

## **SIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**7.30pm 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024**

**At the Village Hall, Ashton Road**

### **PRESENT**

**Cllrs.** M Turner (Chair), J Hayward (Vice-Chair), A Gibbons, J Sparrow; C Smith;  
Mark Young (Village Hall);  
Den Jones, G Jones (Chesterton AFC); Revd Jennifer McKenzie;  
Cllr M Evemy (CDC Councillor); Cllr L Spivey (GCC Councillor);  
J Grayson; N Grayson; W Underhill;  
Clerk to the Council, R Cowley

Cllr Turner opened the meeting at 7.45pm as Chairman and welcomed all those present.

### **APOLOGIES**

Cllr L Spivey (GCC).

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (2023)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### **REPORT FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

No report had been received.

### **REPORT FROM CDC COUNCILLOR MIKE EVELY**

Following my re-election last year, I was re-appointed by the Leader of the Council to serve as its Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance for a fifth year. Within my portfolio of responsibilities, I took on the Council's waste and recycling service for the first time. I was re-appointed to the same role at the annual meeting of the district council on 15 May.

In that role, I chair the Cabinet Transform Working Group looking at how we can make up to £1.5million of savings each year over the course of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy period, whilst continuing to delivering services.

There has been much media focus on local government this year, with the financial pressures on councils across the country widely reported. A number of councils have had to essentially declare themselves bankrupt, whilst many are at risk of collapse without an injection of cash into the sector. My role is to lead the Council's financial decision-making and it's my aim to ensure we can continue to provide the services that residents expect while delivering on its corporate objectives. Amongst all the doom and gloom there is plenty to celebrate, and so I want to highlight some of the successes over the last year that hard-working council officers continue to deliver. The public sector, and local government in particular is a fantastic place to see community focussed members and officers doing their best to deliver services and go the extra mile to ensure that our district continues to thrive.

- CDC has recently been ranked as the 55th best performing local authority in England (out of 312), with our waste service and recycling rates of particular note.
- The Council agreed a new corporate plan in January which outlines four key areas of focus (Housing delivery, Economy, Climate and Communities) and providing statutory services to a good level.

- In-sourcing of staff from Publica is expected to begin in October. This will give us more control over our staff and what they do, should help us to improve our services, make them more cost effective while also making it easier to recruit staff currently working in other councils.
- Funding for various projects agreed through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund, including:
  - £400,000 for business grants for projects across the district.
  - £100,000 allocated for village hall improvements. Several grants agreed already for projects including energy efficient lighting, a new kitchen and replacement windows.
  - £75,000 for the Grace Network to bring the former House of Fraser in Cirencester back into use.
  - Funding extended for another year for the Growth Hub in Cirencester, which enables them to operate an outreach service to cover the whole district.
  - Various projects for Cotswolds Tourism, including an upgrade to their website.
  - The inaugural Cotswold Homes and Interiors Festival which was held in Cirencester in March. It involved businesses in that sector from across the district.
- Changing Places toilet facilities for the severely disabled delivered at Cotswold Farm Park, Cirencester Abbey Grounds, Birdland and soon to be Cotswold Country Park and Beach.
- We have begun work on a new Local Plan with public consultation on initial ideas, updates on Policies and call for sites completed and Design Code public consultation completed in December.
- Ecology Habitat Regulation document has been agreed ensuring recreational impacts by new developments are mitigated in Zones of Influence (North Meadow and Cirencester Beech Woods)
- Green Infrastructure Strategy updated to ensure developments provide green open spaces and wildlife corridors.
- Systems set up to ensure that Biodiversity Net Gain can be delivered and monitored for the regulation 30 years after development.
- 51 community bike stands have been installed throughout the district and within the Cotswold Water Park.
- CWP Nature Recovery Plan, Collaborative work with Cotswold Lakes Trust and Somerford Keynes making wet wild life corridors.
- 165 licensed taxi and private hire drivers have completed safeguarding training at CDC in how to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults and how to respond to evidence presented to them.
- We have won a grant for continuing education on Duty of Care to prevent fly-tipping. Working with neighbouring Districts, Highways and the Police we continue to hold Stop and Search to advise van drivers of the requirements for Waste Carrying licences.
- In total Crowdfund Cotswold, our online fundraising portal, has leveraged over £860,000 for community projects across the district in the last 3 years.
- The contract to run our three leisure centres and the Corinium Museum was taken over by Freedom Leisure on 1 August 2023. The new provider has listened to customers and each of the leisure centres has increased its membership over the last 12 months despite the changeover.
- We successfully ran the Holiday Activity and Food Programme during the school holidays, piloted the first Mr Motivator fitness event at which 100 people participated and rolled out 'Fit Kits' at community events and to individuals in their own homes to promote easy fitness routines for people who may not usually have the opportunity to access this.
- Two events targeting the cost-of-living crisis were held in the North and South of the District. These were really well attended, identifying support for residents in the area, along with tasty food and entertainment for the children.

