

Account of Purley on Thames

District Notes July 1981

R200485 20/1/2018

January 1981

no report

February 1981

no report

March 1981

no report

April 1981

The group which had taken on the job of raising money in Newbury to fund their part of the new Swimming Complex has failed to provide enough money and so we have been forced to surcharge the whole District to pay the deficit, I may add that this was over the vehement protests of myself and Ron Roberts of Pangbourne - we both believed it should have been a surcharge on the Newbury Town area only as they get the benefit. We were very disappointed not to get the support of our neighbouring Liberal Councillors.

The new rate will be 107p made up of Parish (2.4p), District (11.1p) County (112p) less the domestic rebate of 18.5p. This compares with 97.7p last year and is a rise of only 9% which I believe a great credit to all concerned, So far as the District is concerned there is a total spend of £6.6M paid for by Income of £2.5M, Central Govt. Grant of £2.0M, money from balances £0.2M and Rates £1.9M. The Housing Account had a total spend of £7.8M paid for by rents (£5.4M) misc charges (£9M) Govt. Grant (£1.3M) and Rate subsidy (£0.2M) which means that on average Council tenants pay about 78% of the economic rent.

I have been asked to make a special appeal to people not to put loose glass into plastic garbage bags. Last year we had 5 serious cases of injury to dustmen and numerous minor injuries please break up glass as small as you can and wrap it in, newspaper before putting it into the bags.

The Council has now decided to sell the offices at 26 Bath Road, but not until alternative arrangements have been made for the payment of rents and rates etc.

There are continued discussions on a bottle bank in Pangbourne - the current favourite spot is now in the main car park but no firm decision has been made. Construction of the new Riverside toilets in Pangbourne is going ahead.

I have been able to arrange for pensioners to receive a B.R. railcard as an optional part of their concessionary fares scheme. I hope to be able to give full details later.

May 1981

By now everyone should have received their rates demand - may I urge you to pay up promptly and consider carefully the Treasurer's request for people to use the direct debit mandate system. Prompt payment of rates has a tremendous effect in keeping the costs of the Council to a minimum and helps us keep the rates down.

The concessionary fares scheme for 1981/82 was final given the go-ahead on April 14th. This time there will be a choice between taking bus tokens or having a rail card - we hope many people will take up the new option and make good use of their railcard. We have made a special arrangement to have the tokens and rail cards issued from Pangbourne Volunteer Centre in the first two weeks of June.

There has been tremendous increase in the number of planning applications in April to beat the new charges. An obvious consequence is that our staff have been unable to cope properly and there are bound to be delays.

A grant to cover, the cost of the 1981 batch of trees in its long term planting scheme was made by N.D.C. to Purley Parish Council. We are expecting to get approval for a second batch in the early autumn.

Finally may I urge you all to turn out and vote in the County Council Election on 7th May.

June 1981

no report

July 1981

A00208

DISTRICT NOTES

Just to reassure everyone in Cecil Aldin Drive - a new street sign is on order to replace the one damaged a few weeks ago - also a new one (with correct spelling) for Skerritt Way. However these seem to take a long time to come from the manufacturers.

The ground around the flats in St. Mary's Avenue will eventually be properly grassed and landscaped but the contractors have to wait for appropriate weather conditions.

After a poll of all the shopkeepers in the district it has been decided to lift the requirement for a half day closing. It is now up to the shopkeeper to decide whether or not to stay open.

Following the A.G.M. of the Council we now have a new Chairman of the Council in Miss Heather Turner who represents Kintbury. The new Vice-Chairman is Ken Morgan of Basildon. I found myself on an extra two Committees and my duties for the coming year include being Chairman of Transportation, Vice Chairman of Finance and a member of Environmental Health, Development Services, Grants and Projects and Planning Committees.

May I appeal to those who have a strip of public grass outside their house to keep it mowed as if it were part of their front lawn. There is just no money available for cutting these areas on a regular basis and it makes such a difference to the general appearance of the village. I know a lot of you have been doing it for years so to these may I say thank you on behalf of everyone.

Abuse of footpaths is perhaps the one topic I get the most complaints about. There are two sorts - plain footpaths which are just for walking on or bridle paths which can be used by horses. On neither is it permissible to ride bicycles, motor bikes or any other motorized vehicles. Currently all footpaths and bridle paths are under review to ensure that the correct local by-laws are up to date so that appropriate action can be taken against offenders. Could everyone with children - especially

teenagers - please make sure they understand and abide by the law

August 1981

The made-up roads in Purley River Estate should be adopted by the time you read this. This means that they will now be maintained by the Highway Authority and that all the provisions of the various Highway Acts now apply.

It is proposed to close off part of Pincents Lane in Tilehurst and reclassify it as Bridle Way. This is principally on safety grounds and the proposals have been endorsed by Newbury District. It should be advertised - soon and you will be able to register your approval or disapproval as you think fit.

I have been asked to draw the attention of all people whose property adjoins a footpath, to your obligations under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 which requires you to trim overhanging vegetation such that it does not obstruct the passage of pedestrians, obscure the view of street signs or light from street-lamps. This particularly applies to those owners in Westridge Avenue, Hazel Road and Skerritt Way who back on to the Oxford Road.

Following an approach by Newbury District Council to Alder Valley to divert the No.5 bus via Purley, Village, we have been informed. that this will not be possible for operational reasons,

September 1981

DISTRICT NOTES

Things are fairly quiet at the moment due to holidays and there are not many council meetings during July and August. I had a site meeting at the St. Mary's Avenue estate to see what we could do about some of the problems there. We expect to be going ahead with the landscaping as soon as the new planting season starts and this will include prickly shrubs to guard the area by the car park in Lilac Close. We are also looking at blocking off some footpaths to reduce nuisance caused by cyclists and getting a lot of the loose stones cleared away to reduce damage to cars in car parks. It would be a great help if parents could impress upon young children particularly not to throw stones. I have also been asked to draw attention of parents in the Primrose Close/Lilac Close area to the dangers of the very steep drop from the top of the wall by the footpath linking the two roads to the car park. A number of very young children have had to be rescued having been found clinging to the wall by their fingertips over a 20 foot drop, so if you live around there please try to stop them climbing on the wall.

You may have seen in the local papers that the two councillors for Birch Copse Ward have resigned. Malcolm Harris because he is moving to a new job in Surrey and Sue Clifford because her dual role on County and District has got a bit much of late. There will be a by-election on September 17th.

John Chapman
Councillor, Purley Ward

October 1981

A lot of my time at the moment is being spent on footpaths - we seem to be taking some progress again on the path from the Thames to the Roebuck and I hope to have something to report soon. Of particular concern has been the Long Lane to Westwood Path (new Purley No. 12) which keeps getting blocked by building works.

I am awaiting a report on revised procedures for handling planning applications - I called for this because we have been getting so many complaints from neighbours who find applications have gone through before they know about them. The present system of notification is far from satisfactory and I hope to get some improvements when the report comes back to Committee.

Now that we are coming to the bonfire season again let me make my usual appeal to think of your neighbours and don't let fires smoulder for hours.

November 1981

no report

December 1981

A00208

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