

LISS PARISH
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
20th March 2019

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 20th March 2019 when 9 members of the Parish Council, County Councillor Russell Oppenheimer, District Councillor Mike Kendall and 17 parishioners attended.

Mr Roger Hargreaves, Chairman of the Parish Council, presided.

Also in attendance was the Parish Clerk Mrs Sarah Smith.

Apologies were received from Councillors Dodds, Jerrard, Linsley, Mayo, Smith District Councillor Laetitia Pienaar and it was noted that Cllr O'Malley was due to arrive later in the meeting.

PRESENTATION OF THE GOOD VILLAGER AWARD 2020

The Chairman had great pleasure in presenting the Good Villager Award to Mrs Ros Humphreys who received the trophy for all of her work in the community.

Ros Humphreys was nominated as Villager of the Year in recognition of the numerous and varied voluntary roles that she has undertaken in and for the community of Liss.

- Ros is a willing and active Volunteer and Friend of the Triangle Centre – including fund raising activities such as quiz nights, firms and afternoon teas as well as serving in the coffee bar;
- She volunteers regularly for the RVS Luncheon Club – cooking, serving, clearing up;
- She helps at Rother House games afternoon – organising, baking, taking part;
- She has helped decorate the village Christmas trees for many years;
- Ros has also worked to keep Liss Forest looking vibrant by replanting and tidying the Liss Forest flower beds and also on the social side by helping with the very successful Liss Forest Fun Day.

It is with great pleasure that Liss Parish Council has decided to award this trophy to Ros to recognise her varied and valuable contributed to village life.

Ros accepted the award and acknowledged the contribution of all the volunteers who work with her in Liss and do so much.

The Chairman took the opportunity to make a special acknowledgement of the contribution of Ray Betwsorth to Liss who sadly passed away on 13th March. Ray Betwsorth was a respected member of the community. He undertook the role of Village Agent on behalf of Age Concern Hampshire and his contributions to Liss were enduring and varied in their nature. Members agreed he would be missed.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF 21ST MARCH 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 15th March 2017 had been circulated. Proposed by Mr Neasom and seconded by Mr Kendall, they were agreed and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

THE LISS PAVILION PROJECT

The Chairman provided the following report:

The Pavilion has been the biggest single project undertaken by this Council in many years. As I am sure you know, we are building it on the West Liss Recreation ground, replacing an older pavilion and a scout hut which had come to the end of their useful life. The Pavilion will provide changing facilities for the recreation ground, and room for the Liss Scouts, but also a hall, kitchen, a smaller room and toilets to provide much needed facilities for community uses as the village expands

The construction is nearly complete, and current work is on decoration and fitting out, and on the car park. The whole project should be complete by around the middle of April, and we hope to have an Open Day on 26 and 27 April for everyone to come and see. We would like a formal opening of the Pavilion to follow shortly and are trying to agree a date for someone to take on the opening.

We have been publicising the Pavilion through notices, our web site and social media, but we will be shortly distributing a new edition of Village Voice which will tell everyone about the Pavilion and will be emailing organisations and individuals who might be interested in using the Pavilion. If there is anyone here at this meeting who is interested please contact Sarah Smith, the Parish Clerk, in the Parish Office behind this Village Hall.

The Budget

The project is costing just under £750,000, including construction costs, services, architects' fees, and the costs of fitting out the building. We had money from grants, developer contributions and our own reserves, covering about a third of the cost, but borrowed £500,000 from the public works loan board.

That is a big commitment, which has to be paid back over 25 years from our Council Tax precept. So, in March last year we held a consultation with Council Tax payers through a leaflet distributed throughout the village. 68% of those responding supported taking out a loan, and paying for it through the Council Tax. The public works loan board was satisfied that that was a reasonable consultation.

Costs on the project so far have kept within 1% of the original estimate. Additional costs have come from costs on providing services, and particularly from the costs of fitting out. Some of these are costs which we had not planned for, such as the sound system and monitor, but also we have increased the specification on the kitchen, by, for example providing a range for cooking, and better tables and chairs. We feel these facilities will make the Pavilion more attractive for some potential users and the cost will be recovered over time.

Use of the Pavilion

We are very pleased with the final design and the facilities which are being provided, and believe that the Pavilion will be a significant asset to the Village. Of course, the proof of the pudding is in the eating and we will wait to see how it is used before judging its success and whether it is value for money. Nevertheless, even though we still have further publicity to do, we are already receiving firm enquiries and have some bookings. Interest includes groups wanting to use the Pavilion for regular sessions, but others wanting to use it for parties and social gatherings, including a firm enquiry about using it for a wedding.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It has been another successful year for the Parish Council but not without difficulties. Each year the Council commits itself to delivering an Action Plan and we stand to be judged by that. The plan for 2018/19 is attached to this report.

The Liss Pavilion

I have outlined earlier the work on building the Liss Pavilion. Next month it will be completed. It has been a significant achievement, and planning, building and paying for it has required a huge effort by the Council, particularly the members of the Pavilion Development Committee. Of course, the question is, has it been worth it? Soon, everyone can take a look and judge for themselves, but what encourages me most is the number of enquiries and firm bookings we are already receiving for use of the building.

Planning and the Neighbourhood Plan

Development proposals in Liss now have to be determined in the light of the Liss Neighbourhood Development Plan which the Parish Council prepared and was approved through a referendum at the end of 2017. The Planning Committee of the Parish Council has an important role in commenting to the planning authority on the implications of planning applications in Liss, and particularly to ensure that the Neighbourhood Development Plan is taken into account.

One of the largest planning proposals in Liss for many years is the current proposal by Cala Homes for 80 houses at Andlers Ash Road. The neighbourhood development plan decided on the location and much of the proposal reflects the plan, but the Parish Council also has significant concerns about other aspects which do not conform to the plan and is raising objection. On many smaller developments the Parish Council finds itself frequently pushing for better design, adequate parking, and resisting development in the wrong places.

We are also working with the South Downs National Park Authority on setting up a proper monitoring system for the plan to ensure that over time it delivers what we want.

Improving facilities in the Village

The Council has been able to obtain money from developer contributions (S.106 money) and is working with Hampshire County Council on proposals for courtesy crossings on Station Road, and various measures to help with traffic calming. We hope to implement these proposals later in 2019.

The Council has also developed proposals for improving the play equipment and leisure facilities at West Liss playing field. We have applied to the South Downs National Park Authority for money from the Community Infrastructure Levy which developers now have to pay on housing developments. If we are successful, we will consult the community on our detailed proposals, including an exhibition.

We have also applied for money from the Community Infrastructure Levy to pay for new toilets in the Village Hall which badly need updating.

Problems with the drainage of the Newman Collard playing fields continue. We are working with Southern Water to find a solution. The situation is complex since there are a number of drains on the site owned by both the Newman Collard Trust as well as Southern Water all of which were installed some years ago. There is the possibility of new pipe work being required, for which we could apply for developer contributions from S.106 money of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Money from the Community Infrastructure Levy, which is a relatively new way of getting developers to pay for infrastructure and community facilities, could soon become important to the village. Most of the levy in this area goes to the South Downs National Park Authority and we are asking for some of it for highways proposals and the Village Hall toilets. However, 25% of the levy from developments within Liss will come directly to the Parish Council. We are therefore looking at developments in Liss, such as the Cala Homes proposals in Andlers Ash Road, which will eventually produce CIL money of several hundred thousand pounds. We have given a public commitment to use a significant amount of that money to offset the costs of the loan on the Pavilion.

Cleaning and Grass Cutting

With the retirement of the Village Hall caretaker and cleaner, and our head groundsman moving to a new job elsewhere we took the opportunity to review how we provided these services to ensure we were getting value for money. The new arrangements, using outside contractors for cleaning of the hall and the major part of our grass cutting, have proved very successful, both in terms of costs, greater flexibility, and the quality of the work, and we are likely to contract out the cleaning for the Liss Pavilion.

