

# Little Cheverell Parish Council Chairmans Report for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

## **Who Are we?**

Your Parish Councillors are Mike Phillips, Clive Broe, Nicky Broe, Benji Thompson and Lucy Thorne.

I would like to start by thanking Drew Spearey for his service to the Parish Council over many years, Drew has now stepped down and I wish him all the best for his ongoing personal projects. We also welcomed Lucy Thorne to the Parish Council quite recently, Lucy will bring a fresh perspective to our thinking and better focus on Westbury Road.

## **What are we doing?**

For the last year we have tried to focus on projects that we can deliver, i.e. those we can afford, one such project was the installation of the Westbury Road Village gates, we are very fortunate to have Henry Liebling who has designed, built and installed the gates, this saved the Council money but more importantly enabled rapid delivery of the gates which I believe are a great move in the right direction to slow cars on Westbury Road as they enter the Village. Thanks Henry.

Other projects delivered as planned were, the re-painting of the Phone Box on Low Road housing the Defibrillator, Clearance and repair of the Sheep wash pool behind the village Hall and clearance of the overgrown Millenium Green.

The last two mentioned projects were needed because there has not been a maintenance plan in place and in the past there was a heavy reliance on volunteers which is not sustainable. The Parish Council will move to a contractor-based maintenance plan for public spaces, this however requires funding from our Parish precept so you have seen and, should expect a steady increase in precept to allow for this vital maintenance to take place.

## **Budget**

Our budget for the last year was £6,370 and our expenditure was £6,377, the coming year's precept amounts to £8,582 which allows us to deliver more of our desired projects and maintenance plans and to assist the Village Hall with running costs. The Parish Council has a sensible reserve in the bank and has no loans or other debt.

## **Planned Maintenance**

We plan to have in place a basic maintenance plan for keeping footpaths useable and public spaces accessible. Of course, more maintenance means more cost, means more precept required. I welcome the opinion of our electorate on this matter.

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## **Village Hall**

Another area of focus has been the Village Hall which was on its last legs both physically and financially with outgoings exceeding income and many maintenance issues. Working together with the Village Hall Committee we have improved the hall and dealt with some maintenance issues, in particular, the heating. The hall was not useable in the winter months and was deteriorating rapidly due to the cold and damp, the new system was paid for by a 100% grant from SSEN and has hugely improved the hall and allows us to better utilise it even in cold weather.

We are waiting for BT to connect the hall to the outside world with a fibre optic cable, then we will also have free public WiFi to add to the offer.

The Committee has modernised payments with a card facility and now has a full premises licence for Alcohol and entertainment, this alone will enable more spontaneity and flexibility in planning events, and we hope the improved offer will attract more people especially from neighbouring villages. The Hall's finances now look a lot stronger, with ring-fenced reserves ready to use to obtain match funded grants for the improvements planned. The next round of projects includes replacing external woodwork and upgrading and re-configuration of the kitchen, new curtains and some improvements to the grounds and access arrangements.

## **Planning Applications**

Other important functions of the Parish Council include planning matters. The Parish Council will decide to support or object to a planning application independently in our meetings, but we need your input to make the right decision. A classic example was the application for a Children's home recently where it was clear that opinion was against the plans, we were then able to research the planning framework to find the right arguments to cite when commenting on the application which was then refused.

## **Roads**

The Parish Council is not responsible for roads or pavements and encourages you to report matters to Wiltshire Council via the "My Wiltshire" reporting app or website, but having said that we do have a voice, so if you make us aware of any long standing issues, we will be happy to support. We can request the Parish Steward attends to minor problems such as small potholes, overgrown verges and drainage problems, please let the Parish Council know about any such issues.

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## **Website**

Our website has recently moved to a .GOV address [www.littlecheverell-pc.gov.uk](http://www.littlecheverell-pc.gov.uk) which makes it secure. The website is still under-used, so I encourage you to explore. You can now view old photos of the village in the history section, you can read village news and see upcoming events and view a live calendar of events, which you can subscribe to. You can now buy tickets for events at the village hall using the secure online payment system powered by Square. Please do explore the site and sign up for alerts, news and events to receive an automatic email from us keeping you informed. You can also view the Parish council meeting dates, agendas and archived minutes and link through to planning applications.

## **Whats App Group**

If you are not in the village WA group, please do join, it's a great way to stay in the community loop.

Q & A

Refreshments

End.