



ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017

Contents

Chairman’s Foreword	3
The Parish of Stoke Mandeville	5
What is the function of a parish council?	5
Council Members	6
Attendance record at meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees.....	7
Review of 2016-17	7
Committee Reports	9
Membership of external bodies	11
Council Finances.....	12
Looking Ahead.....	14

Chairman's Foreword

Reflecting back on the past year, a number successful events come to mind –

- The introduction of the new speed limit along the Risborough and Lower Roads. Whilst we still have some way to go in persuading drivers not to exceed the 30mph speed limit, those of you who use it regularly will have noticed there has been a slowing down of traffic. However, this does not take into account the constant traffic jams along the four main routes of Wendover, Risborough, Station and Lower Roads as they travel through the village.
- Three successful events of Play in the Park for children took place during the summer school holiday at the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field, Eskdale Road in August and were very well attended. These were organised and managed by Leisure staff from AVDC in conjunction with the Parish Council with the help of funding from the Stoke Mandeville & Other Parishes Charity. These will be repeated during August 2017.
- The celebration event of HM Queen's Ninetieth Birthday spearheaded by the Parish Council and St. Mary's Church together with a number of organisations from the Parish. Despite the rain, many came along to hear the music and enjoy the many attractions.
- The completion of the outdoor gym to show our links with the Paralympic Sports movement and which is already well used and will, hopefully, be more so within the coming summer months.
- The first stage of the replacement of street lights with LEDs to reduce our carbon footprint and save us revenue costs.
- Pushing forward with devolved services and taking responsibility for the cutting of grass verges, hedges, ditches, parish paths from Bucks County Council.
- Identifying a site for a new burial ground on which we are making progress with the necessary formalities and also seeking funding.
- Holding public meetings on major issues such as the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan and responding to the various consultations.
- Providing a new 'bus shelter at Hawkslade, identified by residents and placed with their co operation.
- The Neighbourhood Plan, a time consuming initiative to ensure that the local community has a say in the planning of the future of the Parish, especially the three consultation days held during the spring and early summer. [see elsewhere in this report]
- The introduction of our first electronic newsletter issued with updates on a monthly basis. If you do not receive a copy, please contact the Parish Council
- Being awarded Foundation Stage in the Local Council Award Scheme, demonstrating that we achieve good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.
- Welcoming new Councillor Gillian Watts co opted as a Councillor for the Village Ward

However, we were extremely disappointed that in February of this year the HS2 scheme phase 1 received Royal Assent. Over the past seven years a tremendous amount of work has been done by Councillors not only in opposing this scheme but more realistically in fighting for mitigation in many areas of our Parish. We were successful in the early days of achieving the diversion of the A.4010 bypassing the village to avoid planned fly over bridges along Risborough Road and Marsh Lane. With the construction of the road diversion both Risborough Road and Marsh Lane will eventually be cul-de-sac access only. We also gained ground through our Petition to the House of Commons and the House of Lords for raising the height of

noise barriers along the track, tree planting and screening but disappointedly not for the provision of a green tunnel across the track behind Hawkslade, although additional noise mitigation was agreed. I would like to convey gratitude to the individual members of the Stoke Mandeville Action Group [SMAG] for the time and commitment they gave in working alongside the Parish Council throughout the seven years since announcement of the scheme. We will continue to be involved to ensure that the development of HS2 complies with agreements made during this period. At the time of writing this report, it is understood that the excavation of the old church site will begin in May of this year and continue for about eighteen months. Design for the road diversion will begin as soon as possible with the construction of the new road to be completed in 2019, after which planning and work on the track can begin.

This gives but a snapshot of our work which continues throughout the year. We could not have completed this without the guidance and assistance of our Clerk of five years, Sarah Copley, who resigned in January and is to leave mid April. Sarah has undertaken her duties with assurance and competence and we wish her well in the future. We look forward to welcoming a new Clerk during the next month.

Finally, I wish to extend my thanks to members of the Council for their continuous work and enthusiasm in bringing improvements to our Parish; to my Vice Chairman David Starr, who also manages the budget and ensures we do not exceed our expectations; to the Stoke Mandeville Village Community Association for the excellent management of the Community Centre; to the Stoke Mandeville & Other Parishes Charity for their ongoing support as well as all those with whom we have met and worked during the past twelve months.