The website

We committed ourselves to updating our website. The work on that is almost finished and we are about to test the proposed new format with councillors and a selection of users, with the intention of launching the new website within the next few months. We are also making more use of social media and are pleased by the increased communication with the community.

Planting of a commemorative tree

Fifty three men from Liss died in the First World War, a significant contribution from what was then a small village. The Parish Council were pleased to join with others in commemorating the 100 years since the ending of the First World War by planting a tree donated by Hilliers in the Newman Collard gardens

Running the Council

The business of the Council is conducted through committees and I particularly extend thanks to all committee chairman, including Angela Wright for Finance, Sue Halstead for Planning, Keith Budden for Buildings, David Dodds for Grounds, Howard Linsley for Highways and Liane McDonald for our Review Advisory Committee. I also chair the Pavilion Development Committee. During the year we were pleased to be joined by Nick Wilson who brings a wealth of experience to the Council.

We have also been lucky with the considerable support given by the East Hants District Councillors representing Liss: Keith Budden, who is also one of our Parish Councillors, Laetitia Pienaar and Mike Kendall. Our County Councillor is Russell Oppenheimer who has proved assiduous in working for Liss and supporting the Parish Council.

In 2nd May elections will be held for the whole of the Parish Council. We are expecting a number of our most experienced councillors to stand down at that time, after many years of service, and they will be greatly missed by the Council and the Village. It is, however, an opportunity for others to come forward and make a contribution, and anyone interested can find out more about the council from myself or the Parish Clerk. The Notice of Election will be published on 22 March and nomination papers can be obtained from the electoral services team at East Hants District Council, including on line. It is an easy process but papers` must be submitted by 3 April.

At the same time elections are being held for the East Hants District Council. Due to boundary changes there will be only two district councillors for Liss instead of the three that currently cover Liss and some of the adjoining area. This, however, is reverting to the position we previously had for many years and worked well for Liss. The work of the Parish Council is totally dependent on our Parish Clerk and the support within the Parish office. Sarah Smith took over as sole Parish Clerk at the beginning of 2018, on the retirement of our long-standing clerk, Dick Bowery. At the same time, we appointed a Finance Officer. Unfortunately, due to illness, she was not able to fully take on the role and had to stand down later in the year. This imposed a huge strain on the office and slowed down work on some of our projects. In particular, we

have not been able to make progress on our commitment to update our accounting system.

We have been able to get by through the efforts of Sarah Smith, and the support of Frances Cook as the Assistant Clerk and I cannot express too highly how much we owe to them for keeping things going. Of course, those of you who have been in the Parish Office will know they had some help. Like a bad penny somehow Dick Bowery has continued to turn up, and fill in the gaps on our financial work, and I am so grateful for his contribution. We have now been able to appoint an experienced finance officer, Elizabeth Ford, who starts at the beginning of April. I look forward to the next year with some optimism.

LISS PARISH COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2018/19: OUTCOMES AT MARCH 2019

During the Council year 2018/19 Liss Parish Council undertake the following actions. The Chairman's assessment of progress is indicated in italics:

- Maintain the open spaces for which the council is responsible, including the three recreation grounds, and facilities such as the Village Hall, to the required standard;
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within, and/or impact on the Parish of Liss;
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parishioners of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hants District Council, the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council;
- Communicate with parishioners of Liss by maintaining an up-to-date website (www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk), providing a Twitter feed (@LissCouncil), Facebook page, representation at village events and regular publication of Village Voice newsletters;
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parishioners of Liss and, if appropriate, to signpost to the correct person/ organisation for resolution/ further progression;
- Encourage and work with the Liss Forest Residents Association
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through 11 meetings of the Council per year, supported by appropriate committees;
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money.

All actions completed to a satisfactory standard, despite significant staffing problems in the Parish Office.

Key projects for 2018/19 include:

- Completion of the Pavilion project including securing agreements with users, public approval for an application to the Public Works Loans Board, selection and signing of contracts with contractors, and construction; *Successfully completed.*
- Setting up arrangements for the implementation and monitoring of the Liss Neighbourhood Plan; *An outline monitoring scheme has been produced, but now needs to be integrated with the SDNPA monitoring scheme.*
- Improvement of highway safety, including additional courtesy crossings, village gates and additional road signs using identified funding streams under the

Highways Community Funded Initiative; *Proposals have been produced and funding identified, and now working on delivery.*

- Identifying and promoting key priorities with the aim of securing CIL funds from SDNPA; Infrastructure Delivery Plan; *Priorities defined (the provision of leisure facilities at West Liss Recreation Ground and provision of new toilets in the Village Hall), and bids submitted to the SDNPA.*
- Commencing a project to improve leisure facilities at West Liss Recreation Ground; *Project defined and an application made for CIL funding.*
- Working towards attainment of the Quality Level of the Local Council Award Scheme; *Further actions have been undertaken to progress towards Quality status level.*
- Upgrading the Liss Parish Council website; *New website drafted and consultation underway.*
- Managing staff changes through good succession planning *Difficulties experienced with new staff. New recruitment process now completed.*
- Completing the transition to the SAGE accounting system. *Delayed due to staff difficulties.*
- Implementation of the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation. *Successfully completed.*

LISS PARISH COUNCIL PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR 2019/20

During the Council year 2019/20 Liss Parish Council will undertake the following actions:

- Maintain the open spaces for which the council is responsible, including the three recreation grounds, and facilities such as the Village Hall, to the required standard;
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within or impact on the Parish,
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parishioners of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hants District Council, the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council,
- Communicate with parishioners of Liss by maintaining an up-to-date website, (www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk), providing a Twitter feed (@LissCouncil), Facebook page, representation at village events and regular publication of Village Voice newsletters,
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parishioners of Liss and, if appropriate, to signpost to the correct person/ organisation for resolution/ further progression,
- Encourage and work with the Liss Forest Residents Association,
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through 11 meetings of the Council per year, supported by appropriate committees,
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money.

Key projects for 2019/20 include:

- Promoting and managing the use of the new Liss Pavilion,

- Working with the SDNPA to set up arrangements for the implementation and monitoring of the Liss Neighbourhood Plan,
- Providing additional courtesy crossings, village gates and additional road signs using S106 funding under the Highways Community Funded Initiative,
- Providing new toilets in the Village Hall, subject to the availability of funding,
- Improving leisure facilities at West Liss Recreation Ground, subject to the availability of funding,
- Promoting greater engagement of the council with other community groups and organisations in the village in line with the Community Engagement policy,
- Identifying key priorities for the use of CIL funds,
- Contributing to the Flood Action Group Emergency Plan and Flood Prevention Strategy; particularly through the promotion of community resilience,
- Working towards attaining the Quality Level of the Local Council Award Scheme,
- Completing the upgrade of the Liss Parish Council website,
- Promoting training and induction and ongoing support for new councillors,
- Training and induction of new members of staff,
- Completing the transition to a more effective and transparent accounting system for the Council.

The Chairman welcomed comments on the action plan and advised that it would be open for consultation until the meeting of Council in May 2019 at which the plan would be considered for adoption.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Wright, Chairman of the Finance Committee presented the following financial report.

The precept for 2018/19 was £202690. Contributions were made to the Village Hall, West Liss Recreation Ground and Pavilion and the parish allotments. These are all registered charities, which, because of financial regulations, have to be accounted for separately. A decision to outsource grass cutting was implemented during the year. Estimated expenditure for the year is anticipated as being largely in line with budget.

Looking ahead, staff costs for 2019/20 are reduced by 9.15% largely due to operating with one less groundsman; this saving is partly offset by the outsourcing of the grass cutting which gives a 40.21% rise to grounds maintenance costs, but the net effect of the change provides a saving overall.

Included in the budget for 2019/20 is an amount of £27478 for costs of servicing a public works loan for construction costs of the Liss Pavilion at West Liss recreation ground. An amount of £3000 has been included in the general administration budget, on the advice of EHDC, to meet possible election costs. The new Liss Pavilion is expected to commence operations from the beginning of May.

