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12 October 2020

Dear All,

We held our most recent Parish Council meeting last Wednesday when we had a particularly long and challenging agenda. There were issues of national importance such as changes to planning law, as mentioned here before. Neighbouring St Cuthbert’s Out parish has several members with particular planning knowledge and expertise. They have generously shared their thinking with us and we have agreed to cluster with them in making a response to central government and we intend using the same information to write our individual response.

Our Vice Chair, Ros Wyke, also made a presentation on Stronger Somerset, the District authorities’ alternative bid to the County Council’s One Somerset proposal. These proposals are about creating either one or two new unitary local authorities for Somerset. This may seem a long way away from our parish concerns, but it will affect how our schools are run, how social services are delivered and what services could be devolved our very local level, so it does in fact concern us all. Anyone wanting more information do contact Ros or me.

Much more obviously locally we received an annual report on the state of our footpaths and rights of way from our footpaths liaison officer, Colin Booth. We should all be very grateful to him for the attention he pays to the job, the way he keeps the County Council on its toes and the practical steps he takes to ensure our paths are safe and useable. Do let him know, via the clerk (clerk@westburysubmendip-pc.gov.uk) if you come across any problems when you are out walking.

As a council we receive frequent complaints about a range of nuisances across the parish and several have arrived recently. Mostly all we can do is pass them on to Mendip District Council, but they pay much more attention to complaints coming from individual residents and voters. So, if noisy neighbours, selfish parkers, fly tippers and so forth are getting your goat, contact Mendip’s planning enforcement team. They will ask you to keep a record of the nuisance over several weeks – tedious, I know, but necessary to assess the nature of the nuisance and to provoke enforcement action. For your convenience I attach the form Mendip uses so you can go to them with your evidence already prepared.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 4th November and the agenda will be available on the notice boards and website by the end of the previous week. This is a reminder that we will be considering applications for grants to local organisations at this meeting. The final closing date is Weds 29 October. Further details and an application form are available on the village website or you may contact me directly.

Keep strong and keep safe.

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