

REPORT FROM ECCHINSWELL, SYDMONTON AND BISHOPS GREEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Your parish council held another meeting on the 8th June 2022 at Bishops Green Village Hall.

Derek Mellor your County Councillor joined us and gave his update. Although the County Council has no elections until 2025, the decision of the long-time leader, Keith Mans, to step down has led to some Cabinet restructuring and subsequent changes. Derek still has 3 years to go until the next election and in addition to being our Councillor, he also has the Chair of the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee and the Chair of Governance on the HIOW Fire Authority. Tom Thacker and Derek also sit on the Hampshire Pension Fund Board.

- Ukrainian Update; the VISA problems have largely dissipated and arrivals continue-c.2500 of the c63000 arrivals in the UK have headed to Hampshire at a time when we have not yet dispatched some of the Afghans who arrived last Autumn. Still the Ukrainians are settling quickly, well financed etc and pleased to report that we have already some working in the hospitality sector at a nearby golf course. No problems with schooling although this being monitored closely with the new school year entrants in September. Additional facilities such as free School Meals, settlement grants, even short-term bus travel being made to ensure they settle in. Should the Parish feel they have enough Ukraine visitors to warrant some dedicated local authority expenditure as we have now in a few areas, then HCC does have a sizeable sum to disperse to develop the local community.
- The County Councillor Grant Fund; this is not just to assist in the operating costs of say a Village Hall; it is paramount for new projects and Derek makes no apology for focussing on the youth with his funds. Purchase of sports kit etc being one example of supporting a charitable cause.
- Household Support Fund; on a bigger scale and considering that there are many households suffering in the current financial situation, HCC is party to the Household Support Fund to assist those with real problems on energy bills – although to date this does not include Liquid Gas or Oil.
- Climate Change Grants; on the subject of Energy; if there are any community projects developing energy, then there are now Grants for this under the Climate Change banner.

Attending a Fire Authority training night at Kingsclere, Derek was taken to task by the North Hampshire Commander RE: the lack of checking undertaken by the public in respect of smoke alarms. He went home and neither his wife nor himself could ever recall checking them over the past 10 years plus. He agreed to be an example and arranged for his and his neighbours to be checked and re installed if necessary (it is a free service by the Fire Rescue Service). Fire Engine arrived along with two

Firefighters and within a few minutes they had installed two new alarms to replace the old corroded “thing“ he had on the ceiling in the hall. Unfortunately, the neighbour was not so lucky, as the pump room by his swimming pool exploded the day before and the Fire Service had to respond in the normal manner. Please take Derek’s lead and get yours checked!

Further community consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan took place on Thursday 26th May, Friday 27th May and Saturday 28th May at the Ecchinswell and Bishops Green Village Halls and we would like to thank all those residents who joined us. Our objective was to share with you the key components of the emerging plan to make sure that we had taken account of the views you expressed last September and gain further insight in readiness for our submission. The next step is to produce the draft plan.

It has again come to the Parish Council’s attention that people are climbing the fencing around the allotments and using it for a shortcut. This is causing damage and is a concern for those renting the allotments. These are the only people allowed access to the site. Please help us by making others aware that this is not acceptable – the Parish Council will be looking at further measures to stop this.

Stiles to gates project: The footpath gates delivery has now been confirmed for 17th June and the HCC Ranger is available on 21st July and 25th August, so these are the dates the gates will be installed. Any volunteers who can help would be very much appreciated and should contact the clerk.

And finally, with the weather holding fine, the Jubilee party took place at Ecchinswell Village Hall on Saturday 4th June. It was well supported from across the whole Parish, and we would like to thank everyone who came and also all of those people who helped make it the success it was - a great deal of effort was made by the volunteers and fun and laughter was had by everyone.



Special thanks to those that dressed up in their 50s outfits, it was great to see.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 20th July 2022 at Ecchinswell Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. Please note this date is one week later than our usual schedule. Everyone is welcome.

Cllr Mark Stamp