- We launched our “Unsung Hero” scheme and will look to promote those community champions who are the lifeblood of our towns and villages.
- Encouraging social housing providers not to remove carpets when re-tenanting properties, helping to eliminate unnecessary waste and expense

Over the last year I have attended meetings of the Parish Council to inform myself of matters of local concern and provide advice and support when requested, most often on planning matters.

Ward issues I have dealt with in the past year include planning applications and planning enforcement on the Orchard Fields site, highway and verge maintenance in North Siddington and the future use of Green Lane between the village and Shorncliffe.

I’d be happy to answer any questions residents may have at the meeting or by email or telephone.

Mike Every  
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### **REPORT FROM GCC COUNCILLOR LISA SPIVEY**

This year has again been a very busy time for the County Council and my focus has been on local highways issues with much of the winter spent sorting out flooding. I have asked questions and proposed motions at Full Council meetings and set up working groups for various local issues which seem to have been positive. Here is an overview of some of the work I have been involved in as your County Councillor.

#### **Budget for 2023/24**

Proposals put forward by the Conservative majority administration for a budget of £616million were passed in February. This represents a £42m increase in the budget compared to 23/24. For a band D property, this will mean a monthly increase of £6.34. The increase is above the expected rate of inflation for this year. It is made up of 2.99% increase on council tax and a 2% precept for adult social care.

Amendments by all three opposition parties were accepted. These included the following from my Group:

£25,000 – Increased spending on Public Rights of Way

Increasing the resource available for mapping so people know which walking routes are available to them.

£25,000 – Additional money for Flood schemes

In a year with huge amounts of flooding across the County, the group felt it was important to support communities that suffered from the flooding that occurred.

£100,000 – Additional money for Road safety

Liberal Democrats are committed to reducing the amount of deaths that take place on the county’s roads which continue to cause alarm and are significantly higher than statistical neighbouring authorities

£20,000 – Feasibility Study to support Foster families

Work up the governance arrangements and criteria for a scheme to allow foster carers to make improvements to their home to take extra children

This is a Liberal Democrat idea to provide more space for foster carers to take care of more children. The Policy, could save the county council millions in the future if it means fewer children being put into out of county placements.

### **Motions to Full Council**

In recent meetings we have tabled motions, of which amended versions were passed after the Conservative administration removed criticisms of the government. Topics included:

- Shortening waiting lists for Cancer care and the NHS
- Holding the Conservative Government to account to keep their promise of restoring policing to 2010 levels (we are still a long way off this in police per person terms)
- Cost of Living Crisis
- Declaring a roads emergency

### **Local Bus Transport**

The County Council has had a bid for £6 million accepted to introduce more electric busses in the county. The Robin bus service is due to be rolled out in the south Cotswolds in the Autumn and should provide a really useful mode of desperately needed public transport in the area.

The Council has agreed a bus improvement plan worth £4.4 million meaning some services are now more regular.

This means the trend of recent years seeing cuts to bus services is finally starting to slow. This is thanks to local groups supporting existing bus services. Services like the Robin (a bookable bus that links with existing bus routes) have been a success and are showing a blueprint for supporting rural services in the future.

