

REPORT BY PETER ALLEN, CHAIRMAN 28/05/13

Welcome to the Annual Parish Assembly

Where to start with all that has happened in the last twelve months. Obviously recent concerns have been focused around delayed repairs and extended damage to road surfaces caused by the extended winter conditions and generally iffy weather that we have experienced.

During the last twelve months, two of our parish councillors found that they were no longer able to dedicate their time to the council and relinquished their positions and I should like to extend my sincere thanks to Cllrs Vikki Fennel and Michael Steed for their much valued services. We have been extremely fortunate in being able to recruit two new volunteers Councillor Shannon Kerr and Councillor Arran Stibbe. Shannon is the youngest person to become a Councillor in this Parish and we hope that this is a trend that will continue. Arran has moved into Swindon Village and represented his previous community ~~of~~ <sup>as</sup> their residence association.

The Parish Council would like to express our appreciation to our outgoing County Councillor, Suzanne Williams, not only for the great job she has been doing throughout the County but for her interest in those matters that have an impact on our Parish such as the roads and the cruisers. We look forward to receiving a continuation of that interest and support from our newly elected County Councillor

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Bernie Fisher who now wears both the hat of a Borough Councillor and that of a County Councillor.

Probably one of the most difficult people that any council can lose is their clerk and after so many years of service, support and involvement it was with considerable regret to us all and to Stephen Holley that Stephen resigned his position as Clerk as he felt that he was no longer able to provide the quality of service which we should be able to expect of him. Shaun Cullimore has been appointed as our new parish clerk.

In recent months the Parish Council have formed an Allotment Working Group to work with Ian Brown the Allotment Manager to review the concerns that have been brought to his attention and that of the Parish Council and to update the details and documentation to be in accordance with recently issued guidelines.

To achieve many things you need a dedicated set of people. I am delighted to say we have this, I should like to thank Shaun Cullimore, our new Parish Clerk, and all of the Parish Councillors for their continued help and support throughout this busy and challenging year and for helping keep our Parish in such good shape.

Being a councillor can be time consuming and occasionally an unappreciated position, so I feel it would be very remiss of me not to recognise the work of all the councillors over the last twelve months who represent our Parish Council and give their time freely. I realise it is not always possible for every councillor to

attend every meeting or sit on every committee but each and everyone of you has made a contribution and it is important that people understand that you undertake this role because you care and continually want to improve the community we live in, so for that I say thank you.

To close I should like to say that we are always seeking local people who are interested and prepared to get involved with the council's activities. If you feel that you would like to be more engaged in local matters, to make a difference to your community, then please contact the Clerk to register your interest.

But concerns over wider issues have always been at the forefront of the Parish Council's thoughts such as our opposition to any development on Green Belt and highlighting the consequent impact of increased traffic through the Village Centre and surrounding roads in the Parish if it were to go ahead.

The JCS will be presented in greater detail this evening by Tracy Crewes but it is clear that its impact on all three areas of Gloucestershire will invoke passionate responses from not only those who live in the three core areas but also those who work in them. The JCS seems to have been in debate, out to consultation and in general emerging for a long time. The Cheltenham Local Plan which has been the basis by which planning decisions have been made (informed) has now lapsed and without its renewal we are in a vulnerable position and open to threat from developers as there is no longer any officially recognised local planning guidance.