



Oswestry Rural Parish Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Chairman's Report

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the parish council has met remotely for the whole of the period of this report via the Zoom video conferencing application and this has proved to be very effective. We have continued to see an increase in the numbers of members of the public attending the virtual parish council meetings and this is very pleasing as the parish council exists to represent and support the people who live within the parish area.

The parish council will return to face-to-face meetings from May and the annual parish council meeting is planned for Tuesday 18th May, which will be held in Morda Village Hall, this meeting has to be held within 3 weeks of the local elections, which will take place on the 6th May for councillors to sign their acceptance of office and to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests.

Local elections are a time for parish councillors to reflect if they wish to continue for another 4 years as a parish councillor or if they feel their service is complete and whether they wish to stand aside to allow for new councillors to join and have an opportunity to represent the community where they live. There will be six vacancies for new parish councillors in May, parish councillors are volunteers and are unpaid, most volunteer to give something back to the community where they live and make a valuable contribution in the decision making of the council, affecting the whole of the rural parish area. There will be 3 vacancies in Morda with Sweeney Ward, 1 in Rhydycroesau with Llanforda, 1 in Sychtyn and 1 in Trefonen with Treflach Ward.

We have been successful in having vehicle activated signs installed in Trefonen and this is working well to encourage drivers to obey the speed limits when driving through the village. Bids will be made for other Wards in the parish where speeding issues have been identified if funding is announced again in 2021 from the police and crime commissioner for these valuable safety assets.

The parish has been successful in applying for and being awarded grants as follows:

- Small business grant through COVID-19 funds of £10,000 for the cemetery.
- Environmental grant from Shropshire Council of £1,000 towards grounds maintenance within the parish.
- 2 Vehicle Activated Signs in Trefonen for £4,232.21 from the PCC.

This is a total of £15,232.21 to support the Parish, its assets and responsibilities.

Shropshire Council is currently completing an ongoing review of the Local Plan, which can affect parts of the Parish with Trefonen being identified as a Community Hub where potential housing development can be considered and this has been opposed by the parish council, the parish would like to retain its open countryside status, which is the view of the overwhelming majority of the parish as demonstrated in the housing needs survey completed a few of years ago.

Parish grant awards for worthy causes within the parish are available each year and will be advertised in due course. The Tony Cheetham Community Service Award will also be advertised and members of the public are encouraged to nominate members of their community to receive this award, which is presented each year to a worthy recipient.

The next parish council meeting is Tuesday 27th April via Zoom video link, this is likely to be the last remote meeting, I hope to see you on screen at this meeting.

This has been a challenging year as Chairman of the Parish Council with managing remote meetings due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and several other issues that have taken considerable parish time and resources, whilst continuing to be open and transparent to all external scrutiny. As there was no annual parish meeting in 2020 due to Covid-19 I have actually been Chairman for 2 years and I would like to thank the clerk and all councillors for their support throughout my period as Chairman.

I wish the new Chairman who will be appointed at the May meeting every success and my support for the coming year.

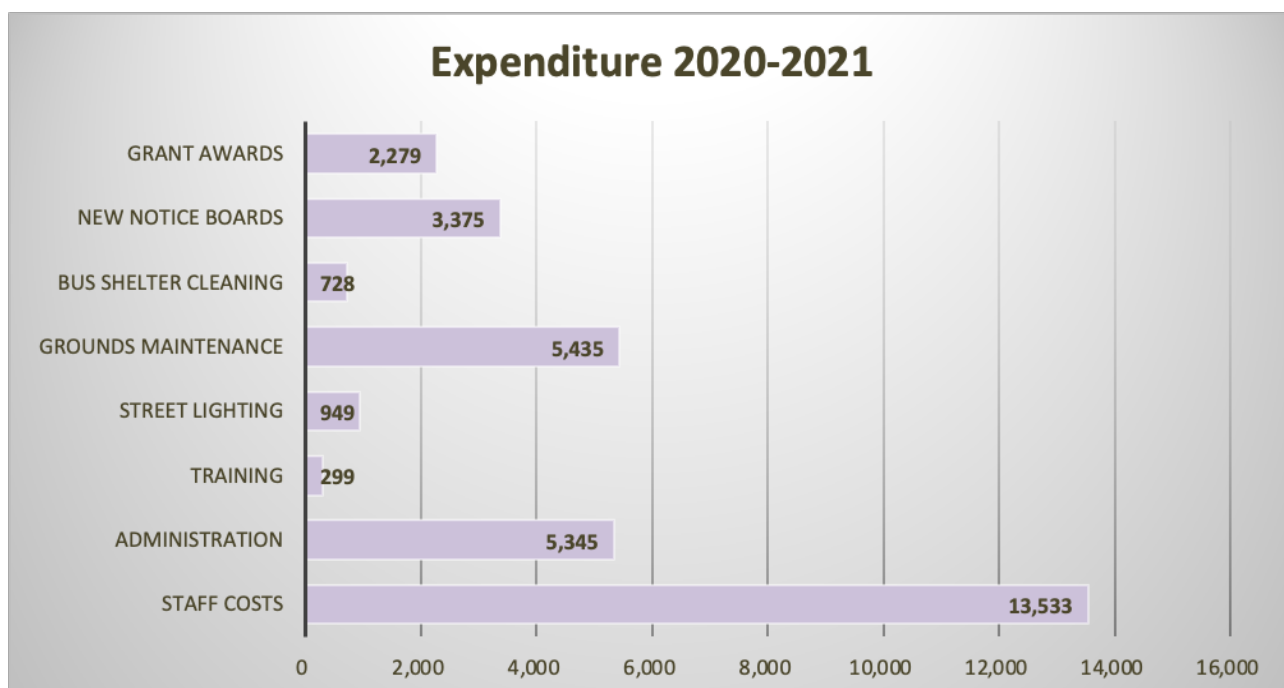
Thank you.

Cllr. Peter Richardson
Chairman May 2020 to May 2021

Budget 2020/2021

The budget for the last fiscal year was £46,833 and the precept was £45,583. Total expenditure was £32,444 and income received was £24,702. Part of the income received was £14,323; £10,000 from Shropshire Council (small business grant COVID-19 for Trefarclawdd cemetery, and £4,232 from the PCC for 2 VAS installed in Trefonen. We also received £34,405 in Neighbourhood Funds from Shropshire Council which can be spent anywhere in the parish to improve the locality.

The chart below shows where money was spent. Further information is available on our website at: <https://www.oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk/financial-information/> or by application to the Clerk.



During the year we made grant awards to local groups and worthy causes as shown in the chart below.

APPLICANT	AWARD £
Hope House (charity donation)	750.00
Trefonen Defibrillator	120.00
Morton Playing Field	750.00
Rhydycroesau Village Hall	613.76
British Red Cross (poppy wreath)	20.00
Flowers	25.00
TOTAL	2278.76