### **Road Safety Policy**

Our group is committed to the County Council's vision for reducing the amount of road accidents taking place across the County. The Council now has a pot of over £2,000,000 to tackle road safety. Going forward, the aim will be to spend this money wisely and reduce the high casualty rates we currently see on Rural A roads.

### **Highways Local Fund**

I was delighted to support some patching works (Ewen and A417 Ampney St Peter), flood alleviation schemes (Somerford Keynes, Cerney Wick), verge tidying (Ampney Crucis), setts (Down Ampney) and signage (Meysey Hampton).

### **Build Back Better – Councillor Scheme**

I received many applications for the remainder of my Build Back Better pot and was able to support many fantastic groups this year including: Down Ampney Primary School, Cotswold Counselling, Meysey Hampton Guides, Ampney Crucis Village Hall, Poulton Parish Council Playground, Kemble Community Gardens, Cotswolds Lakes Trust and Cotswolds Friends. I still have some money left which has to be spent by the end of this year, so do get in contact if you have a project.

### **Committees**

This year I was honoured to be selected by my fellow members to Chair the Adult Social Care and Communities scrutiny committee which looks at Adult Social Care, Public Health, Trading Standards and Coronary Services. This is a fascinating committee and we have looked at various topics including the use of alcohol in everyday life, how the county looks after refugees and asylum seekers, the coronary service and coroner's court and housing for the homeless.

I also sit on Corporate Overview and Scrutiny which looks at the County Council's corporate remit. I took part in the bus Working Group mentioned above which had a very targeted remit and made a series of recommendations for Cabinet and council to consider.

This is just a brief overview of the work of the last year. Please feel free to contact me about these or any other matters.

Cllr Lisa Spivey  
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Gloucestershire County Council  
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## **REPORT FROM ST PETERS CHURCH – Revd Jennifer McKenzie**

It is lovely to be here this evening to share with you some of the things that St Peter's Church have been up to over the last year.

The life of our church has been vibrant over the last year as we have gathered together as a church family for prayer and worship, encouraged and nurtured each other in faith, shared fellowship over refreshments before services and through a harvest lunch and continued to support families through the major life events of baptism, weddings and funerals, walking alongside the bereaved through visits as well as offering friendship and pastoral support to many.

As a church we have also organised a number of events for the community including a soup lunch in Elizabeth Way, some afternoon teas in the church, a murder mystery evening, a quiz and pudding event and we continued to run our KIDZ events which are an afternoon of fun activities for the whole family in the village hall, activities include creative crafts, colouring, edible crafts, singing, puzzles, stories and we finish with a delicious tea for all.

In December we held an Advent market and crib festival in the church and are very grateful to all the local people who loaned as their cribs for this event and for the children at Siddington Church of England Primary School who made a crib especially. As part of the festival we had a special crib services where we learnt about the history of cribs and heard again the wonderful Christmas story through words and music.

The church continues to maintain its strong links with Siddington Church of England Primary School. In the last year the school has visited the church for acts of worship for the major festivals including harvest and Easter as well as for the Experience Journeys. Members of the church also visited the school to lead collective worship, help with Open the Book, help with prayer spaces events and take on the role as governors.

Due to a very generous donation we have been able to have the church windows cleaned this year which has brought more light into the church. Whilst this work was being carried out it was noticed that some of the tracery in some of the windows is in need of repairs. Also needing some repairs is the spire of the church due to some delamination of the stonework. We are currently in the process of getting specifications and quotes for this work to be completed along with a few other minor fabric matters that need attention. We will therefore be launching a spire and fabric appeal later this year to raise the necessary funds, through grants, donations and events so this essential work can be completed.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for their continued support of the church and in particular their support in maintaining our churchyard as a peaceful space for the bereaved to remember their loved ones. We continue to receive many positive comments about the churchyard and so we know that your support is appreciated by the wider community. Thank you.

I am wonderfully supported in my ministry by Revd Helen Caine our associate Priest, Joan Townsend and Liz Pearce our reader and our new reader Steve Buxton who join our team this year, our churchwardens Allen Howe and Eddie Perrettson, our benefice administrator Jeannie Adam and the Parochial Church Council. We are very blessed in our churches by so many people who do so many things to support the mission and ministry of our church. My thanks go out to them all for their support and for all that they do in the life of our church.

