

A SPECIAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WAS HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL,  
STATION ROAD COUNTRESTHORPE ON WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2005 AT  
7.30 PM. WHEN THERE WERE PRESENT: -

Chairman	Mr. A. Collis-Smith
Vice-Chairman & County Councillor	Mr. D. Jennings
Mesdames:	J. Jennings, J. Weatherstone
Messrs:	D. Duffield, F.E. Duffield, M. Gillespie, K. Mason I. Paterson, M. Smith
Mrs. J. Adcock	Clerk to the Council
Mrs. P. Mount	Deputy Clerk to the Council

Invited Guests from Blaby District Council:

Cllr. D.R. Clements Quality Services & Parish/Town Council Partnerships,  
Mr. P. Clarke Head of Planning,  
Mr. J. Wells, Environmental Health Department,  
Mrs. P. Gould Community Development Co-ordinator.

There were 26 members of the public present.

2005/181. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Were received from Mr. D. Ball, Mr. T. Blood, Mrs. C. James, Mr. A. Clifford, Cllr. Webster-Williams and Cllr. G. Jackson Blaby District Council.

2005/182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA

Listed below are Councillors who wished to declare an interest in the following:-

Planning Matters:-

Mrs. J. Weatherstone (Planning Blaby District Council)  
Mr. F.E. Duffield (Planning Blaby District Council)  
Mr. D. Jennings (Planning Blaby District Council, Leicestershire County Council)

Village Hall

Mr. D. Jennings – Chairman of Committee for Registration of Civil Weddings (L.C.C.)

## 2005/183. CHAIRMANS WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed the guests and parishioners to the meeting.

He stated that the questionnaire circulated to all Parishioners had been well received and the results of this had been published in the Countesthorpe Herald. An action plan has been drawn up to deal with points raised from the questionnaire and a mammoth task lay ahead. To-nights meeting to discuss planning and environmental issues is the first to be held to address questions raised by the questionnaire. Further meetings to discuss other issues raised are being organized for the new year – Youth Issues – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2006: Traffic & Highways, Crime & Disorder, Policing – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2006: Health and Welfare date to be arranged for June 2006.

Improvements with regard to communications are on going. A web-site and information booklet should be available in the New Year.

The invited guests were then asked to address the meeting.

Mr. Clarke, Head of Planning gave a brief outline of planning within the District and explained that Blaby District Council was responsible for all applications with the exception of minerals/waste issues and any land owned by Leicestershire County Council.

Leicestershire County Council is responsible for the Structure Plan. The Regional Document will be replacing the Structure Plan eventually after being revised. Housing requirements in Blaby District were low and therefore it was not anticipated that this would impinge on the green wedge. Brown field sites would be used. It is an unknown quantity but the change in the Structure Plan is likely to increase requirements.

Mr. Wells, Environmental Health stated that the department were divided into three sections:

- Health & Safety Team
- Environmental Protection
- Commercial Team

## 2005/184. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN THE VILLAGE AS A RESULT OF THE VILLAGE PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Q Mr. D. Jennings: Litter/grass cutting – Who sets the standards for verges, general grass cutting and litter picking?

A Mr. J. Wells: Rural road verges are cut by the County Council. Other areas cut by the District Council are litter picked prior to mowing (about 15 times and year) and an inspection is carried out afterwards.

Q Rev. M. Gillespie: Toilets – The existing facility is out of date and therefore not suitable. What can Blaby District Council do to redress this situation?

A Mr. Wells: Inappropriate activities had been reported and therefore the toilets had been closed. Whether or not to open the toilets again is under review.

Q Rev. M. Gillespie: Why not introduce self clean toilets?

A Any request should be forwarded to Mr. J. Holden, Blaby District for consideration.

Q Mr. I. Paterson: Conservation – how does Blaby District decide what can/cannot be developed within the Conservation Area e.g. there is development currently on-going behind the old school rooms in Main Street and yet permission has been refused for the demolition of an old derelict barn in Green Lane.

A Mr. Clarke: Good use is being made of the old school building and the new build to the rear of the premises is in keeping. No decision has been taken with regards to the derelict barn. This barn comes within the listing of the main farm building and this is taken into consideration when such a decision is made.

Q Mr. J. Painter: Concern with regard to traffic in The Square/Main Street/Church Street. Could the priority be changed?

A Mr. Clarke: The District Council is not responsible for Highway Matters. This should be referred to the County Council Highways Department.

Q Mrs. S. Taylor: Concern with regard to traffic at the Cosby Road/Willoughby Road cross road. Could priority be changed?

A Mr. Clarke: Again this matter should be referred to the County Council Highways Department.

