

SHIPLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - Monday 20th May 2023

Report by the Chairman, Shipley Parish Council, 2023-2024

On reflection 2024 was a busy year for the Parish Council seeing the fruition of previously held ambitions to start to make a difference to areas that had been historically flagged by parishioners as important to them via councillors and in previous surveys, I will expand on this after some statistical housekeeping.

The Council met ordinarily eleven times, from May 2023 until April 2024, being quorate on every occasion required, and a further five times including a technically extraordinary meeting held in August, all required to discuss planning applications that fell in between ordinary meeting cycles. We have seen some welcoming consistency and continuity with a full council of eleven councillors for the entire year, welcoming Councillors Woodage (back) and Councillor Tuck via co-option in May 2023 following full uncontested elections at the start of the month at the same time of the District Council elections. Councillors Smale and Nunn were duly co-opted in July 2023. We started the year with £76,650 in the current account and reserves and concluded with £62,229, of which £40,442 is currently earmarked for capital projects.

There were 28 planning applications during the course of the year, which was only one more than the previous year, yet they seemed to fall more awkwardly requiring all the extra dates to be arranged to consider them. However, it is worth noting that consent was given to 73 units at Woodfords on Shipley Road by District Councillors at committee stage and again to 8 units at the former Arun Feeds site in Sincox lane in April 2024, so the Parish has seen more consented units than at any point for many years. Further to that, the developer at Rascals Farm off Shipley Road towards the end of the year submitted their reserved matters application for 100 units that had previously been given outline permission. With 436 dwellings currently in the Parish this represents an increase of 181, or 42%, a fundamental increase in housing.

On Parish matters that I alluded to at the start of this report, the focus this year has been on making some material progress regarding important matters such as traffic, littering and the climate agenda. On traffic matters, with two Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) erected outside the village hall last year, permission was sought and granted from a local landowner to erect two more SIDs outside what used to be St Cuthmans, as well as a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) in a joint venture with the Knepp Estate at Shipley Paygate. Whilst all three signs have been purchased, only the posts have so far been erected as the wettest six months for over 150 years prevented us from getting the cherry picker onto the land to fit them. All three signs will be fitted in the summer when the ground allows.

Likewise, Councillor Payne was successful with both the Parish and West Sussex County Councils support in having his parishioners' Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application to reduce the speed limits in Coolham to a mixture of 20mph in the village centre, graduating to 30 & 40 mph buffers that push the national speed limit boundaries away from the village in all directions. The changes are due to be implemented in May/June 2024. A combination of both elements should see traffic entering and leaving the village by the end of the summer at much

slower speeds. The Council also committed to looking at further SIDs north and south to complete the project.

August saw the launch of “Greener Shipley” after agreeing earlier in the year that Councillor Tuck would spearhead the Councils green agenda with the support of Councillor Emrich. Greener Shipley promises to “Work to make positive, practical environmental changes and raise awareness of green stuff” of which it has certainly done quite a bit of in the seven months since inauguration, with already fifty followers on its Facebook page and a committee of local enthusiasts now meeting each month to raise awareness as well doing some of that green stuff it promised.

The group have already adopted the collaborative One Plant software to share ideas with other local stakeholders, set up litter picking gangs of local residents, organised funding and production of 60 bird boxes for construction at Shipley and William Penn Primary schools, the ordering of 9 hirundine nesting boxes to be fitted to Shipleys public buildings, and notable verges identified no less. A very productive few months with much more to come.

In other developments, the 2024 Parishioner survey was also compiled and digitally set up ready for dispatch in May. The Parish Council website was equipped with new planning tracker that emails parishioners’ alerts with new planning applications. Shipley community Hub was launched in May 2023 and celebrated its first birthday recently with founder and former parish councillor Sarah Cuthbertson, which has been a real success in providing a regular focal point for local people to get together. Stoolball is set for a 2024 return, with Councillor De Zoete leading preparations over the winter with 1st Shipley Scouts, coming to the village hall playing fields in Coolham in July after nearly a ten-year absence. There is also much in the pipeline to be reported this time next year, more traffic and climate, playground equipment, training, tree surgery, benches, surveys and more besides.

I will close by thanking team Shipley PC. Firstly, my fellow councillors, who all volunteer their own time, and some a considerable amount, simply because they want to make a difference to their community. I have enjoyed working with you all, chairing some interesting discussions and thank you all for your enthusiasm, efforts, and for making some really valuable contributions all over Shipley during the year. I know other Parishes are not so fortunate. Secondly, thank you also to our District Councillors for their regular attendance and updates, and our County Councillor Amanda Jupp who finds the time to attend all of our meetings, bar diary clashes, in spite of her commitments with other Parishes.

Finally, to our Parish Clerk, Paul Richards. As the Proper Officer of the Council, he has once more been on hand, to help keep us compliant, organised, accurate and relevant where required. On a personal level, in my first year as Chairman, I have also welcomed the straightforward, balanced and objective advice in our discussions that have given me the confidence to act more decisively than I otherwise might.

Matthew Payne

Chairman, Shipley Parish Council - 13th May 2024