 2-4 year olds. Parents who wish to take advantage of the new 30hrs funded child care which will be available from September will be able to top up their hours at Padbury by attending an alternative early years provider.

We hope to continue our involvement with the school, building on our relationship and also to become involved if the school chooses to become part of a MAT. It may be a time for us to look at renegotiating some of our agreements so that we can enjoy a brighter future together.

Cllr. Sue Renshell's Report – April 2017:

The ten years of the Aylesbury Vale Community Chest fund have now come to an end. Over the last decade this project, run by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, has provided just under 800 grants to voluntary and community groups across Aylesbury Vale, totalling close to £5 million. There have been over two million beneficiaries reported by the grant recipients. Many of these grants have improved or established community facilities which will continue to benefit local people for years to come.

In the final year alone, £600,000 has been distributed through 99 grants for projects throughout the Vale. However, the success of the Community Chest would not have been possible without the hard work of the many volunteers who, with the aid of the grant funding, created and enhanced many valuable projects within their local communities. Andrew Grant, Chief Executive of AVDC, commented: "AVDC has been a proud Community Chest partner over the project's ten-year period. All good things must come to an end and while we're sad to see it finish, many of the projects Community Chest helped will continue benefitting the local community for years to come. This isn't the end of funding to community initiatives. We set up the Vale Lottery in November 2015 to help local good causes raise the funding they need to continue their great work. To date the lottery has raised over **£70,000**. Sign up at www.valelottery.co.uk".

Preparations are in full swing for local elections on Thursday 4 May. Seventeen county councillors will be elected in the Aylesbury Vale area, with Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) administering the elections. The election timetable kicks off with publication of the Notice of Election on 27 March, formally opening the period when candidates can submit nomination papers. The AVDC's Gateway Offices, by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 4 April.

Nearly 140,000 poll cards will be sent to residents from Wednesday 29 March, which will include details of each elector's allocated polling station. This year, an online polling station look-up is also available at www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/pollingstation.

Residents who have received a poll card are already registered to vote. For those not sure if they are registered, the quickest way to check is to webchat with the team at www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk.

Residents will be aware that an error was identified in the breakdown of council tax on the bills sent out recently. Specifically, the amounts of Council tax and Adult Social Care Precept levied by Bucks County Council were shown in the wrong proportions and the percentage increases were incorrect as a consequence. However, the total on the bills was correct and we are therefore still able to collect amounts due in accordance with the planned timetable. The inclusion of incorrect information was caused by a human error and new processes have been implemented to ensure that no such error can happen again. The Billing Regulations require that when an error is identified on a bill, even if it

doesn't alter the amount due, then a correction must be sent. In compliance with this requirement all households are currently receiving a new bill with a letter explaining the correction. As previously stated, the totals on the bills remain the same, unless the circumstances of the householder have changed since the original bill was sent out. The dates on which council tax payments are due are also unchanged.

Council services that pay for themselves? AVDC leads the way!

At a time when councils face increasing financial challenges, Aylesbury Vale District Council is leading the way in supplying services that fund themselves. Many local authorities have cut services to make savings, but AVDC has taken a commercial approach in seeking ways of generating income to replace the continual decrease in central government funding, thereby protecting frontline service provision for Vale residents.

Its initial commercial venture in 2000 was to market payroll services to other organisations, such as Wycombe District Council. This involved taking an existing internal process and selling it; 17 years later, the AVDC Payroll Service now generates sufficient income to pay for itself.

Effective to manage and more convenient for users - AVDC has listened to customers' needs and developed a full service to cover expense claims, pensions, maternity and sick pay. Also available is an online self-service function, making it cost-effective for district councils, housing associations, town and parish councils.

Exciting new development, The Exchange, Aylesbury

Leader of Aylesbury Vale District Council, Cllr. Neil Blake, was joined by Fraser Wells, Managing Director for Durkan, donning hard hats and high-vis jackets in the spirit of the official ground-breaking as the works commenced. The Exchange is central to AVDC's plans for the regeneration of Aylesbury and is a landmark project for the authority.

The Exchange will provide Aylesbury town centre with its first purpose-built mixed restaurant and residential development, reflecting how modern town centres are changing to meet a demand for more town centre homes and leisure dining.

