Our Parish Council is now half way through its current 4 year term and we are fortunate to have had a full complement of councillors throughout the past year. Our former clerk, John McParland resigned his position at the end of the 2015/16 financial year and we were delighted to appoint Zoe as our New Clerk in June of last year.

As you might expect the majority of our work as a council related to planning considerations and since June 2016, we have considered 17 applications

plus two sets of amended plans for the Hadspen House development (16/02676/FUL) and for the change of use at Shatwell Farm (16/04044/FUL).

SSDC Planning committee upheld all our recommendations except one to which this council objected but SSDC approved.

The retrospective application for a cattle storage barn at Pitcombe Farm

(15/04009/FUL) has still not been finalised by SSDC.

The applications relating to Emily Estate - Hadspen House and Shatwell Farm - involved very large documentary submissions and it was of significant assistance to us to have received comprehensive presentations both on site and at our council meetings from Paul Rawson of Emily Estate. I hope you will agree that the standard of the work so far carried out has been of the highest order but we are very mindful of the potential impact on the Parish infrastructure of these developments and we continue to lobby for highway improvements, particularly at Grove Cross.

We are grateful for Councillor Robin Currie’s initiative to provide defibrillators in the Parish. The current total raised so far from residents amounts to £2220 for phase 1 of the project which aims to provide a unit at the Village Hall. The siting of a second unit remains under investigation and one of the suggested sites is the redundant Telephone Kiosk in Pitcombe Hamlet which is now, subject to contract, a Parish asset.

We made a number of grants to Parish organisations and to other local bodies. (see list)

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 we are required to maintain an effective website in accordance with the Transparency Code. Zoe has worked very effectively to achieve this and we shall be showing an offline version of the site as it currently stands, following these comments.

I should mention the not insignificant efforts that we have made to maintain footpaths; verges; rainwater drainage and other highway and environmental matters involving regular interaction with District and County Councils including Streetscene. My thanks to Cathy Brook for her determined pursuance of footpath access and to Caroline Donald for keeping us aware of developments in adjoining Parishes which might impact our own but also to all my councillor colleagues and to our splendid clerk, Zoe, for their faithful support throughout the year.