The Council has set a precept of £212900 for 2019/20 and the charge per band D dwelling will therefore be £81.75 compared to £79.80 in 2018/19 an increase of £1.95 or 2.443%.

A broad analysis of total budgeted costs and revenue, including the Charities accounts is as follows:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Increase/-decrease	
	<u>£000's</u>	<u>£000's</u>	<u>£000's</u>	<u>£000's</u>	<u>%</u>
Staff costs	107.6	107.1	97.3	-9.8	-9.15

Insurance	8.7	10.0	7.2	-2.8	-28.00
General administration	10.5	13.4	15.6	2.2	16.42
Grounds maintenance	16.8	19.4	27.2	7.8	40.21
Village hall running costs	8.1	7.6	12.4	4.8	63.16
New Liss Pavilion running costs	0.0	5.0	13.1	8.1	162.00
Grants to local associations	12.8	12.8	13.0	0.2	1.56
Liss pavilion loan servicing	5.5	20.5	27.5	7.0	34.15
Capital projects & provisions	47.7	20.5	19.7	-0.8	-3.90
	<u>217.7</u>	<u>216.3</u>	<u>233.0</u>	<u>16.7</u>	<u>7.72</u>
Funded by:					
Interest & other receipts	0.6	0.6	1.5	0.9	150.00
Rental incomes	14.5	14.8	21.8	7.0	47.30
Grant Funding	10.0	0.0	0.0		
From/to reserves	-1.9	-1.8	-3.2	-1.4	77.78
	<u>23.2</u>	<u>13.6</u>	<u>20.1</u>	<u>6.5</u>	<u>47.79</u>
Precept	182.8	202.7	212.9	10.2	5.03
Council Tax support grant	11.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	
	<u>217.7</u>	<u>216.3</u>	<u>233.0</u>	<u>16.7</u>	<u>7.72</u>
No. of band D dwellings	2510.13	2540.00	2604.18	64.18	2.53
Band D tax	£72.81	£79.80	£81.75	£1.95	2.44

The audit of all 2017/18 accounts was carried out in April 2018 by Lightatouch, the independent internal auditor and approved at the Council meeting on 21st May; PFK Littlejohn Legal Law Practitioners, the Council's appointed external auditor signed the final clearance of the accounts, without any changes or comments on 25th September 2018.

Cllr A Wright
Chairman of LPC Finance Committee

REPORT ON ATTENDANCE OF COUNCILLORS

The Clerk reported Since the last Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council had met 14 times. Mrs Halstead and Mrs McDonald attended all 14 meetings. Mr Dodds, Mr Hargreaves, Mr Linsley and Mrs Wright attended 13 meetings. Mr Budden and Mr Mayo attended 10 meetings. Mr Smith attended 9 meetings. Mr MacNamara and Mrs O'Malley attended 8 meetings. Mr Jerrard attended 7 meetings. Mr Wilson attended 7 of a possible 9 meetings following his co-option in June.

UPDATE ON HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

County Councillor Russell Oppenheimer provided the following report:

Implementation of new speed limits

Despite some delays and hiccups with the implementation, the new speed limits did finally come into force in Liss in November 2018.

To recap those new speed limits, on Hill Brow Road the 30mph limit was extended up the hill (previously it was a 40mph limit). The B3006 was reduced to a 40mph limit (from National Speed limit). And Rake Road now has a 30mph limit (previously it was National Speed limit).

Speed limits alone cannot tackle the scourge of speeding, and we must continue to find ways to slow down the traffic as it passes through Liss. More prominent crossing points may be a part of the solution.

Federation of Liss Junior and Infant Schools

The governing bodies of Liss Infant and Liss Junior schools successfully merged to form a federation on 1 September 2018. This is good news for all children in Liss and the news coincided with a favourable Ofsted inspection report, which showed that the school is raising standards.

The Governor Services team at Hampshire County Council continue to provide training and support to the new unified governing body.

Transfer of Triangle Community Centre

The process to transfer the Triangle Community Centre from Hampshire County Council to the Liss Community Association is nearing its completion.

An historical anomaly was identified whereby the Educational Charitable Trust associated with Liss Junior School had not been moved to the new location. This issue was rectified last October and the lawyers are now working on the details of the Deed of Transfer. I am continuing to liaise with the Property Services Team on this.

New era for Hampshire County Council

The Leader of Hampshire County Council, Cllr Roy Perry, announced on 14 February that he will stand down as Leader at the County's AGM in May. A leadership election process is now underway within the Conservative Group.

The new leader will face challenges from the ongoing financial environment. Demand pressures and cost inflation continue to put pressure on budgets. The new leader will need to press the case for fair funding with central Government. The 2019 Comprehensive Spending Review and the forthcoming Green Paper on Adult Social Care are crucial to establishing a sustainable platform for Hampshire County Council for the coming years.

County Councillor Grants

This year I have supported five projects in Liss as follows:

Project	Amount (£)
Rebuilding of wall at Triangle Centre car park	890
Purchase of new communal television at Rother House	250
Promethean Interactive Panels for Liss Infants School	600
Home Start Butser - support for troubled families in Liss	1,000
Liss Luncheon Club	335
Total:	3,075

UPDATE ON EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The following report had been submitted by District Councillor Laetitia Pienaar:

1. Councillor Devolved Grant Fund

I am pleased to report that in the year which ended 8th March 2019, I have spent the allocated fund in the following way: -

Liss Infant School – Interactive panels	£ 400.00
Crossover – furniture	£ 200.00
Triangle – various	£1000.00
Triangle – new sound system	£ 900.66
Liss Lunch Club – coach hire for a members’ outing	£ 365.00
Liss Parish Council – plaque for WW1 memorial	£ 244.34
Liss Parish Council – internal fitting out of Pavilion	£ 690.00
Rosemary Trust – computers for new premises	£ 500.00
Rother House – Television	£ 200.00
TOTAL	£4,500.00

2. Charity Walk for Peace on 4th May 2019

I have served on the Joint Committee of this initiative right from the start – it is a partnership between the Ahmadiyya Muslim Elders Association and EHDC, for the benefit of the East Hants Community. Two walks have taken place in past years and this year the walk will take place on the 4th May, starting and ending at Penns Place. Two charities from Liss have applied and have been accepted as beneficiaries of the Walk, namely RVS Liss Luncheon Club for the Elderly and the Crossover. I hope that the people of Liss – including the members of the Parish Council – will come along on the day and support the walk. The Walk itself will take a gentle route around the Heath pond and through the town centre.

3. Liz Panton is no longer the Community Development Officer for Liss, but has been replaced by DEAN MAHOMMED, formerly a PCSO, so knows our community well. Also, abandoned vehicles should be reported at parking.office@easthants.gov.uk.

PARISHIONERS’ QUESTIONS

The following queries were raised:

- a) Allocation of Pavilion income – The Chairman advised that the aim would be to cover running costs as far as possible, although the income could not be fully assessed until after a full year of operation;
- b) Pavilion running costs – It was acknowledged that the running costs might increase further down the line. The Chairman noted that a new building would always be cheaper to maintain in the early years and recognised that maintenance would likely increase in later years;
- c) Pavilion construction costs – Although praised for the delivery of the Pavilion and the commitment to reduce the PWLB loan where possible, LPC was asked about an apparent increase in construction costs. The Chairman advised that the figure quoted did not include the fit-out costs and noted that LPC had always been very open about the costs, included an upgrade in the kitchen specification which it was felt would provide a higher income stream;
- d) Query regarding reduced staff costs and increase in grounds costs – Cllr Wright advised that that this was due to the departure of the full time Groundsman and the use of external contractors for grass cutting instead;
- e) LPC position on speeding within Liss – The Chairman acknowledged the issues and advised that, although HCC was the main player, LPC would continue to

work with HCC to tackle the issue. Cllr Wright added that funds had been sought for a black box to measure speeds accurately in Liss Forest as HCC required evidence in order to take action;

- f) LPC position on inappropriate parking within Liss – The Chairman advised that illegal parking is an enforcement issue which falls to EHDC. Cllr Bidden added that the EHDC traffic wardens do spend a reasonable amount of time in Liss and advised that members of the public could take a photo of any offending vehicle and e-mail it to EHDC enforcement (parking.office@easthants.gov.uk) who might be in a position to be able to respond, as detailed in Village Voice Issue 41;
- g) Parish Council responsibility for village resilience faced with issues such as flooding – The Chairman of the Flood Action Group praised LPC for the annual action plan against which LPC assesses itself in an open and transparent manner and requested a wider focus on community resilience as opposed to flooding alone. The Chairman advised that, although happy to consider broadening the commitment to wider community resilience, he had some concerns about delivery;
- h) Committee structure – LPC was asked whether it was thought appropriate to review the committee structure to free up more time for time to be spent on delivering objectives. The Chairman advised that he was very receptive making improvements on committee structure, an issue which would be revisited after the May elections.

CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked residents for attending & the meeting was closed at 21.18hrs.



LISS PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Chairman's Report

It has been another very busy year for the Parish Council. Each year the Council commits itself to delivering an Action Plan and we stand to be judged by that. The plan for 2019/20 is attached to this report (Annex A) with comments on progress made, alongside a new Action Plan for 20/21 (Annex B).

The Liss Pavilion

In May last year the Liss Pavilion was opened by Nigel Atkinson, the Lord Lieutenant for Hampshire. It provides a community hall, changing rooms for the West Liss recreation ground, and facilities for the Liss Scouts and I am so proud of it. Most people seem to think that it looks good and is already proving a considerable addition to the village. It has been of huge benefit to the Scouts and we are finding a very healthy rate of bookings. There have been one or two teething problems and, in particular, we found that disabled pedestrian access was difficult, but we have now obtained money from developer contributions to pay for a flat path across the car park.

Investing in Liss

The Parish Council has the ambition to provide better facilities throughout the village, but we cannot expect to pay for all of these from our Council Tax precept so we are heavily reliant on finance from developer contributions, or grants from various bodies. Traditionally, money from developments in Liss have been provided by what are known as S106 payments from developers but more recently that system has been largely replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy. This is money which is still paid by development but it can be used for a wider range of uses than S106 money and crucially 25% of the money levied on development is paid directly to the Parish Council.

This has allowed us to do a number of things. I have mentioned the improved pedestrian access to the Liss Pavilion, but we are also using S106 money to improve the provision of play equipment on the Riverside Walk, which we have completed this month. The deteriorating Lych gate between Old School Road and the Newman Collard Playing fields was replaced in January using S106 money. Also at the Newman Collard Playing fields we have been working to improve the drainage. Following a detailed CCTV survey we have been able to clear some of the blocked drains but it is a complex situation and there is more work to do.

We have been fortunate to have made a successful bid for Community Infrastructure Levy money held by the South Downs National Park Authority to pay for new toilets in the Village Hall and we hope to get work underway later this year. I should also note in passing that the Village Hall was out of action for some weeks after someone in June drove their car into it. Fortunately, we were fully insured. We have also put in a bid for Community Infrastructure Levy money with which to replace recreation and play equipment on the West Liss Recreation Ground which needs replacement. We wait to hear if we have been successful.

We are also committed to providing a small community park and play area on the green space along Mill Road. We had hoped to obtain a grant under the Government's new Pocket Park scheme but that was heavily over-subscribed and we were unsuccessful. However, having worked up a scheme and found that there was considerable support from neighbouring residents we are still pursuing the idea, looking for funding from remaining S.106 money and other grants.

The potential to use the Community Infrastructure Levy for supporting services and infrastructure in Liss is enormous, not just for infrastructure but also for supporting community and social initiatives. We have therefore recently set up a Projects Review Group to evaluate what is needed and look at how best to engage with the community on priorities and projects. We are, however, still committed to using money from the levy to offset the costs of the loan which paid for the Liss Pavilion if that makes financial sense.

Roads and Traffic

Traffic through the village is a continuing problem and the Parish Council has been promoting a number of measures to help manage it.

- We have obtained funding from Hampshire County Council to put alongside some S106 money to provide pedestrian courtesy crossings on Station Road, by the Liss Pavilion and the Business Centre.
- Forest Road in Liss Forest has problems both of speeding traffic and difficulties for pedestrians on the length of road with a low kerb. We are working with Hampshire and East Hampshire Councils, the South Downs National Park Authority and the Liss Residents Association to find solutions.
- We are supporting a Speed Watch team in Liss Forest which should start operating very shortly

Our ambition is also to deliver traffic and environmental improvements in the village centre, but this needs a lot of work and extensive consultation before we have a deliverable scheme.

Planning and Development

In September 2019 the Cala Homes development for 78 houses on Andlers Ash Road was given planning permission by the South Downs National Park Authority. This is the most significant development in Liss for decades, and is the first development prepared under the Liss Neighbourhood Development Plan which the Parish Council prepared after extensive

consultation with the community. The Council had worked closely with the National Park Authority and Cala Homes to get the best possible development for Liss. Work is underway and I wait to see a very muddy expanse turned into something rather special. Associated with it is the provision of a SANG, or Suitable Alternative Green Space. The detail of this is still being worked on, but it will provide additional space for informal recreation alongside the Riverside Walk.

The Planning Committee of the Council continues to comment to the Planning Authority on all planning applications in Liss, particularly to ensure that decisions reflect the Liss Neighbourhood Plan. The Council finds itself frequently pushing for better design, adequate parking, and resisting development in the wrong places.

Community Engagement

The Parish Council is committed to encouraging effective local community engagement, and to developing relationships between the Council, individuals, voluntary and community groups. Meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees are open to the public and press. Our Annual Parish Meeting enables residents to question and review the work of elected members.

Parish Councillors serve as trustees on a variety of local bodies and work with others: supporting the Flood Action Group, and the creation of a Liss Speedwatch Group, co-ordinating aspects of the Christmas Fair, assisting with the recruitment of a new Village Agent, and supporting the setting up of a Liss Men's Shed. Each year we also give funding support to a variety of local initiatives, and we have recently created an email network of local groups to inform them of funding and other opportunities;

In October last year we launched a new website for the Parish Council, at www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk. This provides better and clearer information about the work of the Parish Council and hopefully enhances our profile within the village. It is supported by our engagement on Twitter and Facebook and most recently Instagram, which are steadily building up more followers.

Changes to Councillors

In May last year elections for the Parish Council were held and five councillors stood down: Kate O'Malley, Frances McNamara, Angela Wright, Brian Mayo, and Sue Halstead. All are missed but we are particularly grateful to Angela Wright a member since 2010 and Brian Mayo since 2004 who made enormous contributions, most recently with Angela working on environmental issues for the Neighbourhood Plan keeping our finances on track and Brian project managing the Liss Pavilion Project. But most of all our thanks go to Sue Halstead, who had been a parish councillor since 1983, chairman of the council, chairman of various committees, not least our Planning Committee

Now we have new members who have joined the council. Ian James, Clayre Williams, Sheila Baldwin, Maggie Knibbs. All live in the village and are committed to improving village life.

We have Keith Budden as vice-chairperson and chairperson of our Planning Committee, Andy Smith as chairperson of our Highways committee, David Dodds chairperson of the Facilities Committee which has replaced the former grounds and buildings committees, Liane McDonald chairperson of the Review Committee and Howard Linsley chairperson of the Finance Committee.

District and County Councillors

In May, elections for East Hants District Council were also held. Because of a boundary change to electoral areas Liss is now represented by just two district councillors, as it had been for many years previously. Elected were Keith Budden, who is also our vice-chairman and Russell Openheimer, who is also our County Councillor with Hampshire County Council. I am so grateful for their commitment to Liss and the Parish Council and I look forward to continuing our work with them in the future.

