

## **BICKNOLLER ANNUAL PARISH CONFERENCE – WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2019**

The Annual Parish Conference was held in the Village Hall at 7.00 pm on the above date.

PRESENT: Councillor C Warren (Chairman)  
Parish Councillors J Anderson, S Dowding, A Harrison, K Ogilvie-White,  
M Rawle and Mrs C Skinner  
Somerset County Councillor Mrs C Lawrence  
Izzy Sylvester, Village Agent  
Mrs C Richards (Parish Clerk)  
24 Parishioners

The meeting was chaired by Councillor C Warren.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** were received from District Councillor A Trollope-Bellew, Maggie Pumphrey, Marian Gresswell, Rose Fish, Julie Hall-Williams, Robert Hardy, Angela Berners-Wilson and Daphne Leggetter.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2018:** The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 3. PRESENTATION BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:**

### **Somerset County Councillor report:**

Somerset County Councillor Mrs Lawrence thanked the Parish Council for inviting her. She thanked the Parish Councillors for all their hard work during the year. Her report "Bicknoller is a very busy village and there is a lot for the Parish Council to do and plan for, my grateful thanks to each one of them. The County Council has had a very busy year. Finance was a major concern at the start of the year, we had to make cuts in most of our services except our children's work. However, with careful planning, many difficult decisions, some reduction in staffing, we balanced our books for 2019. We have been able to put further funds into children's services to meet the ever increasing need. We are always looking to recruit more foster parents that can give a caring home to a child or children that for whatever reason cannot live with their birth parents. The adult social care work has made some really important changes, especially in our home first work. This means helping older people return home quicker after a stay in hospital, providing they have the support they need and any service provision, i.e. physiotherapy or nursing care. It is well documented that you get stronger and feel better if you are able to return home and sleep in the comfort of your own home" was received by those present. She continued by saying that she was pleased that more gully clearance has been done in the village and she would do her best to see that this work is done regularly as required. There is still more work to do regarding Broadband in some rural areas but progress and further funding is how being made. Her work in public health is really interesting and our new strategy called Improving Lives can be found the Somerset County Council's website. She drew attention to two programmes by Panorama, the first on 29 May 2020, which would highlight the difficulties in Somerset of looking after older people living longer. Somerset County Council was going to reintroduce salting the road network and to top up salt bins in villages. She had spoken to Jo Sharp, Traffic Management Engineer at Somerset County Council, regarding speeding on the A358 and at Halsway. Jo Sharp would have a look at road markings to see if anything could be done.

**District Council report:** No report. District Councillor Trollope-Bellew had tendered his apologies as the Annual Meeting of the new Somerset West & Taunton Council was being held this evening.

**4. REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:**

Councillor Warren introduced himself and the three new Parish Councillors – Julian Anderson, Stuart Dowding and Kevin Ogilvie-White. He thanked Mike Andersen, John Grellier and Rod Murphy, who had all stood down at the May 2019 election, for their time and effort whilst Parish Councillors. He stated the Parish Council sometimes had hard decisions to make which would not please everyone but there had been none made in the past year which he had regretted. He extended thanks to all the groups who contribute to the working of Bicknoller Parish. He was looking forward to the completion of the village hall project, the plans for which had been on display prior to this meeting. One group worthy of mention was the Bicknoller Volunteer Group, well done to everybody involved in that, and he was pleased that John Grellier would still be heading up that group as co-ordinator and liaising with Parish Councillor Anderson on that. Some of the areas of responsibility on the Parish Council had been re-allocated following the May 2019 elections. With regard to planning, the Parish Council was awaiting the decision on the outline planning applications for Combe Close, and was waiting to see if planning appeals would be made for Chilcombe House and Combe Hayes. The Parish Council has commissioned a memorial for John Lees, who did so much for the Parish and was a longstanding Chairman of the Parish Council. His wife is undertaking the work and many parishioners had expressed an interest in donating towards the memorial.

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT (CLERK TO THE COUNCIL)**

The Clerk presented the accounts for 2018 -2019. The closing balance at 31.3.19 was £7,396.00. She thanked Clive Raisey who had undertaken the audit work.

**6. VILLAGE AGENT: IZZY SYLVESTER**

Izzy Sylvester reported “village agents were working on Home First but they are seeing vulnerable people who have nothing. The role of village agents is problem solving and doing a lot of charitable fundraising as well. A Good Neighbours Scheme has been set up. The schemes are groups of local people who come together to offer a service in their community for those in need of help and support. In reality most of the people who benefit from the schemes are older people and those living with disabilities, learning difficulties, housebound or with serious short or long term health conditions. The schemes are not there to replace the work done by Social Services and other professional care agents. One of the first Parishes to set up such a scheme is Stogumber where it is working really well. “Talking Cafes” are continuing to prove popular, both in Williton and Minehead”.

In reply to a question about donating the winter fuel allowance to those in need of help, Izzy advised that Forum 21 handle this on behalf of the Somerset Community Foundation. This was started by people who wanted to donate their Winter Fuel Payment to help others in Somerset less fortunate than themselves.

Village Agents were also looking at innovative transport schemes. Community car schemes are helping older people but we are looking at younger people.

**7. PRESENTATIONS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

Representatives of local bodies gave a summary of the current activities of their organisations. These included: Flower Show Committee (Carole Darke); Royal British Legion (Lee Funnell); Church & PCC (Steve Pryde); Bicknoller Social Club (Christopher Leigh); Village Hall Committee (Dave Simpson); Bicknoller WI (report

circulated at meeting); Village Shop (David Croxton on behalf of Daphne Leggetter); and Neighbourhood Watch (Andrew Harrison).

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

David Croxton advised that Pumpings was being re-launched by the Village Hall Committee, it would be available on the Parish Council's website and he asked parishioners to let him have any information for inclusion.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm followed by refreshments.

Signed: .....

Chairman

Date: .....