Jenny Hunt
Chairman Stoke Mandeville Parish Council
April 2017

The Parish of Stoke Mandeville

The parish of Stoke Mandeville was established in 1894 and covers approximately 1600 acres and has a population of about 6000. For administrative purposes, it is divided into 4 electoral wards: Stoke Mandeville Village, Stoke Grange, Stoke Leys and Hawkslade. Though the parish is mainly agricultural in nature, there are a number of small commercial and industrial establishments such as village shops, the Weston Park and Triangle Park Business Parks, the Belmore Centre on Lower Road and the Goat Farm Centre at Old Risborough Road with a number of small outlets offering a variety of goods and crafts in a rural setting. Stoke Mandeville is also fortunate in having its own primary school, two Community Centres, playing field, post office and railway station providing good connectivity by rail and bus.

What is the function of a parish council?

A Parish Council is a Local Authority comprising councillors who are elected for a four year period after which they can be re elected.

Parish councils have powers to provide and maintain certain facilities within their parish. In Stoke Mandeville, these include the Queen Elizabeth II playing field and leisure facilities, Community Centres at Eskdale Road and Hawkslade, allotments and burial ground. We also maintain our bus shelters, public seats, litter bins, dog waste bins, the ruins and site of the Old Church off Risborough Road and some street lighting. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council has also entered into a devolved services contract with Bucks County Council for the cutting of the highway grass verges, weed control and other maintenance work previously undertaken by the Highways Authority.

Parish councils play a vital part in obtaining and representing local views on various issues. As a Statutory Body they are consulted by other public authorities such as district councils, county councils, health authorities and government departments on specific issues affecting their parish. They have a legal right to be consulted on planning applications and can be consulted on schools and highway matters. The Parish Council works within a Committee Structure with meetings of the full Council being held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm supported by a number of Committees being Governance and Resources, Planning, Leisure and Environment. All meetings are open to public and press and further details can be found on Notice Boards around the Parish and on our website.

Each parish council has to appoint a Clerk to deal with correspondence, general administration and finance as well as running the Council's affairs.

Council Members

Stoke Mandeville Parish Council has a total of twelve Councillors, elected or co-opted to the Parish Council, although there is currently one vacancy for Hawkslade Ward. If you are interested in becoming a councillor please contact the Chairman or Clerk.

The Council meets, usually on the second Tuesday of every month except August. Details of the meetings are on the notice boards within the Parish and can be obtained from the Clerk on request.

Name	Ward Represented	Telephone Number	Committees
Jenny Hunt (Chairman)	Stoke Mandeville Village	01296 613217	Environment, Governance & Resources, Leisure, Planning
David Starr (Vice Chairman)	Hawkslade	01296 613430	Environment, Governance & Resources, Leisure
Steve Atkinson	Stoke Grange	01296 612737	Planning
Richard Butler	Stoke Mandeville Village	01296 614461	Governance & Resources, Leisure
Andrew Clark	Stoke Grange	01296 615828	Governance & Resources, Planning
Barbara Ezra	Stoke Mandeville Village	01296 612560	Leisure, Planning
Santosh Kirve	Stoke Grange	07466 802946	Governance & Resources
Stephen Pluckwell	Stoke Leys	07519 166577	Environment, Planning
Marcus Rogers	Stoke Leys	07702 490999	Environment, Planning
Gillian Watts	Stoke Mandeville Village	01296 614289	
Pat Wood	Hawkslade	01296 422217	Environment, Governance & Resources, Leisure

Clerk:

Community Centre, Eskdale Road, Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury HP22 5UJ

Tel: 01296 613888

Email: smparishcouncil@btconnect.com

Attendance record at meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees

Councillor	Possible Attendances	Actual Attendances	% Attendance
Cllr Jenny Hunt (Chairman)	38	35	92%
Cllr David Starr (Vice Chairman)	25	24	96%
Cllr Steve Atkinson	23	21	91%
Cllr Richard Butler	22	17	77%
Cllr Andrew Clark	28	10	36%
Cllr Barbara Ezra	31	25	81%
Cllr Santosh Kirve	16	13	81%
Cllr Stephen Pluckwell	29	23	79%
Cllr Marcus Rogers	29	25	86%
Cllr Gillian Watts	3	3	100%
Cllr Pat Wood	24	23	96%

Review of 2016-17

Speeding Vehicles

Monitoring Speeds of Vehicles

The Council shares a Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) with Weston Turville Parish Council. The MVAS flashes a warning sign to motorists exceeding the speed limit, it also records the volumes and speeds of vehicles which pass it. The MVAS can be moved to various locations around the parish, including Lower Road, Risborough Road, Wendover Road and Anton Way.