Running the Council

The work of the Parish Council is totally dependent on our Parish Clerk and the support within the Parish office. We have had a number of changes in the office, with Liz Ford joining as our Responsible Finance Officer and recently Lizzy Keeling joining as the Assistant Clerk to replace Frances Cook who moved to work for a Parish Council closer to her home.

The office has been under enormous strain over the past year, with the changes in personal, work on the Pavilion and other projects, and in bringing our financial systems up to date. I cannot express too highly how much we owe to Sarah Smith, our Clerk, who has worked far too long and hard to ensure that the work of the Council has kept going, always with a view to getting better at what we do and achieving the quality award of the Local Government Award Scheme. I am so grateful to Liz Ford for throwing herself into the financial work and to Lizzy Keeling for the enthusiasm which she has brought to the job.

We have also gained Julie Ryan as the caretaker for the Pavilion, alongside Miriam Baines, the caretaker for the Village Hall, and the two of them provide an excellent service. So too does Michael Jarman, who will be familiar to many as he litter picks around the village. Finally, I will make a particular mention of Paul Knibbs who is now our sole groundsman, and whose willingness to take on any task and make things happen ensures our grounds are in capable hands.

Thank you.

Cllr Roger Hargreaves
Chairman, Liss Parish Council
March 2020

Finance Report

The precept for 2019/20 was £212,900. Contributions were made to the Village Hall, West Liss Recreation Ground and Pavilion and the parish allotments. These are all registered charities, which are accounted for separately in accordance with financial regulations. Estimated expenditure for the year is anticipated as being largely in line with budget.

Budgeted expenditure for 2020/21 is as follows:

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	% change
Budget:				
Staff cost	107.1	97.3	102.3	5.1%
Insurance	10.0	7.2	7.2	0.0%
General administration	13.4	15.6	16.8	7.6%
Grounds maintenance	19.4	27.2	23.3	-14.2%
Village Hall running cost	7.6	12.4	11.4	-8.4%
Liss Pavilion running costs	5.0	13.1	14.9	14.0%
Grants to local associations	12.8	13.0	15.8	21.7%
Liss pavilion loan servicing	20.5	27.5	27.5	-0.1%
Capital projects and provisions	20.5	19.7	14.2	-27.9%
	216.3	233.0	233.4	
Funded by:				
Precept	202.7	212.9	218.2	2.5%
Interest and other receipts	0.6	1.5	0.2	-86.7%
Rental incomes	14.8	21.8	17.1	-21.7%
Transfer to/from reserves	(1.8)	(3.2)	(2.1)	-35.8%
	216.3	233.0	233.4	

Staff costs for 2020/2021 have been budgeted to increase by 5.1% in accordance with current legislation.

The new pavilion commenced operations in May 2019 and is expected to have 14% higher running costs in its first full year of operations in 2020/2021.

Liss Parish Council is expected to make grant payments of £15.8k to local organisations and associations - an increase of £2.8k or 21.7% from the previous year.

The Council has set a precept of £218,200 for 2021/2021 and the charge per band D dwelling will therefore be £84.42 compared with £81.75 in 2019/2020. This is an increase of £2.67 or 3.3%.

The audit of all 2018/19 accounts was carried out in April 2019 by Lightatouch, the independent internal auditor and approved at the Council meeting on 20th May 2019. PFK Littlejohn Legal Law Practitioners, the Council's appointed external auditor signed the final clearance of the accounts without any changes or comments in September 2019.

Cllr C. Williams, Chair of LPC Finance Committee

Clerk's Report on Councillor Attendance – Year 2019/20

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council has met 10 times.

Cllrs Linsley and McDonald attended all 10 meetings.

Cllrs Hargreaves and Budden attended 9 meetings.

Cllr Wilson attended 8 meetings.

Cllrs Dodds and Smith attended 7 meetings.

Cllr James attended 8 out of a possible 9 meetings following the elections in May 2019.

Cllr Edwards attended 4 out of a possible 9 meetings following the elections in May 2019.

Cllr Williams attended 5 out of a possible 5 meetings following co-option in September.

Cllrs Baldwin and Knibbs attended 4 out of a possible 5 meetings following co-option in September.

Mr Mayo, Mrs Halstead, Mrs O Malley and Mrs Wright attended 1 out of a possible 1 meeting prior to the elections in May, and Mr MacNamara attended 0 out of a possible 1 meeting prior to the elections in May.

Sarah Smith
Parish Clerk

Liss Parish Council Action Plan for 2019/2020

Outcomes as at March 2020 in red

During the Council year 2019/20 Liss Parish Council will undertake the following actions:

- Maintain the open spaces for which the council is responsible, including the three recreation grounds, and facilities such as the Village Hall, to the required standard;
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within or impact on the Parish,
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parishioners of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hants District Council, the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council,
- Communicate with parishioners of Liss by maintaining an up-to-date website, (www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk), providing a Twitter feed (@LissCouncil), Facebook page, representation at village events and regular publication of Village Voice newsletters,
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parishioners of Liss and, if appropriate, to signpost to the correct person/ organisation for resolution/ further progression,
- Encourage and work with the Liss Forest Residents Association,
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through 11 meetings of the Council per year, supported by appropriate committees,
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money.

All actions carried out satisfactorily except time pressures prevented us bringing out Village Voice in Autumn 2019

Key projects for 2019/20 include:

- Promoting and managing the use of the new Liss Pavilion, Pavilion proving popular and also very successful for the scouts, although with less use of the changing rooms
- Working with the SDNPA to set up arrangements for the implementation and monitoring of the Liss Neighbourhood Plan, Waiting for the South Downs National Park Authority to confirm how much monitoring they will be undertaking
- Providing additional courtesy crossings, village gates and additional road signs using S106 funding under the Highways Community Funded Initiative, Courtesy crossings about to be implemented, work on other issues underway.
- Providing new toilets in the Village Hall, subject to the availability of funding, Funding achieved, work should begin later in 2020
- Improving leisure facilities at West Liss Recreation Ground, subject to the availability of funding, Scheme developed and bid for funding submitted
- Promoting greater engagement of the council with other community groups and organisations in the village in line with the Community Engagement policy, New

website set up, with greater use of social media. Liss Speedwatch, Mens' Shed, Village Agent recruitment and the Christmas Fair supported and a local groups email network created

- Identifying key priorities for the use of CIL funds, **Key projects underway and a new Project Review Group set up to identify and consult on priorities**
- Contributing to the Flood Action Group Emergency Plan and Flood Prevention Strategy; particularly through the promotion of community resilience, **Currently discussing with the Flood Action group support for the Flood Prevention Strategy**
- Working towards attaining the Quality Level of the Local Council Award Scheme, **Work underway to meet the requirements of the Award**
- Completing the upgrade of the Liss Parish Council website, **New site launched October 2019**
- Promoting training and induction and ongoing support for new councillors, **Training and induction offered to all new councillors**
- Training and induction of new members of staff, **Training and induction undertaken**
- Completing the transition to a more effective and transparent accounting system for the Council. **Delayed due to staff changes, but preliminary work on a new system underway.**

During the Council year 2020/21 Liss Parish Council will undertake the following actions:

- Maintain the open spaces for which the council is responsible, including the three recreation grounds, and facilities such as the Village Hall and Liss Pavilion, to the required standard;
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within or impact on the Parish;
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parish of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hampshire District Council, the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council;
- Communicate with parishioners of Liss by maintaining an up-to-date website, (www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk), maintaining a social media presence, including a Twitter feed (@LissCouncil) and Facebook page, representation at village events and regular publication of Village Voice newsletters;
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parish of Liss and, if appropriate, to signpost to the correct person/ organisation for resolution/ further progression;
- Working with key local groups for the benefit of residents, including the Liss Forest Residents Association and the Flood Action Group;
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through full meetings of the Council, supported by appropriate committees;
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money;
- Working to identify and secure sources of funding to advance LPC priorities;
- Promoting training and induction and ongoing support for members of staff and new councillors.

