MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT THE PAVILION, ALANS WAY, NEWBOLD VERDON ON 17TH MAY 1993

PRESENT
CHAIRMAN M W Preston
COUNCILLORS H M Francks, PA Hurst, M B Mansley, G Law, D Colledge, P Orrick, R Watson, S Spence
BOROUGH COUNCILLOR J Crooks
CLERK E A Walsh
PARISHIONERS 4

APOLOGIES None

MINUTES The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 1992, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING None

BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT The Best Kept allotment Award of a personalised shield and gift voucher was presented to Mr Fred Robinson by Mr A Hurst.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT The past year seemed to me to have been a rather uneventful one, a year of consolidation rather than progress.

One or two points I made last year have still not taken root or have been acted upon.

1. The planting of a boundary hedge at the cemetEry still needs to be done.

2. The Hall Farm Project still in the melting pot.

3. The County Council still refusing to provide us with a permanent library. Perhaps with a free spending control at County Hall now a distinct possible we may get lucky. Our new County Councillor might like to take this on board for us.

During the year another developer came up with a very controversial plan to develop land at the rear of Desford Road. In the plan was the offer of more playing field space and a woodland site to be dedicated to the village. This project, like the Hall Farm, has been bound up in the Leicestershire structure plan and still no positive decisions have been made.

There still appears to be a certain amount of pressure for further sports facilities and we shall no doubt be turning our thoughts to these pressures in the future.

We welcome the Borough Council's decision to continue with the environmental scheme in the Parish, and welcome their vision in refurbishing the iron railing fence at the front of the Old Rectory, several of these schemes can be seen in North West Leicester District, particularly with older properties. Our own refurbishing of the War Memorial fence will no doubt enhance the old village centre.

We have once again entered the B.K.V.C. and hope for better results this next year (1993).

Last year we were not selected in the draw for the Radio Leicester Quiz, however this year we meet Market Bosworth - Cadeby at Market Bosworth on June 30th 1993. The team will be the same which were winners in 1990 and runners up in 1991. Our participation is organised by the Parish Council and if any aspiring masterminds

would like to be considered for future years they should contact myself or the Clerk.

Finally I would like to make mention of the possibility of a change or otherwise in local government. As many of you may know there is at the present time a review into the running of local government. I have now attended twomeetings and presentations given by the County Council. At both these meetings the impression has been given that should the County Council be the major authority, Parish Councils would be given a greater participating role than at the present time.

The Borough Council meeting which I attended was a very low key affair, and 2 parishes were represented and the officers of the Borough Council made it quite clear that if they are the major authority, Parish Councils would have no more powers than at the present time, indeed they declared that the County were not telling the complete truth. With these conflicting views I am still not sure which camp we need to be in, if any. We must await the outcome with great interest.

To conclude, I extend my thanks to the Clerk and Mrs Tomblin who stood in for the Clerk on two occasions. Also to my Vice-Chairman - Helen and to all members of the Parish Council for your support during the past year.

PRECEPT — The Clerk gave a report on the precept for 1993/4 and highlighted the major items of expenditure. The total precept was £26654

ANNUAL REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MRS M J CROOKS

MAY 1993

I have just completed my sixth year as Borough Councillor for the Newbold Verdon Ward. During the past 12 months I have served on the Housing Committee and Health & Leisure Committee. I am also a member of the working party set up to look into the problems with designation of Gypsy/Itinerant sites. I am a member of the Housing Committee working party, Housing Benefit Revue Board, Appeal Committee and I regularly interview Tenants on the Rent Arrears Interviewing Board.

Before I report on the various committees I must make a short comment. The past year has been one I would not wish to go through again, but because council business has been disrupted time and again and at nearly every meeting, it has to be reported. The civic year started with a special meeting called by the Principal Chief Officer Alan Cleary. He stated that a Councillor had used his position on the Health & Leisure Committee to obtain employment on a scheme to build Leisure Facilities at Canary Wharf in London. (the Councillor in question is a free-lance Leisure Consultant) The outcome of the meeting was that the said councillor was removed as a member of the Health & Leisure Committee against his will. The information against him was obtained through an investigating agency posing as'Berkeley Investments' The special meeting was later proved to be illegal and the Councillor was reinstated, but from that initial mistake evidence of further misconduct came to light and the Principal Chief Officer finally resigned. We are still waiting for the final costing to the council both in time and money, we are also waiting for the District Auditors Report on the Trickle Transfer of Council Houses to an Housing Association. Enough of that, however should anyone wish to ask any questions about this matter, I shall be glad to speak to them at the er of the meeting.

