

Borough Councillor's Missive. November 2009

The Diary.

I missed a couple of meetings last month as we were in the USA but on returning found the overriding issues at Council are finances. I make no secret of some of the wasteful expenditure in our Council and we are doing everything we can to "stop the leaks". To this extent all Capital Expenditure is currently frozen pending a full review.

You may have seen us around the villages delivering preliminary leaflets on behalf of Chris Heaton-Harris. Chris as you may know is the Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Daventry Constituency. I have a lot of admiration for his courage in the European Parliament trying to stop the ridiculous expenditure that apparently makes our MPs expenses look like pocket money, I am still aghast that we in this Ward and Earls Barton are part of the Daventry Constituency. Perhaps the only good thing about it is that we are now co-joined with Overstone, so you can now put your passports away!

Council

People in the village of Sywell who were involved in Sywell Parish Council in the eighties, when I was a member, will recall the then Clerk Mike Scott. Mike recently retired from the Council, before his time. I would like to thank him for all of his efforts and wish him a happy retirement.

Planning

In my last Missive I noted that the "affordable homes" were not to a standard of sustainability that I would prefer, for the reasons of utility economies etc. But in the latest version of the WBC Newsletter The Link, I see that the new affordable homes in Bozeat involve the use of eco-measures such as Heat Pumps and Solar Panels, given that is the case, there can be no reason why the same should not be available to these homes in Sywell. Affordable homes are meant for the most vulnerable in our society and upfront costs are in my view less important than running costs.

The Decision on the Wellingborough North Public Inquiry was issued on 22nd October, well sort of!! Below is part of the text of the Secretary of State for Communities Decision Letter

*"22. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, the Secretary of State **is minded to agree** with the Inspector's recommendation to allow the appeal and grant planning permission.*

*23. The Secretary of State proposes **to defer** his final decision on your client's appeal to enable the provision of **a signed Council's Deed**. The Secretary of State proposes to allow 8 weeks from the date of this letter, i.e. to 17 December 2009, for the submission of this Deed and any accompanying representations which, if necessary, he will then circulate for comments, before proceeding to a final decision..... "I highlight the points of interest.*

Elected Members were surprised to hear about this Council Deed and have rightly and properly asked Officers to clarify the position. The question is, can the Deed be delayed until the General Election?

The full text of the Inquiry and the Decision are available electronically if you would like some light reading!!

West Northants Joint Planning Committee

A Meeting of the above Committee this month (November) has been cancelled the reason stated is as follows: *"An officer decision has been taken to cancel this Committee meeting as there are no decisions to be made at this point. Protracted negotiations with our statutory partners such as the Highways Agency, Natural England and Environment Agency continue, and the outcomes of these will be reported to committee in due course, as part of the plan making process. Processing of the responses to the Emergent Joint Core Strategy continues"*

As I mentioned last month there is little appetite in the Conservative group on this committee for the enormous volumes of development projected by the Labour Government. So let's hope this is all "held" until after the General Election.

Parish Councils

I attended the Ecton Parish Council meeting in November the detailed Minutes are available on the web site. Ecton P.C. has for a number of years had Sywell Aerodrome item on its Agenda and we discussed at length the current position of the JCC, the Sywell Wood issue and of course the vexed question of the runway position. It is interesting to note that there was a poll held in the village with respect to Policy T13, this is the Policy enabling Sywell Aerodrome to expand (with many caveats). The poll produced a very interesting result: *"There was a response of some 73% of the electorate. Of that number there was an overwhelming 92% who voted **AGAINST** Policy T 13"*. At the end of P.C. meeting I was given the overwhelming support of the Parish Council in my actions and intentions towards Sywell Aerodrome. I will continue to do the best I can.

Sywell Aerodrome

By the time you read this we will have completed (hopefully) the second meeting of the JCC it may start to take shape but it will need a lot more effort. We need all the help we can get from the public.

With respect to the company they have now apparently crystallised their allegations against me for alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, due to the process I have yet to see the details and will report once I have seen them.

In the meantime the company has issued invoices against WBC and myself apparently for wasting theirs and their consultants time. Any vexatious allegations will be comprehensively defended. None of these activities would have been necessary had the company complied fully with the Management Agreement and the advice of their Consultants, not breached the Management Agreement and complied with the requirement of "Public Consultation", now confirmed by the FC.

As ever if you have any queries please contact me and remember, I cannot help you if I do not know of your problem.

Jim Bass

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This Missive can now be seen on the following web sites:

www.ectonvillage.co.uk

www.mearsashbyparishcouncil.com