## **REPORT FROM SIDDINGTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL – Louise Lennox – Head Teacher**

*We are responsible, kind and safe.*

Siddington has greeted two new members of staff: myself and Mrs Jarvis. We have also welcomed some new families who have joined us from other locations, or have chosen to move to our school. We currently have 93 on role which is still below our capacity of 105. We look to be full in Reception from September 2024 and have sent out welcome packs with important information and have received positive feedback.

As a team, we are marketing our school through investment in a new website and an open-door policy. We are making links with local businesses and community members as we strive to put Siddington C of E Primary School on the map. Recently, the pupils worked with a local artist to design the class motifs. This was a wonderful experience for all involved and we now have four class mascots. We are grateful to the Village Hall who have given us their foyer space to display our pupils' artwork. We have made connections with Corin and hope to further expand these relationships with local industries. We have maintained strong links with St. Peter's Church and have held events at The Village Hall. This year the pupils have been involved in cycling lessons: Balanceability (younger pupils) and Bikeability (Year 5 pupils). In the future, we hope to get more lessons for 7 and 8 year old pupils so that all children at Siddington can ride bicycles safely on the road by the time they complete Y5. This will enable us to have more access to local trips without relying on coaches. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 have been learning to swim at Cirencester Leisure Centre and the older pupils have future trips planned where they can utilise their ability to swim. We are grateful to Siddington Parish Council who helped towards the cost of swimming lessons and travel. In March, the Year 6 pupils went on a residential holiday to Avon Tyrrell. The trip was a complete success; the pupils were role models for their school and we all left with many happy memories.

Other educational visits this year have been: Gloucester Cathedral, St. Peter's Church, Crickley Hill Country Park, 4front Theatre at the Baptist church, Quenington Sculpture Show, Butterfly World, Cheltenham Pantomime and the Corinium Museum. As part of our safeguarding curriculum, our pupils visited SkillZone in Gloucester; this will become an annual visit so that all pupils get to experience the safety lessons offered.

Over the year, pupils have lots of opportunities to participate in sporting events at Cirencester Deer Park which are led by Young Sports Leaders. Our Year 4 and 5 pupils participated in the Mock Trials and acted as the prosecution. The team were highly commended and won their case against the defence. As a school, we are celebrating our diverse community through The Big Draw, Black History Month and Pride. Over the coming years, we hope to increase these events annually. This year, we have a team of staff we are participating in the race for Life relay in Cirencester.

All pupils at Siddington have the opportunity to apply for school leadership responsibilities. We now have active Nature, Construction, School and Community Representatives. These pupils have been busy following the progress of the onsite building works. They attend formal meetings, give feedback during daily worship and have their voices heard about what is important for the students.

We promote life-long learning and we currently have staff members who are furthering their education, including: NPQs, NPQH, GCSEs and a member of our support staff has gained her ELSA qualification. We continue to offer Forest School to all of our classes and have an after-school club dedicated to learning outdoors. We are very fortunate to have our very own Forest School teacher who also offers wrap around care.

As part of The Year of Reading Project, the pupils visited The Barn Theatre to experience two different authors. We also took some pupils to the Stroud Book Festival, The Malvern Theatre to see 'Boy at the Back of the Class' and experienced the Cheltenham Literature Festival. The YOR project was funded by GCC and the Winstone Trust. The project, which was organised and led by Mrs R Scott (School Improvement Partner), has been a complete success as it provided our pupils with opportunities that they would not normally have.

The legacy building project has been progressing well and we are all grateful for the friendly and supportive site team. The project is due to be complete in November 2024.

### **REPORT FROM SIDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL – Mark Young (Chair of Trustees)**

A year into its second century, the village hall finds itself in good health, both physically and as a charitable business.

The best part of 30k has been spent on extensive refurbishment including a complete overhaul of the toilets and the replacement of windows in the committee room. This has given the hall a much-needed facelift without breaking the bank, allowing us to look at other areas which need improving

such as the garden and preparing for other eventualities such as a possible replacement to the heating system which may be nearing the end of its time.

