



WILL YOU SERVE ON THE PARISH COUNCIL for the NEXT FOUR YEARS?

The Parish Council comprises eleven Members of the public who serve for four years; the present Council all stand down this year with elections being held on the **7th May 2020**.

There will also be one vacancy to be filled on the Borough Council this year.

All British, Irish, qualifying Commonwealth or EU residents over 18 years of age living in Hesketh Bank, or within three miles of the Parish, are eligible to stand subject to some legal exclusions.

The Election process is managed by the '**Returning Officer**' at **West Lancashire Borough Council** in Ormskirk and it is to that officer that you should apply for nomination papers or to answer any questions or queries you may have.

So what does a Parish Council do? Quite often they become confused with Parochial Church Councils being that they both refer to Parishes. That is where the similarity ends however, for whilst in the main they both operate in similar if not identical areas, a Parish Council is a Statutory Body put in place by the Local Government Act of 1972; it is the first layer of Government supported in our case by a Borough and County Council or elsewhere a Unitary Authority. On the other hand the "Church of England" has 'Parochial Church Councils' who run their own affairs.

Parish Councils are independent of both Borough and County Councils and operate within their own legal framework. They are in the main non-political although clearly Members may have their own political views, and work to promote and maintain their own Parochial Area, seeking to represent the views and aspirations of the residents who elected them. They are financed by a precept which is added to the local Council Tax bill and amounts to around 80p per week for a Band D home here in Hesketh Bank. In addition they endeavour to source grants and funds from other organisations to promote their work.

If eleven or less prospective candidates put their names forward, they will be 'elected unopposed'; however more than eleven nominations will result in an election on the 7th of May. I'm sure we will see many of the existing hard working Councillors putting their names forward again along with some new faces for the next four years. Who represents you on the Council is entirely dependent on your vote; our democracy depends on you the voter making your choice and I hope as many of you as possible will exercise that right. The retiring Council can take pride in what has been achieved in the village.

The coming years should be very busy and exciting for the Council. The biggest development in the village since the sixties is well underway with over two hundred houses being presently built on the former Henry Alty Brickworks site boosting the population to around 5,000 souls with the first houses on the Tarleton end of the development now occupied.

As readers of this Newsletter will already know, the Council acquired the land on the westerly banks of the River Douglas last year with a view to developing the long held aspiration of a Linear Park providing a significant recreational facility with a path and cycle way from the Persimmon development initially through to the Tarleton Academy.

The Council also manages its Recreation, Play Area and Open Air Gym at Shore Road, The Play Area at the side of Beconsall Gardens and the Glen Park Drive Play Area which will be totally refurbished this year. It has also acquired several plots of land around the village including the Queen Elizabeth Garden at the front of the Community Centre to maintain as Green Spaces in an effort to improve the general ambiance of the area; all the wayside seats and bus shelters are also provided and maintained by the Council.

The Council also provided the superb award winning “Poor Marsh Allotments” on Shore Road which have been voted the best in Lancashire and which today are expertly managed by the Allotment holders themselves. We are hoping this year to be able to take over ownership and maintenance of the Poppyfields Play Area and Public Open Space which as residents of the estate are only too aware is in a generally poor condition.

We are also presently supporting the Community Centre Trustees with their well advanced plans to replace the life expired hall at the rear of the site through the allocation of significant Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.

The Parish Council also provided and maintains the three Vehicle Speed recording units located in the village and twelve CCTV cameras which constantly record video in an effort to reduce crime and provide additional safety for users of the Council’s facilities.

NOW IS THE TIME to consider if you could contribute to the well-being of the village by putting yourself forward as a prospective Councillor – it’s unpaid and will take up some of your spare time! Why not go along to one of the candidates briefings at 12:30 or 17:45 on Thursday 19th of March at the Borough Council Offices, 52 Derby St, Ormskirk; nomination packs will be available at the Borough Council offices from that date, or packs can be downloaded from the Electoral Commission website. Nominations must be returned to the Borough Council Offices by the strict deadline of **4pm on Wednesday 8th April.**

On behalf of all the residents of Hesketh Bank, I trust I can extend your gratitude and thanks to all our retiring Councillors for their hard work over the last four years for which they didn't receive a single penny. Ian T Cropper.

Ian T Cropper - Executive Clerk & Finance Officer – Hesketh with Beconsall Parish Council
Providence Place, 125 Roe Lane, Southport PR9 7PG
Tel: 01772 812681 Fax: 02030 511934 Email: Clerk@HeskethBankCouncil.uk