Data obtained from the MVAS demonstrates that:

Anton Way: 85% of cars travel at or below 28mph

Risborough Road: 85% of cars travel at, or below 40mph. This is in excess of the new speed limit and Thames Valley Police did carry out some educational work in the area in 2016.

Wendover Road: 85% of cars travel at, or below, 34mph. Cars exceeding this level are travelling early morning or late evening.

The data obtained from the MVAS is shared with Thames Valley Police in order for them to target enforcement where it is needed.

Street Lights

The Parish Council owns and maintains the street lights in Stoke Mandeville Village and Stoke Leys wards. The Council has a rolling programme in place to upgrade all its street lights to LED lamps. The next phase to be upgraded during spring 2017 includes Castlefields, Petersfield, Arnold Close and the roads in Stoke Leys.

If you notice any issues with street lights please report to the Clerk. Residents in Hawkslade and Stoke Grange should contact Transport for Bucks to report any street lights out in their road – 0845 230 2882.

Neighbourhood Plan

Work on the Neighbourhood Plan has continued throughout 2016 under the direction of the Steering Group.

Guided by the local planning consultant appointed in 2015, there were three Consultation Events in May for local residents, followed by an information stand at the Summer Fete in June. In September, a similar Consultation Event was held for businesses within the parish. Using the feedback from these events, as well as from an event arranged with a social group, the Monday Club, the Steering Group derived a set of draft Objectives which appeared to most accurately reflect the opinions and concerns of local residents and businesses. The objectives were allocated to headings of Housing, Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity, Business, Conservation & Heritage, Green Spaces & Environment, and Community Facilities.

To check the validity of the draft Objectives, and to obtain the widest feedback on them from the community, a Questionnaire was devised and issued in February 2017 to each home or business in the parish. The result was a very satisfying response of over 400 completed questionnaires. These are in the course of being analysed, and the findings are being studied by the Steering Group who will use all the evidence collected to create the policies to be included in a draft Neighbourhood Plan. This will be the subject of further consultation with the community before it can be submitted to the local planning authority, Aylesbury Vale District Council, for review and independent assessment by an external examiner. Only if the draft Neighbourhood plan passes successfully through all these stages will it come back to the community where there will be a referendum as to whether or not it should be adopted.

It is important to recognise that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to prevent or block the building of new homes or businesses, but it can provide a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. As such, and if approved by the community at the referendum stage, it will form an important and statutory part of the planning policies that will apply. There is still much work to be done to deliver our Neighbourhood Plan, and if you would like to help, please contact the Clerk, or any member of the Steering Group.

Steve Atkinson
Chairman, Stoke Mandeville Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Committee Reports

Planning Committee

Membership

Jenny Hunt (Chairman), Steve Atkinson, Andrew Clark, Barbara Ezra, Marcus Rogers, Stephen Pluckwell

In the Planning Section of the Annual Report last year, I commented that applications for sites of multiple dwellings had been few and far between within the Parish. This has certainly not been the case during the past eighteen months when we have received five applications for the development of 961 dwellings in the village. The village currently holds 476 dwellings and these latest applications give an increase of just over one hundred per cent when a need had previously been established for 178 new homes to meet local needs. In addition, work on the Aylesbury Vale Local Area Plan identifies land in the parish of Stoke Mandeville for nearly two thousand houses effectively linking Stoke Mandeville into Aylesbury town including the proposed Aylesbury Garden Town. We are by far from alone in facing this expansion which also similarly is being experienced by neighbouring parishes of Stone, Weston Turville and Aston Clinton.