HEALTH & LEISURE

The nine largest villages in the Borough including Barlestone and Newbold Verdon are to have modules for the collection of Glass, Paper and Cans. Hopefully these modules will be installed within the next few weeks. The success of this scheme will determine whether the smaller villages will be included at a later date.
Domestic Refuse is now taken to Bradgate instead of Nuneaton at an extra cost of £11K.
The work on the Ashby Canal Project has continued throughout the year, completion of repairs to the Towpaths, new signs giving details of the flora and forna have been erected and the land boardering the canal has been declared a conservation area. The Council successfully prevented British Waterways from demolishing one of the bridges over the canal on the grounds that it was too expensive to repair, funds were obtained from various bodies to pay for the repairs. The council are involved in an advisory capacity with North West Leicestershire District Council to reclaim the canal as far as Measham. This is a long term project. Last year the Council purchased an extra peice of land adjacent to Burbage Woods known as the Elmsthorpe Plantation this extends the Common and Woods by 21.41 acres, a valuable asset.
A new synthetic Floodlit Pitch is to be made at Earl Shilton by the way of grants from the Sports Council, Borough Council involvment was by way of determining the best area for the project. Members from some Rural wards objected the £40K cost to the Borough being borne by the Whole area and asked for it to come out of "Special Expenses". The vote was lost and so the Borough as a whole will share the expense.
The New Toilets at Earl Shilton are due to be installed shortly and a new Attended Toilet with baby changing facilities is to be built on the Car Park, Station Road Hinckley later this year.

HOUSING

The Government decided some time ago that Local Authorites would become "Enablers" instead of "Providers" of Social Housing. The Housing Investment programme allowance has been drastically cut making it impossible for councils to build any new homes without raising rent levels to pay for the schemes. Land in council ownership is to ..... be "Gifted" to Housing Associations in return for the letting rights (using the Councils own Waiting list). Tenants of property belonging to a Housing Association will not have the right to buy and the properties will stay in the rented sector in perpetuity. The rent levels are termed"more realistic" at more than double the rents of local authority homes. The "Trickle Transfer" of void council properties continues and 55 homes have been transferred up to the end of February. As I said earlier, we are still awaiting the District Auditors report on the legallity of the way the decision was made to "go down this road". Members from the two Tenants Associations in the Borough lobby'd the council regularly over the year for special meetings to discuss the future of social housing. A meeting between the members of the Tenants Associations and the Housing Cmmittee to place in February which was a great success and further meetings are to be held at least three times a year, one in the rural area and two at the Council Offices. The council are to continue with updating and modernising of council homes, but as the number of council owned properties fall rents will rise to pay for the refurbishment and repair of the remaining properties. The rise this year is 8% well over 6% more that the rate of inflation.

PLANNING

As a member of the working party, formed to discuss the provision of a local authority site for itinerants, we learned from the County Council liaison Officer that if Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council succeeded in its bid for designation, the council would be able to defend any future planning appeals with greater effect. We were told at a later meeting that the Government had changed the goal posts, grants for public sites were no longer available and each application for planning permission or appeal against refusal of planning permission would be judged on its merit. As Hinckley & Bosworth has over 34% of itinerant sites in the whole of Leicestershire, the Planning Officers advise us that that in itself is reason enough for an appeal to be dismissed. Five more sites have been applied for during the year and Councillor Bill Crooks opposed all of them at the Planning Meetings, the only Councillor with the courage to stand up and speak out. All the applications were refused, one has so far been to public appeal which the council won (first one) another has also been heard and won concerning a site at Markfield. The long term battle against Sunday Markets continues, Despite looking at various sites the Council were unable to find one where planners and Highway officers would be happy. The Council obtained an article 4 notice from the Government which reduces all rights to hold Sunday Markets in the area.

