

Notes for Pimperne Parish Council Meeting – District Councillor Mike Oliver  
11 January 2012

1. You will be aware from previous reports that planning permission was given to demolish Woodbury Cottage and build 2 semi-detached cottages with 5 parking spaces. However no work has begun due to the fact that the developer appealed against the refusal of the previous application which included converting the Chapel into a 3 bedroom house. This appeal was lodged in August and we still await the results which I am assured by the planners should be made shortly. I gather the delay is due to sickness and the failure of the developer to turn up on a site visit with the inspector.
2. Whilst on the subject of houses I today officially opened 43 new houses built by Persimmon Homes on Badbury Heights. We still have over 1,100 people in need of homes in our District but this goes a little way to help the situation.
3. I have mentioned on several occasions the sad loss of the North Dorset edition of the Western Gazette. Leaving only the Blackmore Vale and Dorset Echo in the area, neither of which covers much if any publicity etc in our area. This is a sad loss and leaves us all with little communication, NDDC have now come to an agreement with the BV for one half page every other week for Council publicity. This is not available to Towns and Parishes. Nicci Brown however is allowed to put forward 4 items per week which may be accepted or not for publication. Otherwise if Parishes wish to contribute an article to the BV it would have to be paid for. However in order to cover the latter Nicci Brown is proposing a Community Magazine for Blandford (possibly in addition to the Blandford Forum Magazine) which might also cover such local villages as Pimperne. She is holding a meeting at Colin's Community Club in Damory Street at 7pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January. All interested in the idea are invited. I will be attending and feel that it would be beneficial to the village if a member of the Parish Council attended.
4. ASDA have applied for outline application for determine access and layout for an ASDA superstore with associated parking and petrol filling station on land off Badbury Heights/Shafesbury Lane. This was to have been discussed at the Development Control Meeting on 20 December. However after a very short discussion it was decided that this application should be discussed at the same time as the Tesco store extension application and thus the meeting was deferred to a date yet to be fixed.

County Councillors Report – January 2012

Nothing received.

County Councillors Report – December 2011

I fear that I have missed a month out of my regular reports.

I have also been informed that one of my Parish Councils finds that these reports are a little too remote from their particular issues. Whilst I understand this feeling in some respects, I would have thought that some Strategic and 'overview' information might be of interest. Clearly the problem with covering specific and very local issues is that I would have to write a large number of varied reports adapted to particular Parishes and this would involve a great deal of work. I have therefore decided to continue writing my reports in my usual way. I would hope they will continue to be of interest to some.

**Revenue Budget**

As reported before, we have successfully saved £28m out of our non-schools Revenue Budget over this year and have been able to find 'one-off' money to cover the £3m shortfall from savings on the outturns from last year.

We are currently engaged in meetings preparing for the revenue savings we need to make for the next financial year. Not surprisingly the task becomes more difficult and far more threatening to our front line services. By the end of this financial year DCC will have removed about 500 (10%) of its non-school full time posts.

There is a real concern that Central Government will return to Local Government for savings over and above those that have already been notified.

### **Icelandic Banks**

The Legal Challenge to the recovery of Local Authorities investments in the Icelandic Banks has been defeated and most of that money will be recovered over time.

### **Libraries**

At the recent Full Council Meeting there was a challenge to the decision to remove 10 community Libraries from the core of Libraries funded by the County Council and to assist them in becoming 'Community Libraries' with the additional ability to evolve other uses as appropriate to local need. This challenge was defeated and most of the local communities involved are now working towards a successful conversion to independent local facilities.

### **Children's Services Annual Assessment**

Ofsted, in their annual assessment of Children's Services have rated Dorset County Council's Children's Services as 'Excellent'. This puts Dorset's Children's Services in the top four County Councils. Clearly we can never become complacent within such an important service but it is an achievement, and particularly so in such difficult times. Still plenty to do.

### **Industrial Action**

Yesterday - 30th of November - the Union's held their Day of Action over Pensions. A number of Schools had to close as a result and my information is that about 7% of central County Staff took part in the Strike and march.

### **Road Closures**

A number of Parishes in the Centre of the Division will be well aware that there have been two recent road closures on the A357. One to the North of Durweston and one at Fiddleford. There have been some of the usual problems with rat-running traffic.

Clearly the Diversion will have increased the traffic on the A350 and the C13.

### **National Olympic Torch Relay**

We are now allowed to know the route of the Olympic Torch Relay through Dorset. It will be coming into Dorset down the A350 from Shaftesbury and therefore through the villages that straddle the road between Shaftesbury and Blandford. I have already had local requests to vary this route but there appears to be resistance to any change in the plans that have already been made!

The cavalcade that will follow the Torch will be about a quarter of a mile long. The Torch will be 'run' in community areas deemed 'safe' but will be in vehicles between those communities. No doubt there will be heavy congestion as a result.

However, it is splendid that North Dorset will have, and be seen to have the Olympic Torch carried through it.

And finally a very Happy Christmas to you all.