

SOMERCOTES PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2010 -11

Councillors: Cllr P Smith (Chairman); Cllr B Lyttle (Vice Chairman); Cllr M Barron; Cllr P Curran-Bilbie; Cllr J Gardiner; Cllr Mrs B Hannant; Cllr C Langton; Cllr J McCabe; Cllr J T Marriott; Cllr W Spibey; Cllr A Stringer; Cllr S Walker

The above Councillors were returned unopposed at the Council Elections in May 2011. There is one vacancy on the Council (to be advertised)

Contacting Councillors: All Councillors can be contacted through the Parish Council Office: 01773 603810, by e-mail to somercotespc@btconnect.com or writing to The Parish Council, The Parish Hall, Nottingham Road, Somercotes, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 4LY

Council Staff: Clerk to the Council: Mr G R Blackmore
Administrator: Mrs G Kenney
Parish Hall Caretaker: Mrs J Mosley
Parish Wardens: Mr C Rick & Mr L Briddon

Parish Council Office: The Parish Council, The Parish Hall, Nottingham Road, Somercotes, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 4LY

Income/Expenditure 2010/2011 and Precept 2011/2012 - £133,744.00 (an increase of 5%).

The Chairman, at the Annual Parish Meeting, stated that the Annual Audit had been completed and was open to public inspection by application to the Clerk to the Council. The Council had increased the precept for 2011-12 by 5% due to the on-going car park maintenance programme (on transfer of the car parks from AVBC) that will be required for Market Place and Mill Yard and other priorities required so as to maintain the current levels of services.

Parish Council Expenditure 2010-11			
Admin:	£ 11,339	Salaries:	£ 55,258
Parish Hall:	£ 19,791	Highways:	£ 15,340
Lighting:	£ 23,325	S137:	£ 4,259
Allotments:	£ 4,287		
Precept (2010-11): £127,000		Total Expenditure: £133,599	

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that it had been a very busy and fruitful year for the Council including the refurbishment of the Parish Hall. Unfortunately, the last year had seen some trying times surrounding some bad publicity with the murder in Sleetmoor Woods and the fire fatality that had shocked the whole community. The Council's thoughts went out to the victims' families. From a personal point of view, after the loss of his wife the Chairman wished to thank all those who have worked with him and supported him and his family. The Council has done a lot of proactive work in terms of delivery working alongside Derbyshire County Council and Amber Valley Borough Council. Thanks were expressed to the new Clerk, the secretary, Parish Hall Caretaker and the two Parish Wardens for their commitment and work on behalf of the parish.

The Council saw the retirement of the Clerk, Mr J Heathcote, after 17 years service, who was thanked for his services.

The Parish Council continues to support community projects and in 2011-12 will consider funding appropriate projects. A budget of £5k is set aside for community grants under S137 and £4k for community projects.

Council Achievements: 2010-2011

Parish Hall:

The Council expended £14k to upgrade the main hall and stage and in the 2011-12 year is to install new gas boilers. The Parish Council wishes to increase usage by the community through its modernisation programme of the building.

Christmas Lights:

The Council agreed a 3 year Christmas Lighting contract for Somercotes that included a Christmas tree and decorations. Christmas Lighting can only be attached to metal lighting columns so the display is mainly restricted to Nottingham Road & High Street, Somercotes

Poop Scoop Bags:

The Council introduced 'free' Poop Scoop bags after the service was withdrawn by the Borough Council.

Allotments:

The Council now has standard agreements with all allotment holders. Flash Allotments (Sleetmoor Lane) is being brought back into use and supported by the Council. Drunken Close allotments used for grazing land for horses and it was agreed to use the second area for the same purpose.

School Fair:

The Council continued its financial support of the School Summer Fair, under its community programme

Pennytown Ponds:

The Council continues its promotion of the Pennytown Ponds project through administrative support. Pennytown Ponds has received an award for from the Derbyshire Environmental Trust for its environmental work and is now aiming for National Green Flag status.

Parish Council Services

Free Car Parking: The Parish Council has agreed to transfer the ownership of Market Place and Mill Yard Car Parks from AVBC to ensure that no car parking charges are enforced. The Parish Council wishes to maintain 'free' car parking in Somercotes to encourage the use of local shops.

Skips: The Council provides a skip(s) service on the first Saturday of each month to assist local residents to dispose of unwanted items. The service is only provided for residents of the Parish of Somercotes that include Leabrooks & Pye Bridge.

Parish matters of concern brought forward by the Council or local government electors:

Gasification Plant: The issue of the proposed gasification plant and possible health implications were raised as a matter of concern. The chairman informed the meeting that the Environment Agency has put the matter out for consultation to ascertain if it is going to grant or refuse the application. The consultation period ends on the 27th May 2011 and the Council will be submitting comments. Derbyshire County Council Planning is currently looking at the application that is to go before the Planning Committee, in July, concerning the issues around the permit. There have been changes in the application in that Belper Waste will no longer be providing material to make DRF and this may affect how the applicant responds to the changes that were agreed at the outset. The applicant should have submitted a report to DCC on vehicle movement by 5th May 2011, but this has yet to be received. DCC will not be able to write its review until this has been received. DCC have concerns to raise on the application to be submitted to the Environment Agency.

AVAIN is the local action group opposing the proposed gasification plant.

AVBC were requested to seek an 'Air Quality Assessment' that had been refused previously by the cabinet member. John McCabe said that it was important that an AQA was carried out and the outcome of the request to the Borough Council was awaited.