

## MELBURY OSMOND PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019

Your Parish Council has met regularly every two months during this electoral year with four of the existing councillors standing for re-election. With no other candidates from the village standing these Councillors were subsequently re-appointed without contention as the number of candidates remain less than the positions available.

The Parish Council currently consists of Roger Caesley, Pete Coverdale, Martin Smith and myself all very ably supported by our Parish Clerk, Jodie Carter.

During the year we have sadly seen some resignations from the Parish Council for a variety of reasons and I would like to thank Michael Kowalewski, Anna Roxburgh and Charles Swallow for their invaluable work over a number of years. The Parish Council is poorer without them and together, with the village as a whole, we owe them all a great debt of gratitude.

We would also like to thank our County Councillor, Mary Penfold, for her continued support in regularly attending our Parish Meetings and keeping us informed of the many changes at County level and I would personally like to thank Martin Smith for stepping into the role of Chair following Michael's resignation and providing continuity for the latter part of the year up to the start of the new electoral cycle.

In addition to the regular Public Meetings all Councillors both past and present have taken on extra duties. From ensuring compliance with ever changing legislation, reviewing insurances, commenting on planning applications, looking after the playground and where appropriate providing support to our local organisations such as the Village Hall, Tennis Club and Artsreach.

The Parish Council organised a village Spring clean again in May this year and together with a number of village volunteers did a valiant job in tidying up a number of village assets including road signs, the playground, the Reading Room, bus shelter and the telephone kiosk.

The Parish Council continues to maintain a good working relationship with Ilchester Estates and we endeavour to represent the Parish in a positive manner as issues become apparent.

The annual playground inspection was carried out by RoSPA during May and Pete Coverdale is now in the process of reviewing the report in order that we can agree and prioritize what maintenance will be required going forward.

Thanks must also go to Anna Roxburgh who is our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator who continues to keep us informed of Police notifications as they occur, Sophie Nash as Footpaths Officer and Barbara Harris who has taken over from her, and Lindsay Reeve who maintains the Village Website.

Following a request from residents a Public Meeting with Dorset Highways was organised to discuss road issues in the village. The notes from this meeting are posted on the village website for reference. As part of this ongoing review we are currently in contact with Dorset Highways and our MP, Sir Oliver Letwin. We will make sure the outcome of these discussions and any suggested changes including speed restrictions etc are communicated to, and agreed with residents as a whole before being implemented.

Parish Council finances are currently sound and we have budgeted in the Precept for known expenditures throughout the year with some allowance for unforeseen outgoings. However, on a fixed income we are limited on any non-budgeted items that arise from time to time during the year.

Our total income for 2018/2019 was £5000 with expenditure at £4692.88 and our bank balance for year-end stands at £1956.10. Audited accounts will be made public in due course and will be available on the website. It is to be recognised that financial pressures continue as more and more routine maintenance formally dealt with by the District Council gets passed down to the local Parish Council with the inevitable increase in the Precept.