**What should GROWTH look like in Burnham?**

We have all seen our pavements cut open to lay down fibre to enhance internet access.

We have all seen the M4 road works to increase its capacity.

We have all seen our rail infrastructure transformed and will soon enjoy the full potential of The Elizabeth Line.

We continue to see the constant renewal and change of our neighbouring Slough Trading Estate.

And of course, we see the transformation of Slough and Maidenhead and to a lesser extent Burnham as new houses and apartments rise up as if by magic.

And yet we also see a secondary school in Burnham that was closed in 2019 and with no prospect of opening in the immediate future!

Furthermore, Burnham had an established footprint – not in sand but in igneous rock, for both a grammar and non-selective secondary school to be located in Burnham for the previous 50 years!

And now we see hundreds of children standing and waiting for coaches every weekday to take them to schools in other boroughs at 07.30 when all our local roads are totally gridlocked!

Collectively we are all failing the majority of Burnham children whilst all families with school-age children rightly seek to make the best possible choice for their own children in the present circumstances.

To their credit, Burnham Parish Council do see the shortcomings of the current situation but we are being poorly served by both our Buckinghamshire Council’s elected members and officers. The working group campaigning for the new school in Burnham have made no progress over the past two years with Buckinghamshire Council and our attention has now turned to seeking to establish a dialogue with the Department of Education’s regional director for the south east based in Watford.

Our immediate local concern is to learn more from parents of children who have just started at their new secondary school and also parents of Year Six children currently applying for secondary school places. It is our understanding that parents in Farnham Common and Stoke Poges have resolved since the opening of Khalsa Secondary Academy in Stoke Poges in 2012 not to send their children to this school but pay for transport to schools in Beaconsfield, Wycombe and The Chalfonts. Khalsa Secondary Academy changed its name to Pioneer Secondary Academy earlier this year and is under that strategic management of the Sikh Academies Trust. It is our understanding that most families seeking a non-selective secondary school place living in Burnham, Buckinghamshire will be allocated a place at Pioneer Secondary Academy whilst also being offered free transport.

By way of clarification – there is also a separate Pioneer Education Trust which comprises of Foxborough Primary School, Trevelyan Middle School and Upton Court Grammar School.

Please do not hesitate to make contact with the working group to share your thoughts and concerns and also take up the challenge of ensuring that Burnham does indeed grow and prosper. e-mail newschool@burnhamparish.gov.uk

Viv Nicholas. Third Draft. 3rd November.