

Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Parish Council

December 8th 2021 Meeting.

Members of the Parish Council (PC) met at 7.30pm at Ecchinswell Village Hall, including councillors from Basingstoke and Deane (B&D) and Hampshire.

Key discussion/action points were:

Borough and County Matters affecting our Parish/residents

- The B&D budget for 2022-2023 is now out for consultation. If accepted, then the increase in precept will be £5/month for a band D property.
- The B&D Local Plan Update, a key document outlining housing development allocations in the borough to 2039, is now going out to a consultation committee for consideration of the detail covering rural areas including our Parish. Our developing Neighbourhood Plan will need to keep in-step with this Update.
- The B&D Council web site now has pages dedicated to a Residents Tool Kit for Climate Change, please follow the link: [Residents Climate Change toolkit \(basingstoke.gov.uk\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/residents-climate-change-toolkit). You can variously get guidance for easy wins through to actions making a bigger difference.
- Hampshire County Council (HCC) is keen to promote a number of grants and schemes available through their web site. There are grants to make community buildings more energy efficient, funds to promote 'neighbourliness' such as to help tackle social isolation, as well as training investments up to £10k for local community support roles e.g. to be a parish clerk, or path warden (visit <https://hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list/parish-town-council-council-investment-fund>).
- HCC also has grants up to £5k for community groups for projects to reduce local waste production (<https://www.hants.gov.uk/waste-prevention-community>, as well as healthy food options and activities to those eligible during the school holidays (<https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/hants/>), and bids for top-up broadband support (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/project-gigabit-delivery-plan-summer-update> - available to mid-January).
- Action on road potholes by Hampshire Highways was discussed in the context of the never-ending problems of Hyde Lane. It appears that they give priority to holes that are in a residential area or are the cause of an accident that is reported to the Police.

ESBG Parish Council matters

- A new building development at Bishops Green has just been put forward by Hathor Properties looking to build approximately 50 homes on paddocks immediately north of Bishops Green and west of the Ecchinswell Road. This is at a preliminary stage although the land has been registered as a 'promoted site' EC004 for development. The developers are seeking an initial dialogue with the community, Parish and Borough Councillors about this site. The B&D site assessment for EC004 states 'due to its location in the countryside its development would not be in line with the borough's current planning framework'. Watch this space. We currently have approximately 550 new houses being proposed around Bishops Green
- The Parish Council is looking to increase the Parish precept by an increase of £8 a year for a band D property (80p/month). The PC has held back increases to a minimum for several years. However, the rising cost of commissioned services this year has inevitably forced a catch up in

charges. In particular, a number of local site and facility maintenance services, historically provided by volunteers, are now having to be paid for from commercial suppliers.

- Following the 3rd accident just south of the Enborne Bridge on the Ecchinswell Road, it is now expected that the Hampshire Highways will not start their proposed safety actions of line painting and moving chevron panels until the spring. The PC do not consider the proposed actions to be sufficient to minimise the risk of yet another dangerous accident. However, it appears we must wait to see whether the proposed traffic calming measures do increase driver caution in the area. Discussion about further safety measures included looking to campaign for a road chicane or speed camera at the location.
- The Parish's Neighbourhood Plan has now reached the stage of amassing technical/documentary evidence to support the housing and land use policies that have arisen from the community consultation meetings (http://www.ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk/Vision_and_Policies_developed_from_Community_Consultation_41649.aspx)The funding stream from central government to cover key costs associated with the development of the Plan was discussed because there is predicted to be an interval of a few months early next year when funding schemes close, before new ones open up in the new financial year in April. The PC agreed to cover any relevant costs arising through this period which would be recouped from the expected renewed funding.
- BGCA received £2k grant from Sovereign Housing to put towards the running costs of the youth club. This is good news as the club only survives because of charitable donations like this.
- The coffee morning held at the Ecchinswell Village Hall continues to be well supported. If you would like to come along then look for details of forthcoming events, including the Christmas Panto, at www.ecchinswellvillagehall.com.
- To celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Greenham Common Trust has provided a grant for communities to plant trees. We have been allocated 5 saplings; these will be planted at five sites around the Parish.
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee (extra Bank Holiday on Friday 3rd June 2022) was discussed further. Would the Parish be looking to organise a commemorative event? We welcome any ideas!
- The Parish Council is looking for a volunteer to join the PC to fill the present vacancy. If you would like to be considered for this role then do please make contact with the Parish Council clerk on clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk .

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 12th January at Ecchinswell Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. All welcome.

Paul Debenham ESBG Parish Councillor.