Q Mrs. E. Cooke: One suggestion to alleviate the problem at The Square/Main Street/Church Street would be to introduce a one-way system e.g. traffic should turn left into Central Street.

The Chairman felt that although a meeting has been arranged to discuss highway matters in the New Year a letter should be sent expressing these views.

Q Mr. K. Mason: As there is a shortage of recreational land in Countesthorpe what can Blaby District Council do for the village?

A Mr. Clarke: There are quite a lot of recreational facilities in the village for young people in Countesthorpe. Recreational land is hard to come by and only usually becomes available when a new housing development is built.

Q Mr. K. Mason: There are no walking parks in the village. Requests for a new walk way along the old railway line to Hospital Lane have been made to the District but nothing has transpired.

A Mr. Clarke: Issues with regard to the purchase of the land had caused difficulties.

Q Mr. I. Paterson: Thousands of miles of disused railway lines around the country have been made into walk ways, why not in Countesthorpe?

A Mr. Clarke: If difficulties arise with regard to owners not being willing to sell land etc. nothing can be done.

A Mrs. P. Gould said that she was unaware of this issue but would look into the matter.

Q Mr. D. Duffield: What is the position with the 'green belt'?

A Mr. Clarke: In this area the land between settlements is referred to as a 'green wedge'.

Q Mr. D. Duffield: How will the 'green wedge' be affected by the new regional directions?

A The Regional Body only tells the District how many houses are required. It is the Districts responsibility to decide where houses should be built.

Q Mr. Painter: Why are neighbours objections ignored when an infill development is proposed?

A Mr. Clarke: Decisions are made on good sound planning grounds. Neighbours objections are taken into consideration but are not the overriding decision. There is usually local consultation.

Q Mr. M. Smith: Local opportunities for employment need to be encouraged so why build houses on industrial land e.g. Regent Road.

A Mr. Clarke: There is a poor demand for industrial units. No allocation for employment has been made in the Local Plan. Industrial premises near to residential properties can cause problems.

Q Mr. K. Mason: Have any plans been made for Park and Ride sites near to Countesthorpe?

A The District Council is only consulted on this matter. The final decision lies with the County Council and City Council.

Q Mr. Painter: What is planned to alleviate the problems of road congestion at motorway networks.

A Mr. Clarke: Options are being looked at by the Highways Agency but a full consultation has not taken place. This should happen in March of next year.

Q Mr. K. Mason: What is going to happen when the decriminalization of car parks and on street parking is taken over the District?

A Mr. Clarke: Blaby District is talking to the County Council about ways forward.

Q Mr. M. Smith: How can we ensure that any future development takes into account low-cost housing and housing for the elderly.

A Mr. Clarke: A survey was commissioned and a demand was found for small affordable housing. On sites of above 25 dwellings 30% should be allocated for affordable housing. The threshold needs to be looked at and increased.

Q Mrs. E. Cooke: Fly-tipping – What action can the District Council take to prevent further fly-tipping in the village and what measures do Blaby District Council take to help combat this problem.

A Mr. Wells: To deter fly-tipping the District use resources such as mobile CCTV units, signage, confidential reporting systems etc. 43 fixed penalty notices have been issued since April 2005. Resources are focused on known sites, so reporting of problems is essential.

Q Mrs. E. Cooke: Could the District request that the permit system for tipping be removed to encourage people to use the tip? Access to the Whetstone site is poor could this be improved or another access found?

A Mr. Wells: The District has been in consultation with the County Council about problems of access to the tip. The Enderby Road is the busiest single carriageway road in the country. Parish Councils may be asked to take over serving fixed penalty notices on offenders. In addition it is hoped that offenders may be made to clean up the mess.

Q Mr. K. Jones: The service provided by the Parish Council litter pickers is very good. Who is responsible for the litter in the hedge rows around the Schools?

A Mr. Wells: It is the responsibility of the District Council.

Q I. Paterson: Household recycling is excellent. Is it possible to have the recycling bins removed from the Co-op?

A Mr. Wells: The use of the bins is monitored and if they are underused they will be removed.

Q Mrs. E. Cooke: Were the objections to another take-away in the village taken into consideration when planning permission was applied for?

A Mr. P. Clarke: Take-aways cannot be refused because there are others in the vicinity. Noise, fumes, traffic increase etc. are taken into consideration.

Q Mr. I. Paterson: Oadby & Wigston Borough Council have produced a guide to planning regulations. Would it be a good idea if Blaby did the same?

A Blaby like to take each case on its own merit. Overall guide lines can cause confusion. Some information is available and this will be sent to the Parish Office.

Q Mr. K. Jones: The dog bin service in the village is very good but who recommends new ones?

A Mr. Wells: The Parish Council usually make requests to the District.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed ..... Clerk to the Council

Dated ..... 2005