

## Salford Priors Parish Council ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 2015



### Period of Report:

This Annual Report covers the work of Salford Priors Parish Council for the period commencing 1st April 2014 and ending 31st March 2015.

A very warm welcome to you all this evening to your Annual Parish Meeting. This is your meeting, providing opportunity to voice your views, to ask questions and to make requests. This being my first Annual Report, I must say how very privileged I have felt serving as the Chairman of the Parish Council in Salford Priors, a village which has been my home all my life. I have found the experience of chairmanship over the last year both challenging and rewarding in equal measure with, at times, the need to meet the demands of a steep learning curve. But I would do it again with enthusiasm. Thank you to all my fellow Councillors for their support, help, advice and their patience during my first year as Chairman.

I would also like to thank on behalf of the Parish Council the sterling work done over the last 12 months by the Salford 7 Neighbourhood Development Planning (NDP) Group. Comprised of dedicated local residents, with the support of Councillors, they have worked tirelessly to bring together a draft plan for consideration in early May 2015. I appeal to you all to take time to look at this important document and let NDP Group know your thoughts and feelings on it. It is your plan. It gives every one of us equal voice in shaping what happens in our Parish over the next 20 years.

This has been a particularly busy year for the Parish Council with a total of 12 Ordinary Meetings and 3 Extraordinary Meetings. Councillor's attendance at these meetings has been:

Kim James 13/15	Karen Littleford 15/15	Liam Maude 12/15	Melanie Muldowney 12/15
David Penn 14/15	John Stedman 15/15	Lindsay Wright 11/15	
District Councillor J Spence – 0/15		District Councillor D Pemberton – 1/15	
District Councillor M Howse – 10/15		County Councillor M Brain – 3/15	

During the period of this Annual Report a total of 193 members of the public attended meetings with the largest numbers attending the Extraordinary Meetings. In addition to the meetings highlighted, the Parish Council also held a budget preparation meeting in December 2014 and two Focus Group meetings which were both well attended. The first of these held in January 2015 explored options for a Parish War Memorial. A Second Focus Group met in February 2015 to consider speeding and parking issues on the B439 Station/Evesham Road. At the next parish council meeting it was agreed to install five covert speed cameras (2 in School Road, 1 in Station Road, 1 in Evesham Road and 1 in Abbotts Salford). The business of both groups is ongoing.

In June 2014 a new Parish Clerk was appointed but, with regret, the Parish Council accepted his resignation in August 2014. Mr Paul Mills was subsequently appointed into the post in November 2014. The parish office was decorated and reorganised creating a more spacious environment to work and hold small meetings. A new photo copier was also installed enabling black and white and colour copying facility. The office is now once again open for business on Tuesday morning and Thursday afternoons.

New housing development proposals dominated the 3 Extraordinary Meetings held during the year. The first, held in June 2014, discussed a Proposed Outline Planning Application for up to 60 residential dwellings on land west of Alamo

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Group Europe Ltd, Station Road and new access onto Station Road Salford Priors. A subsequent Extraordinary Meeting to consider the Planning Committee Report was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015 when it was agreed to submit objection to the application. Stratford on Avon District Council granted Outline Planning Permission at their meeting held in Elizabeth House on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

At the Extraordinary Meeting in August 2014, Lone Star PLP gave a presentation to the Parish Council outlining a potential new housing development on land off School Road Salford Priors at Orchard Farm. Later, at an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held in September 2014, Mr. Guy Wakefield of Hunterpage Planning presented on the proposed housing development scheme by Bloor Homes on land immediately south of Orchard Farm with access from Evesham Road.

During the Open Forum section of the August 2014 meeting a presentation was given by Mr George Hughes regarding the proposed Solar Farm development at Pitchill. When the application came before the Parish Council in October 2014, the Council agreed to support the application. A total of 28 Planning applications were considered over the period of 12 months. These included an extension to the Orchard Cookery School, an extension to the Scout Hut and a Solar Farm in the neighbouring parish of Abbots Morton.

The Parish Council agreed to replace the unserviceable parish noticeboard located at Dunnington School and, at the same time, purchase 2 further notice boards for the settlements of Abbots Salford and Rushford. A 'pin' board notice board was also purchased for the wooden bus shelter in School Road to enable local groups to display their notices. It was later agreed to replace the 2 remaining noticeboards, both being beyond economical repair, sited on the wall of the village shop in Ridsdale Close and at the southern end of School Road near its junction with Evesham Road. These are now also in place.

A first ever Christmas Tree Illumination event took place on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November with refreshments and a firework display organised to coincide with the lights 'switch-on'. Around 150 parishioners attended the event which attracted donations amounting to £425.00 towards the Defibrillator fund. Along with donations of £1000.00 from SPATS and a County Councillor's Grant awarded by County Councillor Mike Brain the parish has been able to purchase 2 defibrillators. Defibrillator cabinets have been very recently installed at the Memorial Hall and at the Baptist Church Hall in Dunnington. The Parish Council will shortly announce arrangements for awareness training for interested Parishioners and we will continue to encourage volunteering support for individuals to receive higher lever training to act as First Responders under the auspices of the Avon Valley Community First Responder Scheme.

The Parish Council received requests for, and granted donations of £806.40 to Alcester Academy for maths equipment, £350.00 to Stratford upon Avon Citizens Advice Bureau for their outreach work and £100.00 to the Overs 60's Club for their day trip to Weston Super Mare. Donations were also made to Alcester Dementia Cafe £300 in memory of Mr Brian Slaughter, ex District Councillor for Bidford and Salford Ward, and The Royal British Legion £200.00 for their Poppy Appeal.

The precept for year 2015/2016 was set at the December meeting and has risen to £50,000. The precept pays for the following services: Amenity Mowing, Verge Mowing, planters and flower displays, Playing Field maintenance, St. Matthews Churchyard extension, parish notice boards, general maintenance tasks undertaken by the Lengthsman and footway lighting, as well as the following facilities, the Allotments Gardens, TOP's Building and the Parish Office. The uptake in the allotment gardens has greatly improved in recently months which is very encouraging. The Parish Council has produce two newsletters during the year. These were delivered to every house in the parish as well a number of e-news notices sent electronically to 122 parishioners who have subscribed.

The current term of Parish Council office has now ended. Parish Council elections take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 with the number of Councillors set to rise to 9 from 7. This increase in representation we hope will bring with it widened ranges of views and contributions towards meeting the needs and aspirations of Salford Priors Parish. With one exception, all current Councillors are standing. They are joined by three other candidates: Mrs Pat Dare, Mr Alan Green and Dr. Tom Littleford. Councillor Melanie Muldowney has decided to stand-down from the Council and on behalf of all council members and parishioners, I record a vote of thanks for all your work and valued contribution over the last 18

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months. I would also like to record the Council's appreciation of all the hard work done by the Clerk, Mr Paul Mills since taking on the job. He has worked many long hours clearing backlogs as well as learning the ropes. He has taken the Council on the first steps towards the Local Council Award Scheme and we now have Foundation Status.

Finally, on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank Councillors John Stedman and Kim James for all their hard work over the last 12/18 months for taking on the additional extraneous roles of acting RFO and Clerk during the extended period in the absence of a formally appointed Clerk and RFO. Their unpaid commitment to the smooth running of the Parish Council through this difficult period was greatly appreciated by all Councillors. The subsequent and ongoing help and support given to the new Clerk is also much valued. *So, on behalf of the Councillors I would like to present you both with a small gift to show our gratitude.*