Taking place at the top end of the Exchange Street car park, opposite the cinema, the development will create four new restaurants with 47 one and two bedroom apartments above them. It will also include a stunning new public square and additional flexible commercial space which will face Long Lion. The project is due to be complete in Autumn 2018.

The Exchange phase one, is part of the on-going transformation of Aylesbury town centre led by AVDC over the last ten years. A £100M investment has seen the building and opening of Aylesbury Waterside Theatre, Waitrose, Travelodge, a new car park, new canal basin and public square and the University Campus Aylesbury Vale. Taking effect from 1 April, residents will receive all of Aylesbury Vale District Council's services for an AVDC's services for the price of a weekly cup of coffee! AVDC also oversees housing provision in the Vale, licensing, food safety, the collection of council tax, noise and air pollution and planning proposals.

Although, in line with central government proposals, council tax will increase this year, it works out at an average of just £5.00 for the year - or just under 10p per week - for everything that AVDC

provides (based on a Council Tax Band D property). Even with the reinvestment of the increased funds, council tax alone will not cover the cost of all the services, so it's become imperative that AVDC generates additional income. It's done this by adopting an innovative, commercial approach and transforming the way it operates.

Over the last seven years, faced with the challenge of losing its government grant, AVDC has reduced its budget by £16 million through a combination of savings, efficiencies and income generation. It has saved more than £5 million a year by becoming one of the first councils to adopt a Cloud IT strategy as part of its digital transformation programme, which also includes the online customer service system 'My Account'. In addition, AVDC has generated income from selling its payroll services to other organisations and has raised more than £70,000 for local good causes through its Vale Lottery scheme

Active Vale introduces lunchtime swimming lessons for local ladies. Active Vale ladies' beginner swimming lessons have proved so popular that ladies' lunchtime lessons have been introduced at Stoke Mandeville Stadium. This is a great opportunity for ladies aged 18 and over to gain water confidence and skills in a friendly and supportive environment. The lunchtime sessions take place on Tuesdays throughout the year, from 12.30pm or 1pm. The cost is £4 per lesson but you can dip your toe in the water with a free first session by booking at www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/ladies-swimming-lesson. Tuesday evening beginner swimming lessons are taking place at Aqua Vale Swimming and Fitness Centre. And if swimming doesn't appeal, there are lots of other fun fitness sessions taking place around the district, with more due to start this spring and summer. Active Vale offers all sorts of fitness sessions across the Vale to help local ladies get active, as research shows girls and women aged 14-40 particularly struggle to achieve their recommended 90 minutes of exercise each week. Aylesbury Vale District Council run Active Vale with funding from Sport England and support from local partners.

Aylesbury has been chosen by the government to become one of three new **Garden Towns**, which will see it receive more than half a million pounds initially to help improve the long-term plans for the town and develop infrastructure proposals. In telling AVDC that they were successful in their bid for an initial £540,000, Gavin Barwell MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, said: "I am impressed by the strength of local leadership and commitment to transformational change that your expression of interest shows." AVDC submitted an application in October 2016 explaining why Aylesbury is the perfect place to become part of the Garden Town programme due to its central location within the 'brain belt' between Oxford and Cambridge, and its critical role in delivering growth for the district and the wider area. Aylesbury Vale is set to have 27,000 new homes built in the next 15 years, with Aylesbury itself expected to accommodate around 15,000 of them.

Getting Garden Town status gives AVDC the opportunity to develop Aylesbury and the surrounding area in a truly visionary and sustainable way, supporting its development as a settlement that offers the best of town and country living. The money will be spent in a number of areas such as developing the longer term masterplan for the town, which will look at improving transport links and green infrastructure, which could include new parks and cycle routes. The funding and support that comes hand-in-hand with being a Garden Town

will help the whole Vale become a greener, more connected and more vibrant place to live, work and visit.

Councillor Neil Blake, Leader of the Aylesbury Vale District Council said: "I am tremendously pleased that our hard work to make Aylesbury Vale the best possible place to live and work has been recognised by government. People right across the Vale and beyond will benefit from Aylesbury becoming a Garden Town, and it will truly help unlock the town's full potential. It's an exciting opportunity to help make Aylesbury a more inclusive, innovative and forward looking town that meets the needs and aspirations of people who live in the area, as well as businesses and visitors."