In the meantime, our infrastructure is creaking with lack of places in local primary schools and healthcare facilities. Much of this speculative development is due to a lack of a Local Development Plan for the Vale of Aylesbury with that of 2007 having been referred back by the Planning Inspectorate. We recognise that additional housing is a necessity especially for affordable housing for young people but this should not be done in the current piecemeal speculative fashion with seemingly little regard to local road and other infrastructure. This is not in the best interests of local communities and leads to the loss of countryside and overcrowding of facilities. In opposing all of these developments the Parish Council considers each one to be premature and should await the outcome of the highways assessment currently being addressed by the local highways authority taking into account the diversion of the A4010 and the adverse effects of HS2.

The Planning Committee has continued to meet monthly to discuss more “domestic” applications as statutory consultees. These are given individual detailed consideration by Councillors working within the parameters of guidelines established by Government and which have to be followed by the local planning authority. Our meetings are held in public and anyone is able to come along to comment on any planning application or just to sit and listen. Details of applications under discussion on agendas of meetings are published on our website.

Jenny Hunt, Chairman, Planning Committee

Planning Applications received for comment during the past two years from 1st April 2015 to the end of March 2017 are shown below –

Type of application	No. received 2015-16	No. received 2016-17
Extensions/alterations to dwelling	19	29
Change of use	4	5
New dwelling (single)	2	2
New development (multiple dwellings)	6	4
Commercial/agricultural	7	0
Advertising signs	1	0
Erection of fencing	2	0
Telecommunication equipment	1	0
A17 – alternative use application	1	2
TOTAL	43	42

Environment committee

Members

Marcus Rogers (Chair), Jenny Hunt, Stephen Pluckwell, David Starr, Pat Wood

2016/17 has been another busy year for the Environment Committee. The streetlight replacement programme has continued – lamps in need of repair have been upgraded to LED units and the next phase of replacements will happen in March and April. This will only add to savings already made and help cut effects on the environment.

Work to secure a new burial ground is well underway. The Government has given the green light for plans to redevelop land off Marsh Lane and the next step is to get planning permission. The Parish is pleased that grass cutting and maintenance services provided by Aylesbury Town Council continues to get thanks and praise rather than criticism.

Checks are happening to ensure the new speed limit on Lower Road and Risborough Road is working. The moveable speed sign is collecting data about vehicle speeds on roads across the area. And benches, bins, dog-bins, and footpaths are being inspected and maintained by the Parish Council. On top of that Committee members are working to make the Neighbourhood Plan the best it can be.

Marcus Rogers
Chairman, Environment Committee

Leisure Committee

Members

Barbara Ezra (Chair), Richard Butler, Jenny Hunt, David Starr, Pat Wood

After four long years of planning the outdoor gym was installed in September 2016. It has proved very popular with the community.

Four sessions of “Play around the Parishes” were well attended in the school summer holidays in 2016, three sessions have been booked for the forthcoming summer break in 2017.

The committee have compiled a list of future projects for Section 106 monies which may be allocated to the council as a result of future housing developments

Over the last twelve months several panes of blown glass have required replacement in the Community Centre along with a new door in the main hall. Looking to the future, the committee will be seeking quotes for the relaying and resurfacing of the aerial runway in the children's playground.

Barbara Ezra
Chairman, Leisure Committee

Governance and Resources Committee

Members

David Starr (Chairman), Richard Butler, Andrew Clark, Jenny Hunt, Santosh Kirve, Pat Wood

As funds become ever tighter, the Committee is focussing ever harder on managing the Council's spend wisely. The past year has seen us move into the second phase of the street lights project with several more phases to come over coming years. Also we are planning the funding of a new burial ground. The Council's land at Marsh Lane has DCLG permission for change of use and if we obtain planning permission from AVDC, we will have another major project to fund over future years. In any case, we have to maintain the land in a condition which will enable the Council to put it to best use for the community.

The Committee is pleased to have been able finally to see the completion of the outdoor gym project on our Queen Elizabeth II Field. This was almost entirely funded by grants from providers to whom we give our thanks.

As for the governance aspect of its role, the Committee has continued to review and update the Council's policies and procedures to ensure we follow best practice. As a result, your Council was awarded a Foundation level quality council award during the past year. We will now continue our efforts to achieve the next level, the Silver award, this coming year.

