

BICKNOLLER ANNUAL PARISH CONFERENCE - THURSDAY 27 MAY 2010

The Annual Parish Conference was held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on the above date.

PRESENT Mr D Venner (Chairman)
 Mr A Trollope-Bellew (County Councillor)
 Mr S Dowding (District Councillor)
 Mrs M ter Braak (Clerk)
 30 Parishioners

- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** were received from several parishioners.
- 2 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2009:** the minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 3 **PRESENTATION BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:**

Mr Trollope-Bellew (County Councillor) reported as follows: there is now a Conservative majority at the County Council following the election. He is a Cabinet member with the Environment portfolio, which includes roads, waste disposal, public transport, rights of way, gypsies and AONBs. Budget - a 0% increase in the County Council element of Council tax. Savings of £44m have been made but the only saving that will affect Bicknoller parishioners is the fact that the Community Budget has been cancelled. Roads - the new contract with Atkins means more will be done for less money. Mr Trollope-Bellew also gave details of how much salting of roads was done during the recent bad winter. Hinkley C - will probably go ahead, but this is not a foregone conclusion.

Mr Dowding (District Councillor) reported as follows: Hinkley C - his greatest concern is the road link between Williton and Hinkley. He has therefore been working with the Police, Somerset County Council and others on the general safety issues of the A39. He also serves on the Planning Committee, and can report that the first application from E.D.F. at Hinkley was to create a new badger sett for displaced badgers!

The big local issue has been the loss of over £0.25m on the build cost of the new WSC offices in Williton. It was only through the sterling work of three members of the public that this mishandling was really brought to light, and other Councillors then really got to grips with the problem.

Local Government Boundary changes - these have been imposed upon us by Whitehall to (rightly) ensure that the electoral mathematics works - i.e. elected members at any level all represent, within reason, the same number of folk as each other. Although WSC made a proposal to slightly reduce the number of members, this will not affect this Ward.

Council Tax - WSC has decided on a 3% increase which is better than the 4.5% wanted by some of the Independent Group. This increase is largely owing to the fact that the Government rate support to WSC is a 0.7% increase, whereas some councils have benefited from a 4% increase!

Mr Dowding also represents parishioners on various other committees - the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee, which is a very thoughtful and useful body dealing with real issues ranging from illegal vehicle use through rhododendron control to use of Volunteers. The WSC Environment Policy Action Group, whose most notable achievement to date is joining the County Council in implementing SORT IT+. He is also Secretary of the Conservative Group and now serves on the Scrutiny Committee, Somerset Building Preservation Trust and the Hinkley Stakeholder Committee.

4 REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:

New Parish Councillor - following the resignation of Julian Anderson, Mrs Nicola Russell has been co-opted on to the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Mr Anderson for all his hard work and welcomed Mrs. Russell on to the Council.

Pathway outside St. George's Church - this path has some bad potholes and is dangerous in parts. As it is "adopted public highway" Somerset Highways are prepared to tarmac the area if requested. However, there is some concern that this might make the area look rather "urbanised". It was also pointed out that it could make the path slippery in wet or icy weather. The alternative would be to level the path and smooth it over. No strong feelings were expressed either way, and the Parish Council will make a decision on this at its July meeting.

Recycling Bins - Village Hall Car Park - West Somerset District Council will be introducing "Sort-It Plus" waste collections from November 2011. This additional service will bring wheelie bins for refuse, food waste and plastic bottle collections to all domestic properties. In order to provide for these extra collections, cost savings will need to be made. Therefore the current paper/card and can recycling bins in the car park will be removed in early June 2010. The glass bins will remain on site until further notice. Residents can continue to recycle their paper, card and cans in their black boxes on the fortnightly kerbside recycling collections.

New bus shelter - A358 Church Lane (Taunton direction) - the Parish Council has decided to investigate the cost of replacing this bus shelter as it is in a bad state of repair. The replacement will be wooden, like the new bus shelter at Woolston Moor. It is hoped (funds permitting) to eventually get round to replacing the two other bus shelters.

Finally, the Chairman thanked the Parish Clerk for all her hard work during the year and the Parish Councillors for all their efforts on behalf of the parish.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT (CLERK TO THE COUNCIL): The Clerk presented the accounts for 2009-2010 giving an explanation of the major items of expenditure.

6 PRESENTATIONS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS: Representatives of local bodies gave the Conference a summary of the current activities of their organisations. Those involved were: David Thorpe (Bick Lifts), Clare Rawle (Flower Show), Molly Farmer (Mothers Union), Cerys Randell (PCC), Julian Anderson (Quantock Eco), David Thorpe (Royal British Legion Quantock Branch), Robert Hardy (Village Hall, John Lees (Village Shop) and Maggie Pumphrey (W.I.).

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS: there was no other business to report.

Signed:

Date: 2011