Council tax annual billing has been delivered and Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) is urging residents to go paperless and move their account online. Any resident who has registered online by Friday 3 March will be entered into a draw to win a £50 discount off their next council tax bill. Terms and conditions are available on the AVDC website. By linking your council tax account online with Aylesbury Vale My Account, AVDC's online customer account, you can view your up-to-date statement and manage your account, 24/7. Setting up an account is quick and easy, just make sure you have your council tax number to hand. If you have any problems, you can chat online to our webchat team who'll help you with the registration. There are close to 80,000 households in Aylesbury Vale and delivering paper copies of council tax statements to each of these properties is an expensive process. Moving council tax accounts online cuts down on this expense whilst giving residents more control over their account. Cllr Janet Blake, Cabinet Member for Business Transformation, said: "By moving your council tax online you can self-service at a time and place which suits you, giving you more control over your account. You can check your statement, make payments, set up a direct debit or apply for discounts, all online and without the need to contact AVDC. It is great to see a project start to come out of the ground knowing it will provide new retail, residential and public space in the centre of Aylesbury." The Exchange will provide Aylesbury town centre with its first purpose-built mixed restaurant and residential development, reflecting how modern town centres are changing to meet a demand for more town centre homes and leisure dining. Taking place at the top end of the Exchange Street car park, opposite the cinema, the development will create four new restaurants with 47 one and two bedroom apartments above them. It will also include a stunning new public square and additional flexible commercial space which will face Long Lion. The project is due to be complete in Autumn 2018.

An exciting new initiative called a green gym starts next week, run by AVDC's Active Vale programme in partnership with Wendover mental health charity, Lindengate. The green gym afternoons are all about encouraging women to get out in the fresh air and enjoy a wide range of activities with a focus on mental health as well as physical health. Sian Chattle from Lindengate said: "Throughout the spring and summer, participants will get the chance to make the most of our extensive and varied gardens, working alongside our supportive staff to try everything from garden-based crafts and construction, to growing, harvesting and cooking their own produce. The first few weeks will offer the chance to try something new and then everyone can focus on a project that most appeals." These gentle weekly sessions are just one of a range of activities designed to help women across the Vale become more active, more often as part of a wider Sport England initiative. The first group is on Wednesday 5 April from 1.15pm until 4.15pm at Lindengate, the Old Allotment site (next to Wyevale Garden Centre), Aylesbury Road, Wendover, HP22 6BD.

County Councillor's Report - John Chilver

1. High Speed Two

On Thursday 23 February, Royal Assent was granted to HS2, giving the green light for construction to commence on the high-speed line between London and Birmingham. The initial stages of the construction process will later this year with the enabling works (site clearance, earthworks, early mitigation such as tree planting).

2. East West Rail

There will be 'significant delivery' of the Western Section between Bicester and Bletchley by March 2019 and completion within the next 5 year period (2019 – 24) although the actual completion date cannot be confirmed at this stage. The EWR alliance is working on the design and construction programme, and a report is due in May followed by a public consultation programme with two local events - Winslow provisionally on May 24th. The Bicester-Bletchley section will not be electrified before opening.

The County Council have purchased the land for the Winslow Station and car park site, and the outline planning application for the Station has been approved by AVDC.

3. A413 Sustainable Travel Scheme

The construction of the new footpath and cycleway from Buckingham to Winslow is now complete. The cost (£ 1.8m) has been directly funded by the Department for Transport.

4. County Council Budget

The County Council is forecasting a budget underspend of £ 2.7m at the financial year end. There are particular spending pressures in the children's services and education budgets. This year's Council Tax increase is 1.9 %, together with the Social Care precept of 3%.

5. Digital transformation

The County Council is improving the online experience for residents and enabling more transactions and services to be delivered online, achieving significant savings. Two such services are applying for a school place and reporting transport issues. A new improved and faster website has been launched.

6. Roads

I was glad that I was able to include the resurfacing of Old End, Station Road, West Furlong and Church Lane in last year's roads capital maintenance programme.

This year's capital budget has set the roads capital maintenance total at £ 15.8m which will help to continue to address the backlog. Programmes for improvement this year include High Street and Buckingham Road Winslow and the A413 between Addington and Adstock.

There is also an £ 1.6m pavements and footways budget and I have asked for the improvement of Main Street near the War Memorial to be included.