As a backcloth to these activities, the Committee continues to maintain the Council's record as being one of the lowest precepting parish councils in Aylesbury Vale.

David Starr
Chairman

Membership of external bodies

In addition to the Parish Council having its own committees, some members of the Council also attend other meetings on behalf of the Parish Council or as a Parish Council Representative.

- **Greater Aylesbury Local Area Forum**
Marcus Rogers is the Parish Council's representative on the Greater Aylesbury Forum which covers Aylesbury Town and the Parishes of Bierton, Buckingham Park, Watermead, Weedon and Stoke Mandeville as well as District and County Councillors and Officers, the Fire Service, Thames Valley Police and the voluntary sector.
- **Wendover Local Area Forum**
Jenny Hunt represents the Parish Council on the Wendover Local Area Forum which comprises the Parishes of Aston Clinton, Buckland, Drayton Beauchamp, Halton, Wendover and Weston Turville along with officers and members of the Authorities mentioned above.
- **Stoke Mandeville and Other Parishes Charity**
Barbara Ezra serves on the Charity's board of Trustees and is nominated by the Parish Council. Barbara is currently the Chairman of the Trustees.
- **ARLA Liaison Group**
Pat Wood is the Parish Council's representative on the liaison group.

Council Finances

Unaudited summary of the Council’s financial performance

Opening balance as at 01/04/16	£59,695.36
Total Income	£173,620.55
Total Expenditure	£152,664.39
Closing Balance as at 31/03/17	<u>£80,651.52</u>

Total receipts for the year were £173,620 which included:

- Precept - £116,420
- Charity grant - £11,765
- Grants for outdoor gym and pathways - £18,503
- Neighbourhood Plan Grant - £6,400

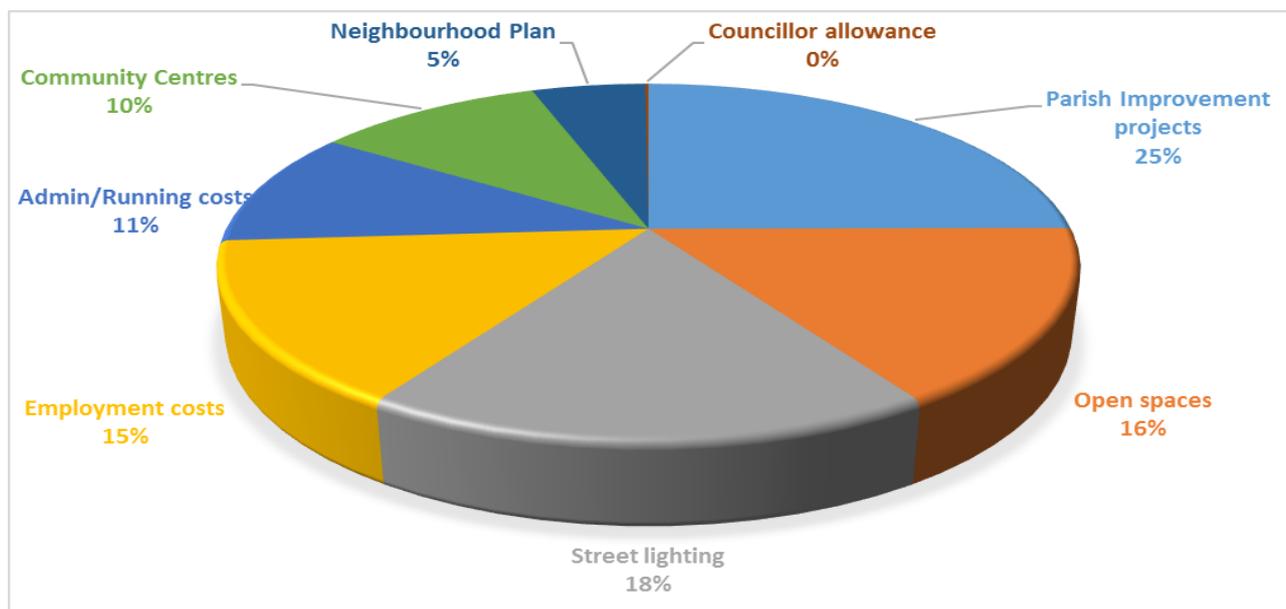
Total Expenditure for the year was £152,664, the highest expenditure items were:

- Street lighting – upgrade of some lamps to LEDs
- Provision of new outdoor gym and accessible pathways at Queen Elizabeth II Field
- Employment of clerk
- Grass cutting
- Street lights – electricity and maintenance
- Grounds maintenance around the parish

The underspend from 2016-17 is largely earmarked for the provision of a new burial ground for the parish.

