

For CMS Newsletter December

Parish Council Meeting 12th November 2013

The Chair opened the meeting at 19:35hrs and apologised for the late start. He welcomed the invited guests from Festival Housing and local Councillor Tony Johnson.

Festival Housing Manager Claire and Housing Options Manager Gay invited questions from Councillors regarding the Buryfields and Leys estates in Cradley. It was pointed out by Councillor Nason that there was a general misconception that problems experienced were always attributed to Buryfields when in fact the vast majority were directly a result of residents of the Leys.

Both officers from Festival stated that according to their records there were very few problems to either area. Members of the Council stressed that their records were indeed inaccurate and that problems experienced by residents in the area showed this clearly. The officers stated that any tenant who contravened their lease agreements would face possible eviction as a result. Festival were requested to provide information(not at hand) on exactly how many evictions had resulted from tenants due to their behaviour, this they agreed to provide.

It was clear from further discussions that the Housing associations measure of "problems" was based on their receiving reports of incidents from the Police. This clearly was not happening as the number of incidents "known" to residents was not reflected in the reports received by Festival.

It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between your Council, Festival Housing and other involved Housing groups and the Police to improve the lines of communication and seek resolution to the problems being experienced by residents.

Councillor Johnson reported to your Council on the on-going problems over finance being experienced by Councils throughout the Country and especially in Herefordshire. He stated that Council tax was likely to increase in February by 1.9% and not by the 5% needed as such a rise would entail the Council in costs exceeding £130,000 to stage a referendum if such a rise was set only to go back to the 1.9% anyway. Very prudent! Tony laid out where Herefordshire Council were making the necessary cutbacks and the full details can be found on the council web site at www.cradleyparishcouncil.org.uk. He brought the cost of meeting their legal obligations on welfare into sharp relief by quoting that it costs the Council in the region of £4,000 per week to keep someone who requires 24 hr attendance. Looking after 5 such people(quite rightly) would eat up over £1m per year out of the budgets. It is the pressures of having to maintain such much needed services that requires that other services are being cut.

It was raised by your Council that we were experiencing extreme difficulties in communication or receiving satisfactory responses for the Herefordshire's new contractors despite their having taken

over some two months previous, Balfour Beattie. Tony agreed that it was not acceptable and offered to look into the reasons and get back to us with answers.

Your Chair has been chasing Balfour Beattie in regards to the problems of the pathway to Pound Bridge but as yet has received little response from the. It is feared that with the onset of winter more erosion will be experienced increasing the danger of an accident due to unsafe barriers.

The recent meeting at Cradley Village Hall regarding the Neighbour Development Plan was well attended with much interest in being involved by several at the meeting. The NDP group have sought guidance on the way forward based on the Parish Plan and it is hoped that things will drive forward once this has occurred. Anyone interested in the NDP can get information from the web Site www.cradleynp.org

With winter approaching how about lifting the lid on a yellow roadside bin and letting us know if it needs filling with salted grit so we can make sure they are topped up? Call Chris on 01886 880282 or one of your Concillors.

Sand bags for residents are supplied free for those who may have problems with flooding. They are now stored on the Red Lion car park for collection. Why not pop in and have a pint with Andy and Kim while you are there?

The Chair noted that the Village now has an online Diary of events and meeting taking part in the three Villages and recommended its usefulness since the closure of the shop and post office.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21:30hrs

Note there is **No Parish Council meeting in December** but we are back on 14th January 2014 in Storridge Village Hall