

# **Borough Councillor's Missive. May 2010**

## **The Diary.**

The General Election, what a result! Do we now have more problems than if Gordon Brown was still P.M. I think not, but we certainly have some interesting bed mates. Chris Heaton-Harris won at a canter and whilst it was a new parliamentary constituency the majority was enormous, so good luck Chris. We were reasonably sure that Chris would get in so I was "posted" to other constituencies, in particular to help my old colleague Peter Bone at Wellingborough. They say every little helps but Peter dramatically increased his majority back to the proportions when Peter Fry was our MP. I also helped Michael Ellis in the Northampton North seat this was a touch and go constituency and needed a lot of graft but eventually it paid off and I see Michael has already made his first TV interview the other day. I know that our constituency is very large and this was stressed to me in no uncertain terms by many during the campaign, I well remember delivering in Earls Barton on the last Saturday and was just reaching the end of King Street when I heard a loud shout "Hey you stop!" I immediately looked for my colleague thinking we could make a quick getaway down the alleyway like we used to do as kids... then remembered I'm sixty five next month!! So reluctantly conceded I would have to use my brain. It seems this guy was really upset about "being in Daventry" when I explained to him it was the Daventry Parliamentary Constituency as redefined by the Labour Government some years ago not part of Daventry! He calmed down which was rather pleasing because he was 6ft 19!!!!. But there is a thought here and that is, I wonder if we could change the Constituency name to say Mid Northamptonshire.

The issue of Fly-Tipping is frequently brought home to me both by residents and what I see with my one eyes. So it is somewhat frustrating to learn that some of the "tips" in the area are to have reduced opening hours, in particular the one at Wollaston which will only be open five days a week and there will be no facility for leaving rubbish adjacent to it. In our area we should be alright because the Ecton Site will remain open for seven days and will improve its sorting techniques etc.

Against this background my wife and I have been slowly "de-cluttering" (what a word) our bungalow and sometime ago when we were removing some units my wife had the idea of placing the units at the top of our drive with a note saying "**Free, please take**". Surprisingly the items disappeared within a day! Recently we did the same thing but it was around 8pm when we put a drawer unit at the top of the drive, by 7:30am the following morning it had gone! Food for thought, someone may be able to use items you may not want so in our own little way we helped someone and reduced the amount of material going to the tip.

## **Council**

The new Mayor of Wellingborough, Councillor Lora Lawman was invested this month amidst the usual pageantry. Lora is a very good friend of ours but I am not sure that we will see much of her this year as not only will she have a very heavy diary but she also works full time. Lora was born in Hannover and is the first none English or Colonial to be elected mayor. Indeed the mayor (or should I say Burgermeister) of our twin town Wittlich in Germany was at the ceremony. At the dinner he gave a speech in excellent English. We wish Lora all the best for her mayoral year.

## **Partnership Review**

We had a joint presentation by a G.P. and a PCT Executive this month. Plans are well advanced to create a minor injury unit for the Isebrook Hospital, dependent on a clinical needs review. We saw the architect's drawings and the unit could well be built in 2011. There is no doubt that we need an alternative to Northampton but getting to Isebrook will probably be just as difficult but hopefully unlike Northampton, parking should not be a major issue.

## **Planning**

At this month's Planning Meeting we had a number of retrospective planning applications in front us. This is becoming an all too often occurrence and I as well as a number of colleagues are very

frustrated that not only members of the community but the so called professionals, architects and developers use this methodology to exert unnecessary pressure on the members of the committee. In particular, one application in Mears Ashby had been opposed by the Parish Council, a view I totally supported at the Planning Committee. However even after a site visit the Planning Committee approved the application in retrospect, although the voting was 3 for 2 against and two abstentions, so very close! Here however is the dilemma, if the application had been rejected the decision would almost certainly be overturned under Appeal because the Inspector has little interest in whether it is retrospective or current. He/she is merely tasked with considering the proper use of the land and local planning policies. I am going to propose a Motion to Council to the effect that charges for retrospective applications should all incur a "penalty cost". We also look forward to the proposed changes in the Planning Laws by the new Government.

### **Sywell Aerodrome**

I read with interest the note in the last issue of the Overstone and Sywell Village Magazine from an anonymous "Sywell Resident". I would like to invite that resident to come and see me or at least give me a call as there are clearly issues he/she has and I would like to discuss them. Perhaps this is also the time to recapitulate where we are or more specifically where I am. During my election and whenever asked I always stated that I was not against the aerodrome nor was I against the all weather runway. I, like many, were shocked at the death of Paul Morgan and if only 1% was caused by the grass runway then that was enough reason to have an all weather version. That said I also stated that I was against significant increase in commercialisation. However many, if not most of the people who my team spoke to during the last part of my election campaign stated they wanted me (if elected) to "do something about the aerodrome", so my final leaflet dropped into every home in the Ward has a statement that reads "***Listen and understand your views about Sywell Aerodrome and ask the difficult questions***". The fact that the Managing Director refused to speak to me just after my election, is reason enough to suggest that it was not me who was unwilling to discuss the position. Indeed only recently the MD cancelled a meeting with another Borough Councillor and Chris Heaton-Harris just two hours before it was due to start! The JCC is still a great cause for concern as its functionality is at best described as "stuttering". The Aerodrome still does not have a proper Flight Protocol and helicopters generally ignore the UK VFR Flight Guide 2010. These are all Planning Conditions.

I have met with the lawyer charged with investigating the Code of Conduct Complaint made against me by the MD of SAL. I spent four hours with her following her draft report. I had indicated that I was not prepared to meet her until after the documentation for the Court Case had been lodged with the Court. I have read the draft report as has the MD but since the contents are at the moment confidential I cannot discuss the details. But here is the point, how much has this **cost you the taxpayer?**

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

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

[www.ectonvillage.co.uk](http://www.ectonvillage.co.uk)

[www.mearsashbyparishcouncil.com](http://www.mearsashbyparishcouncil.com)