Monday, 10th November, 2014, West Itchenor

Parish Council Report continued -MC

WIPC Item 8 - (1) MC

Report to Parish Council with brief reference to some of key meetings and events of local relevance. Some of the Minutes and related papers for the identified Agenda may be available for viewing by request from the Parish Clerk.

9th September - N.P. Steering Group. Apologies - Unwell
18th September - N.B. Scotland voted in Referendum crucially retaining presence in the UK.
20th September - N.B. Party Conference Season continues. Manchester.
24th September - Extraordinary meeting of School Governors to agree revised Constitution for Membership. It is required in law to have a slightly reduced Governing Body Membership. I have met with H.T and will shortly be chairing meetings of Staffing & Performance Review Committee and meeting with External Assessor. The schoolchildren and staff appear to have adjusted well to a reshuffle of Class-Year Responsibilities.
N.B. It is apparent that the growing allocation of housing in the Manhood is putting additional pressure on the local Primary Schools and the inevitable 'bussing' to Secondary Schools in Chichester area.
This term will see the Staffing Committee and the H.T Performance Review as well as ongoing committee work by Governors and staff representatives.

25th September - SSALC Chairman's Networking Day at East Grinstead. Alistair also attended and to report. In the afternoon Lord Lytton withdrew having completed his splendid term of office and, as his elected successor in the Presidential Chair, I took over conduct of the Meeting Programme which overall included presentation by Dr Jonathan Owen, CEO, NALC, LGA Pensions Adviser on Local Government Pension Scheme, the CEO on Elections, being prepared for 2015, Chair & Vice Chair of Ashurst Wood PC on their Annual Village Meeting; Talk on Impact of Fracking on Balcombe Parish Council.

30th September - National Council (NALC) London. It will be of interest that there have been 500,000 more people represented over the last decade and there are over a 100 communities currently in the process of setting up a new Town or Parish Council. The new Chief Executive is travelling widely to familiarise himself with the scene nationwide and he has already gained goodwill from his travels, listening and communicating skills.

With the local and national elections in May, this is a crucial time to make sure that local MPs and Parliamentary Representatives are alert to the role of local democracy and the contribution TPCs and Neighbourhood Groups can and do make in service of society. With Counties/Districts and Unitaries having to increasingly work with their neighbouring Authorities and economic cut back in some citizen services, local communities will have an increasing role in statutory and voluntary service provision, especially for the locally vulnerable. It needs to be made clear through lobbying that TPCs, albeit keen to serve, will need additional training and resources to meet local demand previously met by Principal Authorities.

10th October - WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Council) Board of Local Councils at Billingshurst reviewed Board business and received reports on local developments. Items covered included SALC Finances, NALC Business; Presidency; Planning Military Covenant, A27 Campaign - CEO; Bank Mandates for Councils to function; Training Events-CEO; Protocol Sussex Police & Parishes; DCLG Parking Policies.

21st October - SSALC (Surrey & Sussex E&W) Board, Council Chamber, East Court, East Grinstead. - Throughout the Counties there are concerns about the degree of attention being given to local elections. Town and Parish Councils are being encouraged to make this a key item in their communities and in the meantime maintain interest in wider community affairs and longer term issues which will otherwise tend to be neglected closer to next May.

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Other items included Board Member Duties; Finance; Accommodation; Work Programme; Staffing. Guest; Alistair McDermid, Airports Commission Director - Gatwick Airport. Update on the proposals and view from the Parishes.

Evening of 21 October. Guest at CDC Local Council Evening. Sue attended representing WIPC. My personal impression is that this is usually a very well attended event with a very full information providing programme. It is too tight a schedule for much direct input from the Parishes as such, but excellent as an update of CDC perception of their work and interaction with Parishes over local matters. Topics included Voluntary Action; Preparations for 2015 Elections; International Terrorism Severe Threat Level Advice & Vigilance; New Antisocial Behaviour Legislation; S. Downs National Park Local Plan; Planning Update; Community Rights to Bid/Assets of Community Value; Gypsy Traveller Transit Site etc. If required Sue will be able to tell you more about the actual programme.

29th October - National Council of Local Councils AGM, London. Representing the 9,000 Local Councils across England. Attended in capacity as an elected Vice President & former Chairman. Address by Kris Hopkins MP, new Minister CLG and MP for Keighley in West Yorkshire. (Travelled with Liz Kenney, Chair for Hunston attending at NALC for first time, as a WSALC Vice Chair) The Minister spoke very favourably about the contribution of local councils albeit he was aware that not all local authorities were fulfilling their duty to pass on proportion of funding from national grant to Parishes. He intends to express further concern over this. It is clear to me that it is only through statutory mandates that we will be assured of the capacity to meet the growing demands faced by neighbourhoods and Town & Parish Councils nationwide. The NALC Strategic Plan recommended by National Council was adopted by the AGM. There was the receipt of Annual Reports & Accounts, debate of a Constitutional Motion and an afternoon Workshop focusing upon Communication & Engagement with Communities. Appointments were confirmed and the AGM ended with a Reception

30th October - WSCC/SALC, Chaired Day Conference at Southwater, Near Horsham. The title was 'Towards safer, stronger, resilient communities'. This event was arranged to be a joint event with the WSCC. Lionel Barnard, Cabinet Member for Resident Services provided the CC Introduction and colleagues from Community Directorate and from Highways provided major inputs. Subsequent focus was on Community Planning and inputs to debate were provided by Teresa Gittins, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Services, AIRS. Subsequent inputs were directed to Neighbourhood Planning, Youth, Community Programmes, Good Neighbour Schemes & First response Team Working with an input by Parish First responders highlighting the importance of Community Defibrillators. Southwater Parish Council and SALC Staff worked to ensure the event and the Catering were of a high standard.

5th November - SERCAF at Eastleigh. Attended with Trevor Leggo, CEO for SSALC. Amongst standard committee business agenda there was a specific item by a Staff Officer of 11th Infantry BDE on the impact of updating organisational structure for the army in the South East and consideration of a Community Covenant; a Report on the progress of work of the National County Officers' Forum in collaboration with NALC; Elections 2015; Updates from County Associations.

Cllr Michael Chater OBE