7. Broadband

The Connected Counties broadband programme supported by both the County Council and AVDC is on target to achieve 90% superfast broadband coverage. Aylesbury Vale Broadband Ltd has been set up by AVDC to cover additional areas and has extended coverage to North Marston, Granborough, Oving and Swanbourne.

8. Unitary Council

Both the County Council and the 4 Bucks District Councils have submitted their proposals for a new unitary council structure to the Secretary of State Sajid Javid. A provisional decision is expected in May.

9. Shared Services

The County Council has entered into a shared services agreement with the London Borough of Harrow covering organisational development, HR and legal services. This is planned to deliver £1m of savings for the council over the next 4 years.

Aylesbury Vale District Council Winslow Ward Report from District Cllr Llew Monger to Padbury Annual Parish Meeting 11th April 2017

Introduction The Winslow Ward of Aylesbury Vale District Council, has almost 5,000 electors and includes the parishes of Addington, Adstock, Padbury and Winslow. AVDC is responsible for Planning, Waste Collection and Recycling, Economic Development, Community Matters, Leisure, Environment, Housing and Benefits. AVDC receive 10% of the Council Tax they collect from you. The rest goes to Bucks County Council (75%), Thames Valley Police (11%) and the Fire Service (4%). The full Council has 59 members including 42 Conservative, 9 Liberal Democrat, 3 UKIP, 2 Labour and 2 Independents. There is currently a vacancy for the Wendover Ward. The work of the Council is managed through a Cabinet (all Conservative) and a number of Committees (cross-party). I am a member of the Strategic Development Control Committee and the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee.

WORK OF THE COUNCIL IN 2016/17 The work of the Council over the last twelve months has been dominated by the development of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, discussions about the creation of a Unitary Council and the ongoing commercialisation of the council.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) VALP will be the blueprint for housing and economic development across the Vale through to 2031. Publication of the draft submission (final) version of the plan has been delayed and will now come to Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and full Council in July. There will then be a six week public consultation and following any agreed amendments it will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate for an Examination in Public. This is unlikely to take place before early 2018 and will be contested by competing property developers, other local authorities and town and parish councils. A final adopted plan may not be in place until late in 2018. In the meantime we remain at the mercy of speculative developers.

Current indications are that there is a need for at least 27,000 new homes in the plan period and we may have to accommodate additional numbers from Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe which are resisting building on Green Belt land. There may also be a requirement to take some of London's unmet need. Aylesbury, Buckingham, Haddenham and Winslow will have to grow by 50% and there will also be growth required in the villages though final figures are not yet known. The process is hugely complicated and the government keep moving the goalposts hence the ongoing delays. A Unitary Council Councils all over the country are merging to form Unitary Authorities which provide the services currently provided by County and District Councils. This is more efficient and produces savings though as a percentage of total spend those savings represent between just 1% and 2% of the budget. In Bucks

0 10 20 30 40 50

Conservative Liberal Democrat UKIP Labour Independent

AVDC Political makeup

two options have been submitted for consideration by the Secretary of State for Communities (SoS). The County Council are proposing a single county-wide authority to provide all services which they claim is the most cost-effective option. The four District Councils (AVDC, Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks) are proposing two new authorities, one based on AVDC and the other an amalgamation of the other three. In each case they would absorb the work of the current Bucks CC. Bucks CC are rushing ahead and spending £thousands on consultants even though there will be no decision on which option the SoS prefers until late May at the soonest. Personally I prefer the District Councils option of two new authorities and I feel that would offer a service closer to us as residents. Bucks is a very long county and the south relates much more to London whilst the north links to Milton Keynes.

Streamlining the Council and developing Commercial AVDC. Historically local government functions have been funded in more or less equal measure by grants from central government and what we pay in Council Tax. By 2019 the government half will have disappeared altogether so councils must cut staff & services, charge for things which used to be free or generate new income streams. In most cases, including AVDC, all three measures are being applied. We are seeing ongoing upheaval and change at AVDC which is leading to a significant reduction in staff and reorganisation of how the council works. Whilst this is leading to savings it is too early to say how efficient the council will be in delivering its services. One area which has seen job losses is planning and this at a time when we are under ever more pressure from large scale developments. It is much too early to say how the new 'commercial' functions such as Limecart and IncGen are really doing. Aylesbury Vale Broadband (AVB), the joint venture company set up to deliver rural broadband via fibre to the premises, promised to be supplying ten villages by the end of 2016 but were only operating in three. This leads me to have serious doubts about the viability of the company which has loan funding of £1.5 million from AVDC.