We have embarked on a project to adorn the walls with the work of local artists and look to improve existing equipment within the hall such as stage and lighting which, of course, comes into its own around the Christmas period.

The hall is in use nearly every day of the week with a diverse collection of activities including yoga, karate, fairs, music lessons, bingo nights, dance classes and pilates. These are ably placed by Kim Tye and the Hallmaster system which has proved an invaluable tool in the bookings process.

The hall is also in demand at weekends for parties and gatherings ranging from children's parties to wedding anniversaries providing further proof of the hall's special relationship with the people of Siddington and their importance to the hall's future viability.

In particular, we have sought to strengthen our relationship with Siddington School which has put on and participated in several events such as the nativity play and the carol service as well as contributing to our art project and we put on record our thanks to the Head Teacher, Louise Lennox for her enthusiasm and input in fostering that relationship.

Dr Maxine Harrison is the latest addition to the board of Trustees and has already shown her commitment with useful suggestions and the ability to roll her sleeves up and help out on the less enticing tasks of hall management. I would like to put on record my thanks to all the trustees, past and present, without whose help the hall would be unable to function. There is, of course, always room for others to join us and we are continually on the lookout.

We are looking forward to the next twelve months continuing in the same vein and exploring what grants may be on offer to us before expanding the facilities of the village hall even further.

#### **REPORT FROM CHESTERTON AFC (Den Jones - Chairman)**

Unfortunately, it was not possible to provide the Clerk with a copy of the report.

Q – How many players are from Siddington?

A – Two or three.

Q – Would you change your name to Siddington?

A – It would be considered.

Q – Will you be doing something at the Village Fete?

A – Yes.

#### **REPORT FROM SIDDINGTON WITH PRESTON W.I. (Ann Gibbons – President)**

I'd like to thank you for inviting me here this evening to tell you about our WI. A quieter year than last year, we are 101 years old and still going strong. We do of course lose a few members each year, but on the plus side, we gain a few members too.

Siddington Women's Institute was formed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1923. The amalgamation with Preston came later. The founding President was Mrs Christopher Bowly of Siddington House, with vice Presidents Mrs Hughes of the Rectory, Mrs Attwater of Dry Leaze and Mrs Seymour Paskin of Siddington Manor. It seems likely that these ladies were the main force behind the formation, especially as Mrs Bowly started the funds with £5 (£400 in today's money). There were around 75 members, with many longstanding Siddington names featured: Millington, Waldron, Hicks, Bateman and Gardiner amongst them. One member's address is given as 2 Council Houses, now Parkway, another is Pound Lane, also became Parkway. Other addresses are The Towers and Empire Cottages, both are still valid addresses in the village although they now form part of Ashton Road.

The social conventions of the time are evident in our early records. Most ladies were listed under their husband's first name, as was the founding President (Sarah Bowly). And our town planners no longer name the streets of social housing, Council Houses.

And back to the present day, we meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month (but not August), we have a speaker at most meetings, particularly good this year was Stephen Rowley with a talk on The Creation Tapestry, so good we have booked him again for another of his talks.

In the past year our members have entered WI quiz competition, we are thru to the final in September. We have restarted our trips, the first was to see The King and I in Oxford. It was very good with the 2 leads every bit as good as Yul Bryner and Deborah Kerr. Later this month we are going back to Oxford to see An Officer and a Gentleman. These trips are open to everyone not just WI members.

We are a friendly bunch, we welcome new members and visitors, men can be visitors for an evening but cannot become members. When your children are past school age it becomes harder to make new friends when you move to a new area, I can certainly recommend joining the WI as a route to new friends.

### **REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

The Steering Group now has five members. We are keen for others to join us and are especially keen to increase the age and gender diversity of the group.

The Steering Group has now met three times. We have appointed a consultant, Wendy Hopkins of Brodie Planning Associates and are close to finalising a questionnaire for residents of the parish to provide their views on the village and what kind of development they would like to see. It is planned to circulate this with the July edition of the Village News. There will be an option to complete the questionnaire on line.

