

## Chairman's Address

This year has been very tricky and we as a council have not achieved very much. This a shame as in the past few years we had got some very big projects of the ground and it would have need great to have continue this success.

Hear are some of the many problems that we have faced this year.

- 1 We started the year with out a parish clerk.
- 2 We only had 4 councillors we should have 7
- 3 We had no handy man

The parish clerk is the heart of the council. The clerk gets together all information that the council needs to run properly they put the agenda out so we know what we are going to be talking about and then during the meeting takes the minunits this is a very important part of the job as a lot of the min points have to be used by the auditors for the end of year accounts.

We spent a lot of time and money advertising for a new clerk and we found a guy called Chris, Chris did a great job but as he came from outside the area it took him a long time to get to grips with how the village ran and how things were done as a lot of the agenda were ongoing from the past months if not years. Chris was offered a job at a much bigger council nearer his home on a full time basses and as we could only offer him a part time job he decided to take the new job offer. This was unlucky for us as Chris was getting to grips with what was going on and I'm sure he would have been an asset to the parish as a whole. I wish Chris success in his new role and would like to thank him for the hard work he put in for Camber.

This left us again with no clerk and Pat Thresher one of our councillors steeped in as standing clerk. Pat did all so could for the council and made sure that the agenda and mins were put out every month as well as holding down a full time job. After a few months Pat felt that she could no longer do the clerks job and her husband steeped in to help. Andre was not paid for any of the work he did as standing clerk. At last months meeting Pat decided that she had also had enough of being a councillor and her and Andre were going to close down there care home and go travelling for a year, this came as a huge shock to all of us and left us with only 3 councillors. I wish Pat and Andre all the best with whatever its is that they decided to do and thank her for all her very hard work she has done in the past year Pat will be missed buy all of us left.

During Pat's last stint as standing clerk we advertised again for a clerk and have had 8 people apply, we are going to be interviewing in the next few weeks.

With Pat leaving the council we now only have 3 councillors this is a very big problem as we should have 7 councillors and we need at least 4 councillors to have a quorum, it would be silly of us to employ a new clerk if the council is going to close due to lack of councillors and interest of the people in the village.

We have spoken at length to SALC, Trevor Leggo who is willing to help the parish out in the short term. This will be by way of giving us the use of a clerk to

help sort out all the paper work, for the last year. He can arrange for colleagues of his to sit as councillors until we can encourage more people to come on board.

So if any of you out there would like to come and help make your village a better place to live and work in for both residents and visitors please come and speak to Richard, Julie or myself.

Another blow to the village and most of all the young people for the village was the burning down of the play park. This happened at the start of the Easter holidays so the park has now been out of action since then. The police have spoken to 4 young people and are still trying to get hold of 2 others in relation to the fire. To date no one has been charged with setting fire to the play park and I don't think they hold out much hope as all the people involved are under the age of 18 and no witness have come forward. Pat did arrange for 2 different firms to come and give us a price for a new park but they both failed to show up, pat and André stood out in the rain for 2 hours waiting for them. I have now contacted 4 play park builders and have 1 coming this week and 1 next I'm still waiting for the other 2 to get back to me. The park is insured and we have been talking with our insurers, they have told us to get 3 quotes and they will then look in to paying out for the new equipment. I would like to think that we could get the park up and running again before the summer holidays.

One small piece of good news we now have a handy man he started about a month ago and has taken over all of the handy man duties, these include safety checks on the play areas, cleaning the play areas, cleaning and painting the bus stops plus a long list of other jobs that need to be done as we have not had a handy man for some time.

I would like to thank both Richard my vice chairman and Julie for all their hard work over the past very stressful year. All of the councillors give up their time for free and it really is a thank less task, it does not matter what you do or don't do you can never please everyone. It upsets all of us when we hear people talking about the parish council and saying that we are not doing a very good job, most of these people can't even be bothered to come along to the parish council meetings to see what we are trying to do and achieve for the village as a whole. Yes this past year we will admit that we have not achieved much but this is not from the lack of trying, with only 4 people to share the work load and no clerk to keep us up to speed it is very hard. All of the councillors have full time jobs some of us working an average of 60 hours a week so trying to find the time to do a lot of the day to day running that should be done by the clerk as well as any extra projects that we would love to start is very hard.

I would like to thank councillor Nick Ramus, Keith Glaser and Paul Osborne for all of the support they have given to the parish council and the village over the past year. These guys come to all most every meeting and it is great to have them on our side to help fight for Camber on a district and county level.

Finally can I thank all of you for coming out tonight and supporting the parish council, and as I said at the start if any of you are interested in being a parish councillor please do come and talk to one of us.