

# MICHELDEVER PARISH COUNCIL

# NEWSLETTER

December 2019

## **Chairman's Report**

*William Helen*

The Parish Council hope that you find this free copy of the Dever informative and a useful update on the Council's activities and support across the Parish. I would like to thank the Parish Councillors, City Councillors and Hampshire County Councillor for their support and efforts to maintain an active and living community, safe for us to live in.

## **Affordable Housing**

Winchester City Council (WCC) have recently conducted a call for sites for commercial housing development as part of their Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) process. The parish council remains opposed to more commercial housing under the SHELAA process. However, due to the high cost of housing in this area, the Parish Council has traditionally been supportive of identifying opportunities for additional affordable housing in the parish. This is so that local residents who cannot afford to buy or rent locally will not be forced to move away. Affordable houses are homes that can be rented or part bought. The reason for providing new affordable housing is to help local people of all ages stay within, or return to, their parish and so contribute to village life and the local businesses and services it provides. People with a genuine local connection to the parish are given priority for these homes.

The parish council is therefore sending out a Housing Needs Survey to assess the demand and gauge the level of community support for new affordable homes in the parish. We are

doing so in partnership with Winchester City Council (WCC) and a Rural Housing Enabler from Action Hampshire. We should stress that at this stage no decisions have been made. Next steps will depend on the outcomes of this survey and will be subject to further discussions with residents. This is a very important issue that we as a community have to face, so please take time to fill in this survey. Even if no one in your household or family has a housing need, we want to know your views.

## **Wheelabrator Application**

As many of you may now be aware Wheelabrator are proposing to create a waste to energy facility (incinerator) on land north of the A303, adjacent to the Raymond Brown Enviropark. The site would use the A303 to access the road network. The electricity connection to the grid would be approximately 7km away. The proposed facility would burn up to 500,000 tonnes of waste per annum, which would arrive by road, the boiler house would be up to 46m tall and the chimneys up to 80m high. Whilst not in this Parish the development, if allowed, would still have implications which could impact locally such as the air quality, the visual impact and the increase in traffic movements.

The Parish Council are in receipt of updates on the proposal and will be agreeing a response to this stage of the consultation process at the December meeting.

## **Parking in Micheldever Station**

The Parish Council has, for many years, sought to try to balance the requirement for safe parking with the needs of residents and to deal with issues around obstructive parking and speeding on residential roads.

The City and Parish Councils were aware that South Western Railway were investigating creating a car park on the land behind the New Road allotments and, in late June, an update was received from SWR to this effect. It was a surprise to find out in September, from residents of New Road, that a surveyor had been commissioned to survey for a much larger car park incorporating the allotment land. This naturally caused concern amongst New Road residents who would be most affected but it also raised concerns that additional commuters would be encouraged to travel from Micheldever Station.

Notice has now been received from the land agents, and confirmed by SWR, that this scheme is no longer being taken forward.

## **Village Design Statement**

Thank you to the residents who commented on the draft Village Design Statement. A revised draft, incorporating many of the suggestions made by residents will be submitted to Winchester Planning Department for a further review to ensure that it is compatible with the Local Plan and can be formally adopted

## **Forestry England Operations**

Over the Winter Forestry England have advised that they will be carrying out work at Micheldever Woods, Itchen Woods and Blackwood Forest. The works are designed to help tackle tree disease and encourage more natural regeneration of native species but will result in the closure of some paths and trails. A longer article, providing more detail, is on the Parish Council website at

[www.micheldeverparish.org.uk](http://www.micheldeverparish.org.uk) and more information is also available by contacting [southern.reception@forestryengland.uk](mailto:southern.reception@forestryengland.uk)

## **Hedges and Overhanging Trees**

Now is the time to look at any parts of your property boundary which meet the road edge. All growth of hedges and trees should be cut back behind the road edge, allowing room for growth next season. Growth should be clear to a height of sixteen feet vertically. If this was enforced fully throughout the Parish major tree and hedge work would be required, so please do your utmost to comply with this requirement. The PC can provide guidance and advice if you need clarity.

## **Road Signs**

In the past HCC has had adequate funds to go above and beyond their call of duty and clear many areas of foliage, including hedges obscuring signs. With increased pressure on funds this cannot continue and any signs obscured with foliage are the responsibility of the owner or manager of such a hedge and need to be trimmed back to allow clear vision for road users. Again, your vigilance in this would be appreciated.

## **Grit Bins**

Grit bins around the Parish should now have been refilled. If you know of any that have been missed please email me the number (inside the lid) and I will ask for it to be refilled.

As many of our roads are not gritted by HCC, they have supplied these bins to help keep the roads clear of ice.

Please remember the grit is for highways use and not private use. If the grit is found to be being used for private paths and drives HCC may refuse to refill the bin.