The battle continues to prevent the Nailstone Tip being turned into a rubbish dump, It has been successfully refused at both Borough and County level, but we are waiting for an appeal date to be set.

The Borough wide Plan is still in the process of being drawn up, it is hoped that the draft will be available around September of this year. This plan superceeds the Rural Parishes Local Plan. Much of the work carried out for the rural plan has been incorporated in the Borough Wide Plan with minor adjustments. The plan will have to go to public participation once again and public meetings will be held during the period September 1993 to March 1994.

New rules on the way planning applications are to be dealt with have just come into fo
— 60% of planning applications will now be dealt with under Deligated Powers, even where some objections from neighbours have been received, unless the local Councillor
— requests that it be put on the adgenda. We have consistantly opposed this move, but because planning applications have to be dealt with within an 8 week period it is hope that this way more applications can be processed. This will not effect large scale applications which will go before the committee as usual.

Several new conservation areas have been created, Osbaston being one of them. This wi help to protect the lovely old buildings in the village.

POLICY & RESOURCES

The decision to set a nil Council Tax was made due to the fact that the collection rate for the Community Charge was greater than expected and the charge last year of £14 per person to cover for those who would not or could not pay is being carried forward to this year the rest being made up from balances. Some objections to banding levels have been received, but on the whole most people are happy with the new tax.

Requests from the Police for funding towards extra Crime Prevention Officers has been turned down. This was to be jointly funded between all the District Councils in Leicestershire at a cost of approx £12,500 for each authority. It was dismissed
— on the grounds that we would only receive about 2.5 hours per week for the Borough.

The Establishment Committee has now been "Devalued" as a committee, it is now a sub-committee of Policy & Resources and meetings are only called when necessary.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Various meetings have been held throughout the County to put forward arguments for and against one large authority or several smaller unitary authorities. The County Council appear to be spending a great deal of money to put over their case and several leaflets have been delivered to each household, also meatings with Parish Councils and other bodies have and are being held all over the County. The Borough and District Councils are holding advisory meetings with members and it is hoped that several meetings with Parishes and representatives from the Urban areas will be called shortly. We will have to wait for the commissions decision at the end of the day.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has supported me during the past year and I look forward to representing you again in the coming civic year.

MONTAGUE CHARITY

The bog allotments appear to be the most popular site for gardeners, and most of the plots are taken. This year the best kept allotment winner is Fred Robinson who spends many happy hours down at the bog. This year he receives a garden voucher for £10 and a trophy which he keeps for life.

The top close allotments are not so popular, but there are many very well tended plots. They are however surrounded by some rather rough pieces, some of these are gradually being brought back into cultivation, but there are still too many vacant plots. The lack of tenants in turn of course affects the income of the charity.

This year the Trustees have reluctantly had to increase the rents from £4 to £5 in order to meet the ever increasing water charges.

Some time ago an inquiry was made by a local developer, to ascertain whether the Trustees had the powers to sell the bog allotments. The trustees do have the rights to sell, but the Charity Commissioners would have to consider that any actions were in the best interests of the charity.

The Trustees have this year given three sums of money to local schools, attended by children from the village, a total of £300.

Bosworth College	£75
Bosworth High School	£75
Newbold Verdon Junior School	£150.

REPORT FROM THE LORD CREWE TRUST

A very brief meeting of the Trustees was held at the school on Tuesday 29th September, 1992.

The bank statements and ledgers were examined and revealed that the total money held at the bank stood at £686.24.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed to leave the money in the bank to accrue pending a discussion on spending at a future meeting.

Following the death of Mr Benny Clinton on the 6th February, 1993, the Trustees decided to send a donation of £100.00 to the Rainbow Appeal in his memory. Mr Clinton taught at the school for over 30 years and was closely involved in the work of the Lord Crewe Charity for 24 years. He commanded great respect from numerous people in the village. He was a great man who fiercely defended traditional values not only in his professional life but in his home life too. He will be remembered for a very long time.

Following recent payments, the total money held at the bank now stands at £1091.02

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.18 p.m.