We will have a stall at the Village Fete and will use that as an opportunity to hand out questionnaires and try to generate interest in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We have been told to expect the process to produce the Neighbourhood Development Plan to take three years but we all hope that it can be completed more quickly than that.

William Underhill

Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

### **REPORT FROM THE ALLOTMENTS**

#### **Mission statement**

"This is a fresh start for all of us as we plan to look forward to growing a positive vibrant community of gardeners. Working together, sharing skills, swapping ideas and giving practical support where possible."

We are happy to say we now under new management!

Last year it was agreed that the allotments were too big a job to be run by a single Warden, so a committee has been formed to take on the running of the Siddington Allotments. In the lead up to this we had regular consultation for nearly a year, with Lucy Stevens, representing the Bathurst Estate. We also had a very well attended open allotment holders' meeting in March to get feedback from tenants about the Allotments and what they wanted, before the new season started.

We have done a lot of background work with Lucy, sorting out various admin details, and now hold a current list of allotment holders and which plot(s) they rent, and who has paid up. We can also keep an eye on whether the plots are being actively worked or not. If not, we will have a chat to see if it is just a temporary problem, or an ongoing one. The tenants will get six-week tidy-up notices if necessary, and if that doesn't improve the situation, they may not get their tenancy renewed the following season.



We have already been able to allocate some plots to new tenants. If local people would like to apply to go on a waiting list, please email Penny at [siddingtonallotments@gmail.com](mailto:siddingtonallotments@gmail.com).

We have also instigated a 'Community Allotment' for the plot holders to use as a meeting point and social space, and to swap plants, seeds etc and a monthly tidy-up where plot holders can volunteer to join in communal chores for the site.

We are still finding our way, as the new committee, but we've made a good start to our first season and aim to become an even more productive community asset.

Jan Sparrow  
Secretary Siddington Allotments

Q – How many plots are available?

A – All plots recently filled, but a waiting list has been started.

### **REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE SHOW (Nick Grayson)**

The show was a success last year and through fundraising and activities on the day have funds for another show this year. At our public annual general meeting the current committee were all voted in to their present roles for another year. The show committee would like to thank the parish council for paying for the village hall each year for the show. This year's show will be on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### **REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE FETE**

The Village Fete will be taking place on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June from 1pm - 4pm on the playing fields. The Village Hall has been booked as a back-up in case of rain but this will be a reduced event as the dog show will not be able to take place.

A Village Fete has not been held in the Village since 2012 and a volunteer committee has been set up to raise funds for the church and other village groups including but not limited to the school, the village show, and Chesterton AFC. The fete will also be open to private stall holders for £20, but any local groups or charities are free.

The Fete Committee would like to thank Chesterton AFC and the Parish Council for allowing the Fete to take place on the playing fields.

The Fete Committee would like to pass on a big thank you to the Parish Council for allocating funding for the Fete. The committee does not have reserve finances available and is reliant on the donations of the village and the Parish Council. The Parish Council funding will cover key items including first aid, marketing, and one-off costs such as craft material.

The Village Fete will be opened by a Dalek, and will host a charity dog show, plant sale, fire engine, games, tea and cakes, BBQ, various stalls, a raffle and much more. The school choir will be providing some musical entertainment. There will be a craft tent where anyone can help to complete a mural of the village which, once complete, will be hung in the Village Hall.

If anyone would like to volunteer on the day or to help set up please let me know [jude@succour.org.uk](mailto:jude@succour.org.uk), and we welcome everyone on the day to enjoy and support the fete.

Jude Grayson  
Chair of the Village Fete Committee

### **REPORT FROM CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – Cllr M Turner**

Another year has passed and some progress has been made – not as much as I would have liked, but the wheels turn very slowly in Gloucestershire.