*Olly Bramley, Chair of Highways*

[olive.bramley@micheldeverparish.org.uk](mailto:olive.bramley@micheldeverparish.org.uk)

## **Fireworks, Thatched Roofs & Animals**

With fireworks no longer confined to the 5th November but used at celebrations throughout the year please be conscious of any neighbouring thatched properties, take sensible precautions and warn the occupants if you intend to use fireworks. If a thatched roof does ignite the results are rapid and devastating. Similarly, please show consideration for dogs, horses and other animals which may become distressed by the noise of fireworks and warn neighbours in advance if you are planning an event.

## **DOG FOULING – AGAIN!**

This issue has been raised many times before but the problem persists and is particularly dangerous where children play and take part in sports activities. The open space areas in our parish are for recreational purposes and are not public toilets for dogs.

It is an offence punishable by a fixed penalty notice of £50 to allow your dog to foul in a public area. If the fixed penalty is ignored a £1000 fine can be imposed by the court. Ignorance of your dog's actions is not a permissible defence so, if necessary, please consider keeping your dog on a lead until they have completed their business.

Around the country, and closer to home, pitches are being fenced off, bye laws enacted and CCTV installed due to the scourge of dog waste, please do not make any of these actions necessary in your community.

If you witness a dog owner not clearing up after their pet please call 01962 848350 during office hours or e-mail [ehealth@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:ehealth@winchester.gov.uk). Further detail is available on the village website.

## **The Dove Inn**

The Parish Council applied to register the Dove Inn as an Asset of Community Value on behalf of a group of residents who wish to make a

community bid for the premises. Please find below a summary of the results of the survey conducted by the residents group.

### ***Results from the Dove Inn Survey – what the community said***

A huge thank you to all of you who took the time to complete the recent questionnaire posted through your doors with regards to the Dove Inn. The results are in and below is a brief summary of how you use the Dove now, what else you would like to see the Dove offer and how you would feel if the Dove Inn closed.

#### *How you use the Dove Inn now?*

Over 50% of the local community use the Dove Inn at least fortnightly, if not more often. 94% of the local community believed it is important to have a pub in Micheldever Station. 63% have made use of the guest rooms upstairs for when friends and family come to stay.

The three most important facilities of the Dove Inn as voted for by the local community were catering (77%), the family friendly area (60%), with Guest rooms and the Garden & Play area ranking equally (47%).

#### *What you would like to see at the Dove Inn?*

From the categories provided in the survey, the three most popular services the local community would like to see available at the Dove Inn were a Post Office service (74%), groceries/amazon collection point (52%) and a taxi service (also 52%).

Additional facilities the community would like to see at the Dove Inn included meals to be served at any time, for breakfast to be available, a shop for essentials, for the ability to allow commuters to park for cheaper during the business day, a small library/book donation area and film/dvd nights.

With regards to catering in the future, the local community indicated that Sunday lunch at 80% was the most popular catering option to be available, with Saturday lunch and Saturday dinner at 67%, weekday dinner at 60%, Sunday

dinner at 43% and weekday lunch at 40%. In addition, suggestions from the local community included BBQs, a curry night, a regular pizza van and weekend breakfast/brunch.

*How the local community would feel if the Dove Inn closed?*

We received a clear message from the local community through the survey that they would be “devastated” and “desperately sad” if the Dove Inn was to close. Comments included “Disappointed! Here in Micheldever Station there is not a post office, shop or church and now we’re losing the pub?”. “Very sad as it’s integral to the village”. “Very sad, disconnected from the community” and “Sad it has always been there. Please keep it open for local job opportunities.”

Thank you again to all those who completed the survey. If you would like a copy of the survey, please email [suebell0906@gmail.com](mailto:suebell0906@gmail.com) or [sarah\\_huck@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarah_huck@hotmail.co.uk).

## **Local Bus Service**

With much regret, Mervyn Annetts has informed us and Hampshire County Council that his coach company will be discontinuing their public bus services at the end of the year, with the last day planned for 30th December.

It is very disappointing that the combination of reduced subsidies and number of passengers has meant that the services are no longer sustainable, and recent additional requirements by the County Council have added to the challenges. Despite best efforts to encourage people to use the services whenever they can, this can be difficult when people need flexibility and the loss of services is an all too common fate for bus links in rural areas across the country. Sadly the loss of such services increases isolation for those who rely on the bus as their own means of transport – despite tackling loneliness being a stated priority across political parties. The County Council have not yet confirmed what services will be offered in place of the Mervyn’s Coaches routes, but it is unlikely to offer such a reliable and professional service as Mervyn and his team have provided to our villages over many decades, for which we pass on our thanks and look forward to continuing to see their coaches around the roads on excursions and private hires. I do hope that as many as possible will take the opportunity to travel on one of their services a final time in the run-up to Christmas to thank them personally.

*Andrew Adams*