How Stoke Mandeville Parish Council spent your Council Tax

The work of Parish Councils is funded by the precept which is collected by district councils through the Council Tax levy. For 2016-17 Stoke Mandeville Parish Council’s precept represented a charge to an average Band D household of £50.42 per annum.



Stoke Mandeville & Other Parishes Charity Grant.

The Stoke Mandeville and Other Parishes Charity provides a grant to the Parish Council which helps to keep the precept below the national average and also ensures that all residents benefit from the Charity. In 2017-18, the Parish Council have applied for a grant of £15,000.

2017-18 Precept

For the next financial year starting on 1 April 2017, the precept of the Parish Council will increase by just 10p per week for a property falling into council tax band 'D' and will vary from that upwards or downwards according to which council tax band your property falls within. The increase is necessary to deal with a number of high cost projects which have to be completed over the next three to five years as listed below:

- continued project to upgrade the street lights for which we are responsible to in accord with current requirements
- completion of a Neighbourhood Plan to help to manage the future growth and development of our Parish
- continued delivery of services devolved from Bucks CC with reducing subsidy
- development of a future burial ground for the Parish

Looking Ahead

The following table is an extract from the Council's Development Plan and demonstrates the work the Council will be focusing on in 2017-18.

Street Lights	Upgrade to LED lights Lights to be upgraded in spring 2017: Castlefields, Petersfield, Arnold Close and roads in Stoke Leys ward
Play Facilities Hawksalde	Identify site for provision of play area for children in conjunction with AVDC Leisure services and liaise with AVDC Leisure services over suitability of land and provision of equipment
Burial Ground	Explore and identify sites for future provision, working with other agencies. e.g. Thames Valley Water Authority, AVDC Planning Authority, Environment Agency and others
Local Council Award Scheme	Assess the PC against the criteria and submit application for silver award
Resilience Planning	1. Produce a resilience plan for Stoke Mandeville 2. Flooding - Identify water courses in the parish and who is has the responsibility
Neighbourhood Plan	Develop neighbourhood plan for Stoke Mandeville Parish
Conservation Area	Identify and apply for conservation area within Stoke Mandeville including community engagement

Burial Ground

The attention of the Parish Council has been directed towards the need for a new Burial Ground there being approximately ten plots remaining in the current one in Swallow Lane. The Council's land in Marsh Lane has recently come back into public use and investigations are taking place to assess whether this could be used as a future burial ground. Permission has been granted by the Department of Communities and Local Government for change of use of this land and the next stage is to be discussed with the planning authority, Aylesbury Vale District Council.

Meetings of Stoke Mandeville Parish Council 2017

The meeting dates for the remainder of 2017 are as follows:

Month	Date	Time	Details
May	9 th	7.30pm	Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
	18 th	10.30am	Planning Committee
	23 rd	7.30pm	Governance and Resources Committee
June	13 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	22 nd	10.30am	Planning Committee
	27 th	2.30pm	Leisure Committee
July	11 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	18 th	7.30pm	Environment Committee
	20 th	10.30am	Planning Committee
August	8 th	7.30pm	Parish Council (provisional)
	24 th	10.30am	Planning Committee (provisional)
September	12 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	19 th	7.30pm	Governance and Resources Committee
	21 st	10.30am	Planning Committee
	26 th	2.30pm	Leisure Committee
October	10 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	17 th	7.30pm	Environment Committee
	19 th	10.30am	Planning Committee
November	14 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	23 rd	10.30am	Planning Committee
	28 th	7.30pm	Governance and Resources Committee (budget)
December	5 th	3.30pm	Leisure Committee
	12 th	7.30pm	Parish Council
	21 st	10.30am	Planning Committee

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 Tel: 01296 613888 Email: smparishcouncil@btconnect.com