

## **Village survey – Public Works Loan**

Whilst we appreciate that any increase in Council Tax is unwelcome, as a village we need to move on as our main community buildings are no longer fit for purpose. Because of their age they are costly to maintain and do not meet the needs of an expanding village. Some of those costs are being paid for through your Council tax.

The project has a dedicated team of volunteers with a proven track record who can make this modern multi use community hub happen, but we cannot do that without the support of villagers. A Public Works Loan is a key part of the project's current funding strategy.

The Parish Council need to know whether householders support taking out a loan, if you have not completed a survey form please do so as soon as possible.

The following covers feedback that has been received.

### **The amount of the increase will rise every year**

If a loan was taken it would be at a fixed rate so the loan repayments would not increase. In addition surplus profits from the new building have to be used in the community and some would be available to reduce the cost of loan repayments.

The £500,000 example used on the survey form is the maximum loan amount the council could apply for. If it applied for a smaller amount e.g. £200,000 the approximate monthly increase would vary from 48p for a house in council tax band A to £1.44 per month for a house in band H.

### **Can we opt out of this increase?**

If and it is a big if the Council decide to apply for a loan then all households would have their council tax increased. The Council would only consider a loan if the survey showed an overwhelming majority of villagers supported it.

### **The money should be spent on safer road crossings**

Money for this would either come from North Somerset Council or s106/community Infrastructure Levy monies from new housing developments.

However, the only way to persuade North Somerset Council or the Parish Council to look at, they need the evidence to support why the crossings are unsafe. When this came up before we asked for help to look at pulling the evidence together but only one villager came forward!

If the newbuilding was up and running its surplus profits have to be used in the community and therefore would be available to be used for this type of thing.

### **Few villagers will use**

The new building will provide a broad range of activities, more than are currently available from our existing buildings. For example their will be:

- more holiday activities for school children
- a juice bar for our young people who would like somewhere to meet their friends
- more activities for our ageing population including North Somerset Community Partnership who provide several community-based healthcare services, free to the people of North Somerset.

770 villagers voted for the project's Community Right to Build order and over 200 people pledged £ 288,000 of their own money. The project has over 130 villagers in its volunteer pool and a lot of these are working in the new Community café, the profits from which are going towards the cost of the new building. The project has been supported by several grant bodies and over 30 local businesses.

Village organisations have been involved in ensuring their requirements are included in the new building and we have been proactive in consulting with the community at every stage to gain opinions on various aspects and possible options as we are doing now.

### **It is a white elephant**

Claverham and Shiphams halls are relatively new and both are successful and financially viable building up significant cash reserves. They are smaller communities and don't have the benefit of the income generated by the Recreation club users who would move into the new building.

### **Congresbury Village Hall Limited**