My Council and related community work. I am a member of the Strategic Development Management Committee and the VALP Scrutiny Committee (when it meets!). I also sit on the Member Development Committee which organises training and development sessions for council members. Although they meet rarely I am also a member of the Senior Appointments Committee and the Appeals and Complaints Committee. I have represented AVDC on the Trustee Board of Buckingham and Winslow Citizens Advice for the last six years. In addition to my membership of AVDC I am a member of Winslow Town Council where I Chair the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Through my involvement with the development of Neighbourhood Plans I am a Neighbourhood Plan Champion for the Department of Communities and Local Government. In addition to my council related work I sit on the local board or the LEADER FUND (Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale) which distributes grants from the EU Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The fund supports projects in Farming, Forestry and Rural Communities. The application process is rigorous but grants of up to £50,000 can be achieved for appropriate projects.

It is difficult to cover all of the work of the Council in a couple of sides of A4 but hopefully this report has given at least an insight to the key issues. I am happy to expand on anything in this report and always available to help on any matters related to the business of the Council. I can be contacted on 07808 096513 or by email at llewmonger@btinternet.com. I hold a monthly residents advice surgery between 10.00am and Noon on the first Saturday of every month at the Winslow Town Council Office, 28, High Street Winslow MK18 3HQ.

Cllr Llew Monger Liberal Democrat. AVDC Member for Addington, Adstock, Padbury, Shipton and Winslow.

Padbury Parochial Church Council (PCC) report to the Parish Council – April 2017

Attendances for our regular morning services remain fairly stable. More challenging is the prospect of engaging with a younger congregation. There are few attenders under the age of about 60 and efforts to attract families are proving slow to show positive results.

Clergy go into Padbury School regularly and the Footsteps after-school club is enjoyed by many. School services are held in the church most terms and are very well attended.

Our team of Neil Gibbard, Chris James and John Wrigley, energetically led by David Rasmussen, continued to keep the churchyard in an exemplary state of good order. Our thanks are due to all of them for their help. The PCC acknowledges with thanks the continued contribution of £500 from the Parish Council, towards the cost of maintaining the church yard.

The pressures on our finances continue to rise and be ever more challenging to meet. So far, we have always managed to pay our Parish Share to the diocese, this being a contribution towards the Vicar's stipend, housing and pension costs. The 2016 figure was £14k and this year is very similar. Our total expenditure was £25k.

During the year, we run a number of fund-raising events, the largest of which has, for many years, been the Open Gardens weekend. This year, we are 'resting' this event and will need to devise other means of raising the funds we need.

In the autumn of 2015, we very quickly latched onto a new Government scheme to help Listed Places of Worship to repair leaky roofs and gutterings. With a grant of £50200, work was completed in the summer of 2016 to replace and slightly re-form the roof on the south aisle and to refurbish the rainwater goods.

Shortly before that work started, and with an impeccable sense of bad timing, thieves struck and stole all the lead from the north aisle and about one third from the main, nave, roof. The process is under way to obtain the necessary diocesan permission to re-cover the north aisle and the whole of the nave in terne coated stainless steel. This process is being hampered by a total lack of responsiveness from AVDC about the need or otherwise for planning permission for the change of material. Estimated cost will be in the order of £70k.

Storm Doris recently took out a panel of fencing between the church and Lodge Close. After assessing the state of the rest of the fence, it was decided to remove it and install a 'fedge', that is a willow fence/hedge. This will require some annual maintenance but is less likely to suffer storm damage.

The Buckingham Decorative and Fine Arts Society completed their researches and recording of all that is inside the church. A copy of the resulting highly detailed Record has been presented to the church. Being a rare and valued tome, it is kept under lock and key, to be displayed on occasions when it can be supervised, or by special request to the Vicar or Church Warden.

Monthly coffee mornings are now held in the village hall and in conjunction with the village hall committee. These are proving popular but, again, by and large to older members of the community.

Jenny Shields continues to host a weekly bible study group which is well attended.

Margaret Templeton excels as the leader of the flower arranging group, which invariably has the church wonderfully and floriferously decorated.

John Wrigley
Church Warden
01280 814199