



Monday 7th August 2017

The Lion Hotel

Summary

o Introduction

Eleven group members were present but three had to leave early. Thank you to Viv S for organising the drinks order in Phil's absence.

Denise M

o Discussion Topics

Who should have final say over the medical care of a sick child?

- Not, it was felt as in the Charley Gard case, an expert who hadn't read the case notes and had a financial interest in the treatment. Not people without necessary medical knowledge, e.g. the Pope, Donald Trump or Boris Johnson.
- Parents may not be swayed by the child's best interests because of their own need. Case quoted of a child of Jehovah Witnesses who could not be contacted when child was on a school trip needing a blood transfusion. School had to decide and adult child thanked teacher for saving her life.
- Best if agreement can be reached between parents and medical authority but final resort must be the court (as in cruelty cases). Unfortunately, crowd funding and media interest may exacerbate disagreement.

What barriers are preventing more people from being involved as a citizen?

- The House of Lords is currently asking for views on current attitudes. Ideas were as follows:
 - o Non-registration to vote
 - o Should voting be compulsory?
 - o Ignorance of who to contact or who is accountable for community problems
 - o Inertia
 - o Fear of the consequences of action
 - o What is the point to protesting when fobbed off, puzzled by jargon, and delaying consultations, you find no one takes responsibility for their actions
 - o What about volunteering? Fewer volunteers because more people working more hours to older ages, grandparents providing childcare, single parents

now working, retired people with more options. Increasing pressures on fewer volunteers cause by financial pressures and cuts to services

- Blood and organ donation reduced by squeamishness

Should M.P.s have to wear ties in parliament?

- An almost unanimous no, but some felt a need for smartness. Is this sexual discrimination?

Are you for or against a cashless society?

- Mobile transfers have been a godsend for those sending money home regularly, especially in Africa. Works against the black economy. Entails more regulation. It is traceable. However, small businesses have to pay a charge, poor people often can't get a bank account and many people find it easier to get into debt and charities find it a nuisance. What do you do where there is no mobile system? Difficult for fairs, stalls. Banks stand to gain but the poor are hit. A majority were against and thought choice was important.

Should the basic details of everyone's income and tax payments be publicly available?

- Norway have laws to the effect but found the need to ensure that the names of enquirers were available to those queried. This reduced frivolous enquiries.
- People felt it may give the public more influence and shows up gender issues but wonder how much it would cost.
- There was a majority for this but a sizeable minority against.

Was it right to show that video of Princess Diana?

- Only one person watched part of it and she felt somewhat voyeuristic, it was felt that this was manipulation by the media for money. When does news become history?

○ Future Topics

The list of topics has been exhausted. If you have any suggestions, especially last-minute topical issues, please email vivienne.barker@gmail.com

○ Next Meeting

The next Café Society meeting will be on Monday 4th September at 10.00am at The Lion Hotel (Tudor Bar room). Sue B has kindly volunteered to compile the discussion summary at this next meeting.

