



A mandate is to give someone the authority to act on your behalf.

In a political sense, in our form of democracy, we elect people to act on our behalf. At the national government level this is rarely for a specific purpose and mostly on a party basis – on what they present themselves as for, in a general sense of policies and personalities.

At Parish level there is less emphasis on the national parties with a growing number of candidates who are “Independent” or are highly specific in naming as for their purpose or ambitions. Our democracy can be seen as under threat at local level with average turnout at 35%, 65% seats filled by “no contest” without a poll “elections, many wards with no candidates or inquorate. Windlesham is unusual within our local arrangements in electing our Parish Councillors as opposed to the other two villages in the grouping where there were “no contest” elections except for the recent by election in Bagshot won by Richard Wilson.

In local governance.

I am hard pressed to understand claims to have a “mandate” when it was not given by vote.

In the Ecclesiastical pre 1894 period, parish affairs were managed by vestry meetings which were led by and dominated by the local Squire, the Parson and major landowners who did not represent the broader community in a democratic way. The changes made in 1894 to Civil (non religious) Parish Councils were intended to reinvigorate local communities by elections to the Parish Council giving residents a voice in local governance.

The franchise was still limited at that time, Universal Suffrage was not until 1928. Those who fought bravely for it would be very disappointed at the lack of democratic



engagement as reflected above and the recent Parish Council “Consultations”, both of which drew less than 1% of the 13,000 electorate and at the Full Council Meeting which reviewed the results, there was only this one member of the public present.

I strongly believe in the principle of local governance and the local the better. We cannot be satisfied with this situation which calls for urgent review.

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