I will highlight the major areas that have occupied the Parish Council during the past year:

1. The plan to install a defibrillator on the playing field. I am disappointed that another year has passed without this being installed, but we are trying. The selected site at the top corner by the notice board has been approved by South West Ambulance service and the Bathurst Estate has given us permission to run a trench for the power supply from the football club to the site. However, it has been too wet to dig a trench, and there are various hoops that need to be jumped through to get everything in place. I sincerely hope that at the Parish Meeting next year we will be reporting that it has been installed.
2. The closure of the Green Lane to motorised traffic. We paid a small sum of money (£50) for Gloucestershire County Council to do their statutory consultation. One of the consultees – a trail rider group, who I expect do not even know where Siddington is, objected so the County Council will not take the matter any further – democracy in action. We are seeking legal advice, as we believe that we do have a case for what we propose and hope to make some progress. It is very difficult to move forward when both Gloucestershire County Council and Cotswold District Council are opposed to the idea for reasons that seem unfounded and undemocratic to us.
3. The clerk is still fighting the case to get a new vehicle activated speed sign in the village. The old broken one has now been removed so Highways can no longer claim that we have one.
4. On the subject of Gloucestershire Highways – the only words that I come to mind are incompetent and useless. We have items on the list of repairs going back to 2016 - not a big job, just a faded weight limit sign. It is not acceptable that they will not do the repairs required, neither will they let the parish council undertake them. On a (hopefully) positive note the Highways Manager has recently changed so we are hoping for more progress.
5. The state of our roads is only getting worse. There is a plan to resurface Ashton Road in the coming year, but at the moment only going as far as Fraziers Folly, not on past the Greyhound, we are hoping to get this changed so it goes right thorough the village.
6. We have also had numerous conversations with Gloucestershire Highways about their communications relating to road closures. They seem to put out blanket message saying the roads will be closed to all traffic except emergency vehicles. This leaves residents thinking they will not be able to access their properties, after much angst and firm email it has turned out this is not the case and residents have been allowed access during the works, it was just a result of poor, lazy communication sent out with no regard to the impact on residents.
7. In recent weeks there have been some disturbing posts about anti-social behaviour and youth gang violence both in the village and directed at people from the village. There have been rumours that the police can do nothing about this behaviour due to the restrictions of the youth justice system. The police have been involved with the victims of these assaults and can press charges where appropriate and the victim wishes to bring charges, regardless of the age of the perpetrator. The police have increased their patrols on Siddington to offer reassurance and act as a deterrent.

On to more positive things:

1. Great work has been done on the proposal to install a trim trail on the playing field. An application has been submitted for a lottery grant, we are waiting to hear if we have been successful. We have permission for the Bathurst Estate to install it so it should be all systems go if we can secure the funding.
2. The extension to the graveyard is still a work in progress. The original patch of land offered by the Bathurst Estate is no longer suitable for burials following a change in the rules about the proximity to a water course and burials. We have proposed an alternative piece of estate land within an easy and safe walk of the church, and we are awaiting a response from the Estate regard this proposal.

3. You will have noticed that the solar farm opposite Nursery View is taking shape. They were originally hoping to commission it in February this year, but the inevitable delays have hit them so will have to wait for our payment of £80,000.
4. The houses on the Orchard Field estate are now all complete and mostly occupied. There has been some concern from the residents regarding the school drop off point and how this will work in practice particularly regarding their responsibilities once they take over the management of the estate from the developer. The residents are in regular contact with the school and the Academy Trust to reach an agreement.
5. The extension to the school is taking shape and is due to be completed on schedule. This has raised some concerns from parents and villagers around the extra traffic that will be generated when the Steadings School takes up its temporary residence on the school grounds.

Coming up:

There are a couple of big planning applications either in progress or in pre-planning consultation that we will be keeping a close eye on:

1. The extension to the retirement village at Siddington Park
2. The organic plant nursery on the land adjacent to the Orchard Field Development.

Finally, I would like to thank on the parish's behalf our Clerk, Robert, for all his hard work for the parish over the year and to thank my fellow councillors. We currently have two vacancies on the Parish Council which will be filled by Co-option, anyone interested please come and have a chat after the meeting.

Q – With regard to Green Lane, is it worth approaching the single objector.

A – Although most respondents had no objections, it is too late now.

Q- Are there any plans for what to do with the £80,000 from the sola farm?

A – Not yet, but suggestions are welcome.

### **Public Questions**

There were no questions.

The Chairman thanked all those present for attending and the meeting closed at 8.28pm.