Key projects for 2020/2021 include:

- Covid-19: helping the village recover and learn from the experience of Covid-19, in consultation with the community, using our services and funding and through support to and from other organisations, such as the district and county councils and local voluntary groups;
- Liss Neighbourhood Plan: working with the SDNPA to set up arrangements for the implementation and monitoring;
- Identifying priorities for the use of CIL funds allocated directly to Liss Parish Council, with work to be led by the new Project Review Group and to include community consultation;
- Highways priorities: delivering the additional courtesy crossings in West Liss and identifying opportunities to tackle speeding throughout Liss;
- Facilities priorities: providing new toilets in the Village Hall, improving leisure facilities at West Liss Recreation Ground and delivery of a Community Garden on land between Woodbourne Close and The Oval, subject to the availability of funding;
- Community engagement: promoting greater engagement of the council with other community groups and organisations in the village in line with the Community Engagement Policy;
- Governance: making further progress towards attaining the Quality Level of the Local Council Award Scheme;
- Financial framework: completing the transition to a more effective and transparent accounting system for the Council.



LISS PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Chair's Report

It has been an extraordinary year for us all and covid restrictions have meant the Council has had to close some facilities and carry out its business in very different ways from usual. As always we have been working to an Action Plan and I am pleased to say that we have managed to deliver a lot of our services and to continue building for the future. The plan for 2020/21 is attached to this report.

Community Engagement

The Parish Council is committed to encouraging effective local community engagement, and to developing relationships between the Council, individuals, and voluntary and community groups. Even under covid restrictions it has continued to communicate as widely as possible. The business of the council has continued through its usual council and committee meetings, but since March last year these have had to be held remotely, using Zoom, and have all been carried live on Youtube. The Parish Office has had to remain closed since March but officers of the council have worked from home and have been available by telephone and email.

The Liss Parish Council Website at lissparishcouncil.gov.uk has been used to tell the community about the business of the council. A Covid-19 webpage was set up in March 2020 and has continued to provide up-to-date links to the latest information as well as sources of help and practical support for those who have needed it, making use of local links as well as more formal schemes. We compiled a comprehensive guide to locally available Covid-19 support and are grateful to the numerous volunteers who helped deliver the Covid-19 flyer to individual households in April 2020. The Council has also continued to increase its social media presence during this time, such as Twitter and Facebook and most recently Instagram, to help keep parishioners informed.

We had to close some facilities under the covid lockdown restrictions. The Village Hall and the Pavilion could not be used at all from March 2020 onwards until the lifting of the first lockdown. Since then, following comprehensive and rigorous risk assessments, we have been able to keep the Village Hall and Pavilion open for activities allowed under covid regulations, such as the RVS using the Village Hall kitchen to provide meals for the elderly. Children's play areas at Newman Collard, West Liss and Liss Forest were closed under the

first lockdown but we have been able to keep them open after that. Allotments and other open spaces have been open.

An important form of engagement with the community is that Parish Councillors serve as representatives on a variety of local bodies, for example, the Newman Collard Playing Fields Trust, The Triangle Centre, Crossover and the Liss Forest Residents Association. We have also supported the creation of a Liss Speedwatch Group, and the setting up of a Liss Men's Shed. Each year we also give funding support to a variety of local initiatives.

Investing in Liss

The Parish Council has the ambition to provide better facilities throughout the village. We have a programme of projects to provide new facilities and to improve the environment and safety of roads in the village and also to support other community and social initiatives. We cannot expect to pay for most of these from our Council Tax precept but they are made possible by finance from developer contributions, or grants from various bodies. Developer contributions have become a major source of funding, some from what are known as s106 payments, but increasingly from money collected from developers under a relatively new system called the Community Infrastructure Levy. This money can be used for a wider range of uses than S106 money and crucially now that we have a Neighbourhood Plan 25% of the money levied on development is paid directly to the Parish Council.

The potential to use the Community Infrastructure Levy for supporting services and infrastructure in Liss is enormous, not just for infrastructure but also for supporting community and social initiatives. A key issue for us is how to best to engage with the community in setting priorities and projects.

Improvements to facilities

In March last year the Council was able to overhaul the play equipment on the Riverside Walk with money from developer contributions allocated by the South Downs National Park Authority. Funding has also been allocated for the Council to contribute to a 3 year plan for controlling Himalayan Balsam growing along the walk.

We have completely refurbished the toilets in the Village Hall following a successful bid for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy pot held by the South Down National Park Authority. We are also starting a programme of external refurbishment and redecoration of the Hall as part of a two year improvement programme as recommended by a structural report on the building.

Following the loss of the previous Petanque court when the Temple Inn pub was redeveloped, A new Petanque court, or terrain has been provided within the Liss Forest Recreation Ground using funding from S.106 money paid to the Parish Council. We have also allocated some additional funding to provide a hard pedestrian path to the terrain.

Drainage on the Newman Collard Playing Fields has been a problem for some time and following technical investigations work has been carried out on drainage in the Centenary

Gardens with S.106 money which has assisted in reducing the flow of surface water on the footpath into the playing fields.

A path for greater accessibility has been laid through the car park of the Liss Pavilion, along with improvements to the pavement outside the Pavilion, and this has been linked to the provision of a courtesy crossing across Station Road, all funded from S106 contributions.

We have also introduced a new rolling allotments tenancy agreement to provide greater clarity for tenants, to better manage the reallocation of unworked plots and reduce the administrative burden of the annual renewal process. As a result of this, and in response to increased interest in allotments, we have been able to allocate plots to 10 new tenants.

Another project which should get underway soon is the Mill Road Community Garden which will provide a small community park and play area on the green space along Mill Road next to Woodbourne Close. There has been considerable support from neighbouring residents to the proposals, funding has now been secured from S106 money and we are close to agreement with EHDC who own the land over a licence to use it.

A larger project we are pursuing is a sports and leisure hub on the West Liss Recreation Ground. Proposals currently include a new play area for toddlers and young children, a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) for children and teens and a Fitness Area & Obstacle Course for teens and adults but we will need further community engagement to get it right. The proposals are intended to complement the new Pavilion and to fit within the Parish Council's strategy for working with partners to expand and renew recreation provision across Liss. It is dependent on a successful bid to the South Downs National Park Authority. Although we were unsuccessful last year the Authority recognises the project as a high priority for us.

The Council has also recently signed an agreement with the Newman Collard Playing Fields Trust which will enable the Liss Mens' Shed project to use part of the Groundsman's Hut at Newman Collard and which secures future provision for the Council for our grounds maintenance needs.

Roads and Traffic

Traffic through the village is a continuing concern for residents and the Parish Council has been promoting a number of measures to address concerns. S. 106 developer contributions have been collected specifically to support traffic and highways works and made available by the South Downs National Park and this is enabling us to:

- Deliver a pedestrian courtesy crossing on Station Road, by the Liss Pavilion and to work with Hampshire County Council to deliver a further crossing at the Business Centre,
- Develop proposals to put a number of gateways at the parish boundary to create a clear sense of place and discourage speeding, working with the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council,

- Develop proposals for street scene improvements on Hill Brow Road, particularly around the schools, to improve the environment and discourage speeding, working with Hampshire County Council and Liss Infant and Junior Schools.

Forest Road in Liss Forest has problems both of speeding traffic and difficulties for pedestrians on the length of road with a low kerb. This is a complicated issue, but we are engaging with Hampshire County Council to understand the costs associated with designing a plan for improvements. Along Forest Road and also elsewhere in the village we are supporting Liss Speed Watch in their efforts to reduce speeding in the village.

Village Centre improvements

The Liss Neighbourhood Plan, which has been overwhelmingly supported by the community identifies improving the village centre as a priority. Liss Parish Council wants to ensure that the village centre is a vibrant location where people want to spend time. Achieving this will be crucial as businesses and the community seek to recover from the impact of COVID-19 in the medium term.

