West Itchenor Parish Council 16th March, 2015

Brief Reports under item 8, from 12th January 2015 until 16th March 2015. - Cllr M Chater OBE

Please note that as 'Purdah' applies during the Announced Pre General Election Period there is less to formally report albeit still much activity on local government and other fronts.

Meetings of Local Government Organisations -
The next main meeting of NALC Council takes place in Westminster Central Hall, London on 31st March. The Devolution Group will set out a possible stance for consideration at this meeting.

Consideration is being given to corporate membership of the LGA through NALC.

There have been a range of committee and sub group meetings in the intervening period particularly to increase liaison between members and staff with a view to further changes in the operation of the committee structure of NALC. Joint Meetings with the SLCC continue and Trevor Leggo was invited to NALC to present a Report on the Benchmarking Paper operating in conjunction with the County Officers Forum. This will be reviewed bi-annually. There was also agreement for SLCC & NALC to encourage participation in the Local Council Award Scheme and to promote take up of CILCA. Other joint working proposals are being extended.

A Meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Local Democracy took place on11th February at Portcullis House, Westminster.t he meeting with NALC, Parliamentarians and on this occasion interests in Rural Broadband was Chaired by Tessa Munt MP. Following comment by national stakeholders incl. Vodafone the APPG agreed that fast and reliable broadband, mobile and satellite connectivity was needed across the whole of England asap. DEFRA offered to work with NALC to improve communications with parishes over Phase 2 of the Government's Superfast Broadband Programme.
On the same day the APPG had a meeting with Civic Societies to launch the Civic Voice Manifesto 'Localism for Real'. This calls for every part of England to have a parish or town council.

The Sustainable Communities Advisory Board, 6th March pressed for Ministerial decisions on their proposals particularly in relation to being statutory consulates regarding nationally significant infrastructure projects.

AIRS Concern at National Cuts affecting work with rural communities. Local Council expressions of concern were sought last month and the Petition is now closed.

WSALC / SSALC A series of area Board Meetings have taken place and Officers and Board Members are working with Staff through arrangements to consolidate the structure and provision across the counties. A Major and more wide-spread Induction Programmes has been devised in preparation for the training of New Councillors in 2015..

National/ Sub Regional Developments. Changes in face of local government reflect the need to continue the process of localism but severe financial cuts also continue to be anticipated. Commitment to parishing England gaining credance as communities seek authority to devise the means to resolve specific local needs.

MPP.Monday 2nd March , at Selsey Centre - Constituted of representatives of Principal Local Authority & Government and Other Regional & Local Environmental Agencies. Copy of Report Lodged with Caro as Parish Clerk. Main topics revolved around A27 with Peter Phillips, Asset Manager, Highways Agency re Access to Manhood Peninsula. Other items incl. Green links, Operation Watershed, RSPB Medmerry & Pagham Harbour; Natural England Solent an Marine Conservation; Economic Development Projects; Partner Updates incl impact of Poly Tunnels and need for respect for Special Designations.

Free Open Seminar Re Community Involvement & Parish Council Elections in Birdham Village Hall on 30th March at 7.0pm. This is organised by David Siggs, Clerk to Birdham Parish Council and supported by SSALC. Trevor Leggo CEO and I will be attending. - David has indicated that all are welcome to this Seminar for New & Aspiring Councillors.

Birdham School Governors Meeting and School Events - Please see regular School Mailing and Newsletter (just released) available from the School Secretary @ 01243 512399.

Michael Chater.