

MINUTES OF THE 2013 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held at 8 pm at St Bridget's Church, Chelvey on Monday 18 March

Present: Cllrs Bryan Smith, Mike Fishwick, David Pike, Antony Ridge (Vice Chair), Julian Ridge (Chair) and parishioners Margaret Pike, Joe Watt, Jacqui and Andrew Olver, Katy Hallett, Linda and Paul Elliott, Gill Iles, Felicity Ford, Wanda Denning, Jennifer Hunt, and Bill Wright. **In attendance:** District Cllr Geoff Coombs, speakers Richard Simon and Steve Barrett (Directors, Solarsense), and Gill Rowley (Clerk).

- 1 **Apologies** were received from Cllr Liz Lunn and parishioners Mary and Geoffrey Hobbs, Connie Ridge, Liza Ridge, Blanche and Rupert Ridge, and Keith Hallett.
- 2 **Minutes** of the 2012 APM were read and accepted as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.
- 3 **Chair's report**

JR reminded parishioners that the parish council meets every two months in the Smyth-Piggott pew in Brockley Church. Any parishioner is welcome to attend and may speak at the start of the meeting. Meetings start at 7.30 and usually last 1½ hours. He summarised the year's main topics:-

 - 3.1 **Core Strategy:** A draft Sites & Policies Plan aimed to put detail on the Core Strategy for North Somerset and was currently out to consultation. The Core Strategy had gone forward with the overall new housing requirement set at 14,000. Bristol University's challenge to the Strategy arising from a proposal to develop land at Long Ashton had been considered by a judge, who had ruled that only those areas of the plan resulting from flaws in the planning inspector's report should be reconsidered. If this resulted in a change in the overall housing requirement, it could have implications for other planning policies and reopen the risk of development in West Backwell.
 - 3.2 **Bristol Airport's expansion plans** were under way and the mitigating aspects were beginning to be felt. The Airport's Local Community Fund supported local projects that mitigated the effects of increased airport activity. Plans to link the A38 and A370 near Long Ashton were still live. Passenger numbers were still lower than in 2008, and increased public transport from Cardiff was being proposed.
 - 3.3 **Road signs:** The council had serious misgivings about the effect of traffic on roads in the parish - especially Brockley Lane – and had secured North Somerset Council's agreement to erect a road narrows sign at Brockley Crossroads, double bend warning signs in advance of Solarsense in both directions, and the painting of white lines to highlight the road edge near Nailsea Court. Unfortunately NSC had recently withdrawn the offer because of lack of funds. We had therefore applied to the Local Community Fund for a grant of £395. If agreed, NSC would do the work in conjunction with some other road maintenance.
 - 3.4 **Mains water at Brockley Church:** The second project we were hoping to undertake was to connect mains water and install toilet facilities in Brockley Church. Antony Ridge was talking to the many people with an interest in this, including the Churches Conservation Trust, the Friends of Brockley Church, Bristol Water, Wessex Water and the Alvis Trust. The next step was to draw up plans and cost the scheme to decide if it was feasible. Fund raising could be in the offing! Once these facilities were in place the church would be a much more suitable venue for public functions and would help to make Brockley a cohesive community.
 - 3.5 **Flooding:** The winter had been very wet and for many weeks there had been minor flooding in Brockley as a result of the various springs that run along the edge of the escarpment. Because these only run every 10 years or so, the drainage infrastructure cannot cope. JR had discussed this with the NSC drainage engineer and a programme of work would be undertaken to ensure that all the known drains were working and would be regularly maintained. The NSC priority had been to sort out problems that caused flooding of property elsewhere in the district. We would keep up the pressure and make sure that it didn't all go quiet when the better weather arrived.
 - 3.6 **Wind Turbine:** A planning application had been submitted to erect a 20 kW, 27 metres high wind turbine at Grove Farm, Backwell. The original application had not been widely advertised and Backwell Parish Council had approved it; only at a very late stage were the full implications apparent in terms of visual impact and noise - especially as it would affect properties in Chelvey Road. The Central Area Committee had deferred a decision in order to allow additional consultation: this time many more opinions had been expressed, with Backwell Resident's Association and Parish Council objecting. Recently, the applicant had reduced the size of the proposed turbine, but this would have only a limited effect in making it more acceptable. Another Planning Committee was due shortly, when a decision would be made. Our view as a council was that,

although green energy schemes were to be encouraged, wind turbines needed to be sited carefully, as they are large structures that can have a damaging effect on the immediate environment.

- 3.7 Footpaths: We continued to try to keep the parish footpaths and bridleways open and signed. Sadly, one particular landowner did his best to thwart us by flailing signs and kissing gates as well as hedges. Each year, in early summer, we employ Brian Whiteway to trim vegetation and ensure the footpaths and stiles are open. Anyone noticing a problem should tell the clerk or any councillor so it can be included in BW's list. After consultation with landowners and users, the footpaths and bridleways in Brockley Woods are to be upgraded and made more user-friendly. We hoped to have this work completed later in the year. Thanks were due to Elaine Bowman at NSC for her help and guidance.
- 3.8 Diamond Jubilee: In addition to the Liquidambar tree planted at the crossroads, councillors had planted 100 February Gold daffodils, which were currently in flower. Together with the tree and bulbs planted by Brockley Hall residents and others, the four quadrants at the crossroads were now very attractive.
- 3.9 Budget: Copies of the budget were available. The precept for 2013-14 was £3,300, with a call for £61 from reserves.
- 3.10 Annual Litter Pick: This would take place on Saturday 23 March. All welcome: meet at the crossroads at 10 o'clock.
- 3.11 Glendale Countryside Planning Application: JR asked if any parishioners had objected to the Glendale planning application for an advertising sign at the junction of St Nicholas Way with the A370. He explained the council had objected to an earlier application, which NSC had gone on to grant. However, Glendale had recently submitted a proposal for an even larger sign, which the council found totally unacceptable. Despite the applicant ticking a box on the proposal form to say he had 'consulted neighbours or the local community about the proposal', parishioners at the APM said they had not heard about the sign and knew of no local notices.

4 District Councillor's report

- 4.1 Drainage: GC had been lobbying for the backlog of clearance of road drains. Hopefully the engineers now had the message and surface water drainage and road repairs were the only area where the NSC budget had actually been increased.
- 4.2 South Bristol Link Road: The proposed South Bristol Link Road would have quite an impact on Brockley: a planning application would be submitted in the next few months and GC thought it important there should be good local support for the road.
- 4.3 Sites & Policies Plan: GC emphasised that this took the Core Strategy to a lower level of detail – for example, concerning wind turbines – and he encouraged parishioners to make their views known.
- 4.4 Council tax: NSC had now set its 2013-14 budget, with an increase in council tax agreed at 1.5% overall.

5 Parishioners' questions and comments

Parishioners were saddened to see so much litter in Brockley Combe. JR advised that for health and safety reasons we could not lead the annual litter pick along Brockley Combe Road. The NSC Area Officer, who lends equipment for the Pick, was looking into traffic management so his contractor could safely litterpick the Combe.

There were increasing amounts of drinks cans in local litter, with hotspots in Chelvey Road, suggesting people were parking up and drinking: for this reason it had been reported to the police. JR thanked the parishioner for taking action: it was difficult to know what else to do.

There were no other comments or questions, and business ended at 8.30. JR thanked Felicity Ford for organising refreshments, and AR introduced the guest speakers. These were Richard Simon and Steve Barrett, Directors of Solarsense UK Ltd, who gave a well-focused and much appreciated talk on 'The practical application of renewable energy', illustrated with photographs of local examples.

Signed.....

Date.....