Liss Parish Council recognises that it has a key role in convening stakeholders, residents, and businesses to take this work forward. We are looking at ways to provide some initial financial investment to scope options and develop proposals that have the support of the community and also key stakeholders such as Hampshire County Council as the Highways Authority. If there is community support proposals will be used to bid for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy, the Local Enterprise Partnership and other community, highways and economic development funding streams.

Planning and Development

Andler's Wood, the new Cala Homes development on the former Hilliers land at Andlers Ash Road is now well underway. While there were some initial teething problems, we have found Cala to be a very receptive developer so that items such as heavy construction traffic through the centre of the village were rapidly resolved. The development is now progressing at pace and will continue to develop throughout 2021. The development has also seen the creation of a new area of public open space near Cumbers, on the opposite side of the River Rother to the main Riverside Walk. This open space area will continue to evolve over the next couple of years.

We have continued to provide feedback to the local planning authority, the South Downs National Park, on planning applications across the Parish, and we are pleased that for the majority of decisions our views have been taken into account. As much as Covid-19 restrictions have allowed we have kept a careful eye on developments across the village and reported any concerns to the planning enforcement team at East Hampshire District Council for investigation and action where appropriate.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we anticipate plans coming forward for some of the other development areas identified in the Liss Neighbourhood Plan, and taking up the planning issues arising from the Village Centre proposals.

Changes to Councillors

During the year three members of the council stood down, Ian James, Cyndi Edwards and David Dodds. Our thanks to all three for their contributions but I will mention David Dodds in particular who has been a councillor for many years, making a huge contribution as chairman of our Facilities Committee and I am glad to say that he has been co-opted as a non-voting member of that committee so that we can continue to benefit from his knowledge and experience.

We advertised the vacancies on the council on two occasions and we were pleased to have an excellent response from a number of high quality candidates. We have selected Ginnette Lowe, Rob Finn and Jenny Bennett to serve as new councillors and I warmly welcome them to the Council.

Keith Budden has continued as vice-chair and chair of our Planning Committee, Andy Smith as chair of our Highways committee, and Liane McDonald as chair of the Review Committee. Nick Wilson has taken over as chair of the Facilities Committee and Clayre Williams as chair of the Finance Committee.

District and County Councillors

Since elections in May 2019 Liss has been represented on East Hants District Council by two councillors, Keith Budden, who is currently chairman of that council as well as serving as Vice-Chairman of the parish council, and Russell Oppenheimer, who is also our County Councillor with Hampshire County Council. I am so grateful for their commitment to Liss and the Parish Council and I look forward to continuing our work with them in the future.

Running the Council

The work of the Parish Council is totally dependent on our Parish Clerk, Sarah Smith and the support within the Parish office. The office team consists of Sarah, Lizzy Keeling the Assistant Clerk, and Liz Ford our Responsible Finance Officer. They have been under enormous pressures over the past year, having to adapt their way of working and carry on serving the community from their homes. Liz has also been preparing the adoption of a new financial planning and accounting system for the Council which we hope to fully introduce in 2021.

All have worked extra hours to keep the Council going and to support initiatives to improve our services and I am so impressed by their commitment and enthusiasm and particularly by Sarah's leadership in holding the Council together during this difficult year.

They have been supported by Miriam Baines, the caretaker for the Village Hall, and Julie Ryan as the caretaker for the Pavilion. With the Village Hall and the Pavilion being closed

for most uses due to covid they have taken on other tasks. Also, Michael Jarman, who will be familiar to many as he litter picks around the village and Paul Knibbs our invaluable groundsman. This is a very good team serving the village.

Thank you.

Cllr Roger Hargreaves
Chair, Liss Parish Council
March 2021

DRAFT Liss Parish Council Action Plan for 2021/2022

During the Council year 2021/22 Liss Parish Council will undertake the following actions:

- Maintain the open spaces for which the council is responsible, including the three recreation grounds, and facilities such as the Village Hall and Liss Pavilion, to the required standard;
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within or impact on the Parish.
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parish of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hampshire District Council, the South Downs National Park and Hampshire County Council.
- Engage with the community, including parishioners, local businesses, community groups and organisations in Liss by maintaining an up-to-date website and social media presence in the village in line with the Community Engagement Policy.
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parish of Liss and, if appropriate, to signpost to the correct person/ organisation for resolution/ further progression.
- Work with key local groups for the benefit of residents, including the Liss Forest Residents Association;
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through full meetings of the Council, supported by appropriate committees and working groups.
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money.
- Identify and secure sources of funding to advance LPC priorities.
- Promote training and induction and ongoing support for members of staff and councillors;
- Maintain good governance, including adhering to relevant benchmarks to achieve Quality Status of the Local Council Award Scheme.

Key projects for 2021/2022 include:

- Covid-19: helping the village recover and learn from the experience of Covid-19, in consultation with the community, using our services and funding and through support to and from other organisations, such as the district and county councils and local voluntary groups.
- Identifying priorities for the use of CIL funds allocated directly to Liss Parish Council, using extensive community engagement.
- Making use of new accounting software to manage finances and provide enhanced reporting data to support decision making.
- Highways priorities:
 - Delivering the village gateways project;
 - Developing the school zone proposals, including reviewing options for the crossing point on Hill Brow Road; and
 - Exploring the opportunity and costs of improvement work on Forest Road, including traffic calming.
- Facilities priorities:
 - Creating a new sports and leisure hub at West Liss Recreation Ground to complement the new Pavilion (subject to the availability of funding);
 - Delivery of the planned Community Garden on Mill Road;

Working with partners to further develop a village wide strategy for recreational facilities;

Exploring options for restoration of the Millennium Mosaic,

- Developing proposals for enhancement of the village centre.
- Exploring opportunities with supporting organisations for enhancing the social welfare of the village.
- Liss Neighbourhood Plan: working with the SDNPA to set up arrangements for the implementation and monitoring.

Finance Report

The precept for 2020/21 was £218,208. Contributions were made to the Village Hall, West Liss Recreation Ground and Pavilion and the parish allotments. These are all registered charities, which are accounted for separately in accordance with financial regulations.

Estimated expenditure for the year is anticipated to be largely in line with budget. Estimated rental incomes from the Village Hall and Pavilion are expected to be effectively zero and have been replaced by East Hampshire District Council Coronavirus Grant funding.

Local organisations and associations supported by Liss Parish Council grant funding during 2020/2021 include:

East Hants Area CAB
The Triangle Community Centre
Crossover
RVS Luncheon Club
Liss Historical Society
1st Liss Scouts
Home Start Butser
Liss AFC – Juniors
Rake Village Hall
LUPIN
HIOW victim support
St Mary's Church – for war memorial and burial ground
King's Arms Young Carers
Liss Village Club
Liss Mens Shed

Contributions from S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funding of £31.5k have been invested in the refurbishment of the toilet facilities in the Village Hall, provision of a new pétanque terrain on the Liss Forest Recreation Ground, improvements to drainage on Newman Collard Playing Fields and an accessible pathway to the Pavilion.

The audit of all 2019/20 accounts was carried out in April 2020 by Lightatouch, the independent internal auditor and approved at the Council meeting on 15th June 2020. PFK Littlejohn Legal Law Practitioners, the Council's appointed external auditor signed the final clearance of the accounts in September 2020.

Budgeted expenditure for 2021/22 is as follows:

	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	% change
Budget:				
Staff Cost	97.3	101.5	105.7	4.2%
Insurance	7.3	7.3	7.5	2.7%
General administration	12.3	13	15.7	20.8%
Grounds maintenance	26.3	28.1	32.3	15.0%
Village Hall running costs	13.6	12	10.6	-11.8%
Pavilion running costs	15.1	13.9	15.7	12.9%
Grants to local associations	13	15.8	15.7	-0.6%
Pavilion loan servicing	27.5	27.5	27.5	0.0%
Capital projects/provisions	19.7	14.2	4.1	-71.3%
	232.1	233.3	234.8	0.6%
Funded by:				
Precept	212.9	218.2	224.3	2.8%
Interest and other receipts	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.0%
Rental incomes	21.9	17.1	12.5	-27.2%
Transfer to/from reserves	-3.2	-2.2	-2.1	-3.0%
	232.1	233.3	234.8	

Staff costs for 2021/2022 have been budgeted to increase by 4.2 % in accordance with current legislation.

