



Wendover Parish Council Annual Report 2018/19

Wendover Parish Council has focused on the key objectives agreed within its Community Action Plan. The objectives identified several areas for improvement including staff recruitment and training, community & business engagement, service delivery, improved IT and business performance.

- **Staff Recruitment & Training** – Training requirements are considered by the Staffing Committee annually. Suitable courses are sourced through BALC (British Association of Local Councils) to develop the skills and knowledge of Councillors and staff members. Several courses were identified over the year with a 100% success rate achieved for attendance and completion. We are also pleased to confirm the appointment of a new Parish Clerk, the promotion of our Assistant Clerk to Deputy Clerk and two permanent Assistant Clerks employed on a job share basis. The Clock Tower team is now firmly established to support the Council and respond positively to the numerous requests and observations received from the Wendover community.
- **Community & Business Engagement** – Whilst we witnessed improved engagement during the previous year it was felt more could be achieved. The Annual Quiz and Christmas event continued and were a resounding success despite the poor weather! The focus then moved to the wider community and local business. With regards to the local community, our social media platforms provide regular and current updates for everyone to access. They provide a vital link between the Council and the community and we will be encouraging greater engagement during the coming year. Our Facebook page went live in 2018/2019 with the ‘likes’ and ‘followers’ continuing to increase over the year. We currently have 328 followers. We revisited the Councils web site, updating it to ensure its intuitive, user friendly and informative. Now live and under construction, we welcome comments from the community on how it may be further improved. Not forgetting the younger element of our community, the Council engaged with local businesses and schools to organise a Christmas and Easter competition. Both events have been very well supported and further events will be organised during this year.
- **Service Delivery** – The Ground Team continue to provide a valuable service throughout the community ensuring our recreational areas, hedges, verges and other facilities are regularly maintained. Thanks to their sterling efforts, Wendover won the Best Kept Town competition in 2018 and we are planning to retain the award this year.

- **Improved IT and smarter working** – Improvements to the IT system during last year have enabled the Office Team to work more efficiently and flexibly; however, it was quickly recognised that further improvements could be adopted. All councillors now have dedicated council email addresses. The use of tablets, fully utilising Office 365, is being trialled with the ambition to have all councillors working on tablets for all council business by the middle of this year. This will ensure GDPR compliance, deliver significant savings on printing / paper and allow them to be totally mobile whilst conducting council business.
- **Improved Business Performance** – The Council developed Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) to measure their success against agreed business and finance objectives. Whilst proving useful, it was felt the KPI's could be improved to deliver Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Bound (SMART) objectives to accurately report on performance and provide improved confidence the council is achieving its business objectives. They have been developed and became active from the 1st April 2019 reporting on the financial year 2019/20

The focus on HS2 continued with extensive lobbying of the Government to adopt a mined tunnel aimed at significantly reducing the environmental impact on Wendover. There has been measurable success with the Chairman (Cllr Tom Walsh) regularly engaging with senior members of government to gain their support for the initiative. Lobbying will continue this year maintaining the momentum towards what we hope will be a successful conclusion.

Cllr Sheila Bulpett has been working very hard at developing the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). It's an unenviable task which requires a great deal of dedication, commitment and tenacity. Working with her team, engaging with AVDC and organising public consultations, Sheila is on the verge of success! Once accepted, the NP will reflect the importance to the Wendover Community of its local green spaces and rural environment supported by Community Engagement until 2033.

The year ahead presents significant challenges with the introduction of a Unitary Council. The Unitary Council will combine the current 5 District Councils into one with the vision of delivering improved efficiency around service delivery, spending and engagement. Community Hubs are to be introduced bringing the Council closer to the community; however, we are unsure how this may impact on Parish Councils. Developments and progress will be communicated through our web site and we encourage you to regularly visit for updates on how the transition is progressing.

Finally, the Office Team are working closely with the Council to develop further ideas on how community awareness of the Council may be raised. We are here to support and serve the Wendover community and we want your ideas on how facilities may be developed and improved whilst maintaining the unique character of Wendover; 'Gateway to the Chilterns'.