The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic national lockdown has resulted in the closure of both the Village Hall and the Pavilion. While both will re-open in accordance with government guidelines when it is safe to do so, rental income is expected to be 27% or £4.6k lower than budgeted in 2020/2021.

Liss Parish Council is expected to make grant payments of £15.7k to local organisations and associations – a decrease of £0.1k or 0.8% from the previous year.

The budget for capital works has decreased by 71.3% as the Council expects to receive significant Community Infrastructure Levy funding which will be allocated to project work in the village in accordance with the Liss Neighbourhood Plan and in consultation with the community.

£32.5k has been received for investment in courtesy crossings and pavement improvement outside the Pavilion, development of the Mill Road Community Garden and a pathway to the pétanque terrain. These works will commence in the coming months.

The Council has set a precept of £224,250 for 2021/2022 and the charge per Band D dwelling will therefore be £86.69 compared with £84.42 in 2020/2021. This is an increase of £2.27 or 2.69%.

Cllr C. Williams
Chair of LPC Finance Committee
5th March 2021

Clerk's Report on Councillor Attendance – Year 2020/21

Since the last scheduled Annual Parish Meeting (which did not take place due to Covid), the Parish Council has met virtually, via Zoom videoconferencing, a total of 8 times.

Cllrs Hargreaves, Budden, Baldwin, Linsley, McDonald, Smith, Wilson and Williams attended all 8 meetings.

Cllrs Jerrard attended 4 of a possible 8 meetings.

Cllr Finn attended 4 out of a possible 5 meetings since co-option in October.

Cllr Lowe attended 3 out of a possible 5 meetings since co-option in October.

Cllr Bennett attended 2 of a possible 2 meetings of Council following co-option in January.

Cllr Knibbs attended 4 of as possible 7 meetings prior to her resignation earlier this month.

Cllr Edwards attended 2 out of a possible 4 meetings prior to her resignation in November.

Cllrs Dodds and James attended the 1 meeting of Council held prior to their resignations in June and July respectively.

Sarah Smith

Parish Clerk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR PETERSFIELD HANGERS

ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISHES 2020-21

11 March 2021

Over the last year, the Public Health team at HCC have done an amazing job of working with the NHS to keep us safe. Infection rates in Hampshire were lower than in neighbouring counties thanks to everyone pulling together. HCC and EHDC worked tirelessly – with incredible support from local voluntary groups – to ensure that vulnerable people in our communities were protected and supported. At HCC we were all very sad when Fareham County Councillor Keith Evans died from Covid-19 at the end of December. I extend my sincere sympathy to all those who have lost friends, family members and colleagues to this dreadful virus.

The Hampshire Highways Team have managed to keep the roads safe despite the challenges. HCC managed to get our Household Waste and Recycling Centres operational again with a new booking system to ensure social distancing. With support from HCC, our schools have kept going throughout the last year for key workers. Schools were made Covid-safe and ready to welcome back all pupils this month.

The financial costs to HCC of the pandemic are still being counted. As well as the extra costs of looking after people, there is also lost income from services such as Country Park cafes and cancelled ceremonies. The Government has provided some emergency funding, but we still face considerable budget shortfalls.

Nevertheless, due to sound financial management and forward planning, Hampshire County Council is in a much stronger position than most other County Councils. We have strong reserves which enable us to invest in new schools and infrastructure. Our Capital Investment programme runs to over £750m for the coming four years. This will help with the Green Recovery. That capital programme includes:

- £68million in new and extended school buildings to ensure there is a local school place for every child in Hampshire
- £118million for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges in Hampshire over the next three years
- £91million for integrated transport schemes including over £18 million specifically focused on walking and cycling improvements
- £33million for decarbonisation schemes covering solar PV and single to double-glazing window replacements.

This last bullet point forms part of our Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which was approved by Cabinet four months ago. We will plant one million trees and millions more wildflowers on County Land and verges. We also have a group-buying solar scheme called “Solar Together”. It is a great scheme. Even if you have solar panels already, you can still use the scheme to get a discounted battery. I had solar panels installed last Summer, so this is what I am doing. You can register for solar, battery storage or both by 26 March at solartogether.co.uk/hampshire

Everyone in Hampshire can be proud that HCC Children’s Services are still rated “Outstanding in all Areas” by OFSTED. Only one other Council has achieved this accolade and it is a much smaller one than Hampshire. This is a tribute to our outstanding social workers.

To boost local jobs and support the recovery, HCC has doubled funding to Apprenticeships and set up a Skills Hub. We are determined to do everything we can to get young people into work and training.

In February 2021 HCC secured funding to continue our highly successful Supporting Families Programme. To date, positive outcomes have been recorded for 1,923 families who have accepted support and achieved changes within the family as a result, such as sustained employment or improved school attendance. Independent evaluation by Solent University demonstrated that between 2015-19 the support given to families to get back on their feet translated into savings of £27million to the public purse.

On transport, we face a real challenge to rebalance our streets towards walking and cycling. It is a challenge we are determined to meet. This is crucial for our own health and wellbeing as well as for the climate and the health of the planet. We have started consulting on a bold new Local Transport Plan for Hampshire which puts Active Travel first. That consultation will resume later this year when we publish the draft plan.

Finally, for the sake of good accountability I would like to use this report to share a table of all my County Councillor grants made in the financial year – see next page.

Each year I do my best to spread the grants around the entire Division. But Petersfield Hangers is a large Division and so this is not easy! If re-elected, next year I will be looking to fund projects in villages that I did not manage to support with a grant this year. The next County Councillor grant round opens in early June 2021.

SUMMARY OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR GRANTS AWARDED IN 2020-21

Organisation	Project Title	Project Description	Amount Awarded
Hawkley Parish Council	Coronavirus Support Programme	We have established a group to deal with the impact of Coronavirus on the local community. It supports self-isolators and also addresses other unforeseen impacts of the current situation.	£1,000
Petersfield Youth Theatre	Elf - the Musical	To support the performance of 'Elf - the Musical', (Project was delayed but will be brought back)	£750
Steep and Stroud Newsletter	The Steep and Stroud Newsletter	We publish the newsletter ten times a year and it is delivered free to every household in the two villages. It is a much valued link for the community	£300
Home-Start Butser	Home-Start Butser support for families in Liss	We urgently need funds to be able to continue our vital work with local families who are facing unprecedented challenges during the Covid-19 Coronavirus outbreak.	£1,000
Petersfield Open Air Pool	upgrades to admin/change room building	We will replace and upgrade the guttering, soffits and fascias of the pool admin/ change room building.	£1,500
Federation of Liss Infant & Junior School	Dining Tables	There are issues that we need to overcome when pupils return to school. The pandemic has heightened our need to replace the existing dining tables & chairs.	£1,500
Greatham Parish Council	Improvements to traffic/ transport	We have applied to HCC for various traffic improvements to help ease speeds of traffic in the village and make improvements for pedestrians.	£1,000
Funding to Community First	Emergency funding to food banks	Emergency funding to support Hampshire's most vulnerable children and families.	£2,000
Hawkley Parish Council	Fingerpost Refurbishment Project	The refurbishment and repair of traditional iron fingerpost signs situated around the parish	£400
The King's Arms youth project	Youth Project	We have purchased and are setting up a new hub in Petersfield. We are in the process of changing the building from a restaurant to a youth club/hub.	£544

I would like to acknowledge the resilience and dedication of all Parish Councils and Petersfield Town Council, who kept going impressively throughout the pandemic despite the challenges, serving the local community and taking forward important projects. Thankfully we can all look forward to a better 12 months ahead.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER

County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers