

**EAST FARNDON PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH
HELD ON TUESDAY 16TH MARCH 2022 AT THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT
7.15 PM**

PRESENT: Mr R Burton (Acting Chair), Mr B Fallon, Ms E Pepler and Mrs. C Burton (Clerk to the Parish Council)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: 4

1. Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Cecile Irving-Swift (WNC Councillor), Gill Kirby (Secretary to the PCC), Councillor Curtis (Chair of East Farndon Parish Council), Lynn Deacon (Chair of the Village Hall Trustees), Paul Harrison (Police Liaison Representative & Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator), Jean Westwood (WI), David Thake (Amenity Land Committee), and Jessica Oakden & Judy Hodgetts (Tree Wardens)

2. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Councillor Reports

WNC Councillors Cecile Irving-Swift and Kevin Parker intend to report on the first year of WNC in May 2022. WNC Councillor Harris, in attendance, presented the attached report.

3. Chair's report

The Acting Chair, Councillor Burton, read a report prepared by Councillor Curtis, Chair of the Parish Council. He thanked Caroline Burton, our Parish Clerk, and all of our Parish Councillors, for their professionalism, dedication and hard work during the last year. He reported that this year, the Parish Council has continued to maintain good financial control, whilst managing multiple issues and improvements, the major items being:

- Burial Ground tidy up, combined with a major improvement in terms of our ongoing management processes and record keeping.
- Legal updates to confirm Parish Council ownership of the Village Hall Land, Burial Ground Extension, War Memorial and Spring Trough.
- Transfer to EFPC of the responsibility for the maintenance of the main Churchyard.
- Launch of the new Village Website (now one year old).
- Initiative to manage weekly collections from East Farndon for the Jubilee Foodbank (now one year old).
- Ongoing management of the village defibrillator with an additional training session held for residents in March 2022.
- Provided memorial plaques for the July ceremony to remember and honour the RAF airmen who lost their lives in the East Farndon WW2 air crashes, the ceremony being followed by a Dakota flypast.
- Taking the leading role in the ongoing opposition to the proposed major housing development between East Farndon and Market Harborough. This has included written objections to West Northamptonshire Council and Harborough District Council as well as securing active support from our MP, Chris Heaton-Harris and Historic England.
- Completion of the survey of village residents in November 2021 to highlight their priorities for Parish Council spending and areas for improvement. As a result, the Parish Council is taking more of a leading role in bringing the village together for community events, increasing the focus on actions to limit speeding through the village and investing more in dog waste bins in 2022.

- Set up of the Parish Council coordinated Queen's Platinum Jubilee Committee. Three events to bring the village together are now confirmed for 2022, including Jubilee Beacons & Beverages on 2 June, Jubilee Coffee Morning & Exhibition on 3 June and the Jubilee Family Festival (traditional fete, kids picnic lunch & evening music) on 4 June.

4. Reports from village organisations: -

a) Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Gill Kirby (Secretary to the PCC):

- Due to continuing Pandemic restrictions and guidelines, the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and subsequent PCC Meetings continued to be held via Zoom at the beginning of 2021. In July 2021 the first face to face meeting was able to take place and following meetings were able to resume as normal and it was good to be able to communicate again in person.
- There were the usual 4 meetings throughout the year and in September, services were able to resume in Church following current guidelines at the time. It was however agreed that a service on Zoom would continue to be held on the 5th Sunday of the month.
- Once again fundraising events were severely restricted and with the loss of income from the fete and harvest supper, and lack of services, our finances have suffered but we were able to hold a Harvest Festival service, followed by a Bring & Share lunch in Church in September, a short open air Memorial Service for Remembrance Day in November and a Christingle & Carol Service took place at Christmas.
- The Parish Magazine is up and running again with items of news and Church service timetable.
- We are currently awaiting the results of the Quinquennial Report carried out last year, which will no doubt result in some further work being necessary for the upkeep of the Church. With the ever increasing costs which we are all facing, we continue to be very grateful for the donations received by the Church and from fund raising events within the community.
- Thank you to the Reverend James Watson for his continuing ministry, with the assistance of the Reverend Janet Donaldson, and we are grateful to all those within the community who give of their time in any way to help and support the Church.
- The PCC looks forward to a better year ahead and would be pleased to welcome any new members.

b) Village Hall Trustees

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Lynn Deacon (Chair of the Village Hall Trustees):

- The Trustees have continued to commit to the Village Hall and regularly check and maintain it to a high standard.
- Unfortunately, the Annual Financial Report cannot be produced until April. However, the finances remain healthy:
 - Current Account: £24272.00
 - Savings Account: £15743.10
 - Further Government grant: £2667.00 (received in February 2022)
- We have had to buy a new kettle and toaster, and the hall is being painted on Monday 14/15th March 2022.
- The Hall is being used regularly by the Play Group, Yoga, Dancing, Art Group, Wine Group, and Spirited Group. There have been individual lettings for parties, talks, coffee mornings and other meetings.

- The trustees for the last year were Lynn & David Deacon, Sheila Fox, Jan Cooper, Stephanie Hook, Jim & Sue Grant, Bob Osborn, Laurel Curtis and Joanna Shaw. Paul Jeanneret agreed to be the Treasurer.
- Trustees agreed to help fund the Jubilee Celebrations from previous funds as Government Grants can only be used for the benefit of the Hall.
- After a lot of thought I have decided to resign as Chairman of the Hall Committee at the next A.G.M. in April.

c) East Farndon United Charities

Nigel Haynes, in attendance, presented the following report on behalf of the East Farndon United Charities:

- The Trustees conducted the beginning of 2021 business remotely, but had a regular meeting in November, this being in accordance with the easing of government covid restrictions.
- Grants are available for new babies, for funeral expenses, when starting primary, secondary school and higher education, for the purchase of books, equipment and educational trips. The amounts of these grants were raised this year. Other discretionary grants can be awarded as the need arises.
- There is a two year residency requirement before grants are given.
- At all times, the Trustees must adhere to the original terms of the Charities Governing Document before grants are made.
- During the year there were 4 educational grants, 1 birth grant, 2 burial grants, 2 discretionary educational grants and 26 winter fuel grants awarded.
- Finance: The annual figures for 2021 were sent to the Charity Commission on 8th February 2022, and Annual Accounts are available for inspection by written request to the Clerk of the charity.
- Summary of Annual Charity Accounts 2021

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Dividends	£7867.47	Charitable Giving	£8950.00
Rent	£92.00	Bank Charges	32.60
TOTAL	£7959.47	TOTAL	£8982.60

- During this year the HSBC introduced bank charges for charities & community groups. The trustees are considering possible alternatives to avoid these costs.
- As announced on the village news website, Caroline Burton joined the East Farndon United Charities as a new Trustee.
- The present Trustees are Nigel Haynes (chairperson), Adrian Hill, Richard West and Caroline Burton. The Clerk is Pamela Haynes, The Haybarn, New House Farm, East Farndon, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 9SG

d) Burial Ground Committee

Councillor Burton presented the following report on behalf of the Burial Ground Committee (BGC):

- Membership - During the past year Richard Green resigned as Chair of the BGC and was thanked for all of the hard work he has done over many years. The BGC now consists of Councillor Hodgetts as Chair plus two members, Councillor Burton and Chris Pepler. An updated Terms of Reference has been agreed by the Parish Council and posted on the village website. The main function of the BGC is to ensure the Burial Ground is well-maintained and safe, and that regulations, which have been updated during the year, are being adhered to.

- Administration & Finance - This responsibility is now undertaken by the Clerk on behalf of the BGC. During the year, records have been reviewed and digitised where appropriate, with any queries arising being investigated and resolved. The bank account previously held separately for the Burial Ground has been closed, with finances now being managed through the Parish Council bank account. Income has been received during the year due to burials and plot purchases which has helped to offset ongoing maintenance costs. The Clerk has also taken steps to regularise the issue of ownership of the Burial Ground.
- Maintenance - the Burial Ground is in good order with regular mowing and hedge-cutting being carried out. Contracts for these activities have been tendered and renewed during the year. In addition, members of the Parish Council and a neighbouring farmer have assisted with hedge-cutting work. The BGC has periodically levelled graves when needed and carried out the annual 'push test' to check memorial safety.

e) Police Liaison Representative (PLR) & Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Paul Harrison as the Parish's PLR & NHW Co-ordinator:

- PLR wise, I have received no feedback from residents regarding crime issues that may be concerning them. My intent is to still meet our assigned Police Constable. However, as things stand, that will be not be until April. The main focus will be vehicles speeding through the village. His options are limited but there are tools at his disposal to help us out. He has stated that speed cameras are not solely a police decision. Accident statistics are a factor however, so is potential revenue...
- No news is good news in terms of NHW and at present, there have been no recent reports of issues in the area outside of 'normal' criminal activity. We are very fortunate on that front.

f) Footpath Warden

The Footpath Warden, Alan Langley, in attendance, reported:

- Over the past fortnight I have walked virtually all the parish paths, through the usual seasonal mud and small lakes. I found no new problems, but nearly all the old ones still remain to be fixed.
- In March 2021 I reported a number of problems before last year's annual meeting. Eight of these are unchanged since last year, despite the responses on StreetDoctor being that they were hopefully to be attended to 'in the next 6 months' or 'the next three months' or even 'the next four weeks'. Two problems of waterlogging were expected to be dealt with 'during the summer months'. There is the extreme case of the fingerpost which was thrown into a ditch that I reported in April 2020 and has still not been replaced. So a lot remains to be done.
- Over the past year the only reports I have made were that the bridge at the foot of the Gosse which was rotting and had a hole in the middle was repaired by Robert Gowling as nothing had been done. And in October I reported that the path at the back of the village hall was very difficult, because of the slippery, muddy slope in the middle section. I was told that there would be some news on this 'within weeks'. Just as I was finishing this report, an email unexpectedly arrived to say it was being investigated, so maybe something will happen to improve this path.
- So progress has been minimal, to put it charitably. However, most of the paths are usable, even if the stiles are wobbly or split and the handrails are rotting.

- On a brighter note, it is good to see that the Farndon Walks leaflet has reached its final format and can go on the village website and perhaps eventually into a flyer for walkers to take round with them.

g) Women's Institute

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Jean Westwood on behalf of the Women's Institute, as follows:

- East Farndon WI held its first post-covid meeting in September 2021.
- Unfortunately, at the AGM in October, due to disability and other reasons, we were unable to form a committee. Reluctantly, it was decided to close in the new year.
- The suspension is for three years. If anyone wishes to restart the WI, it is easily done and there will be some money to help with the restart.
- We were all very sad to close after 88 years and hope that in the future the WI will again be part of East Farndon village life.

h) Amenity Land Committee

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by David Thake on behalf of the Amenity Land Committee:

- This year we have received the valuable help of two or three gardening volunteers, who have kept the weeds at bay, and to whom we are very grateful.
- The grass was regularly mowed during the summer months, and now looks in good condition.
- The trellis broken on the container (by the footballers) has been replaced.
- As our fund raising this year has been small, we have applied for, and received two small covid grants from West Northamptonshire Council.
- Our financial situation for the coming year looks sound.

i) Tree Wardens

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by the Tree Wardens, Jessica Oakden and Judy Hodgetts:

- Quarterly inspections have been carried out during the past 12 months, and the tree wardens also monitor the trees when walking around the village.
- There are approximately 30 trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them (some are in groups under one TPO). All the trees were photographed in October 2019 and the state of them noted for use as comparison.
- All homeowners with trees on their land under a TPO were advised in writing by East Farndon PC in November 2019, and a guide to tree preservation procedures was included with this. This guide plus a TPO map and list are both available on the village website.
- Current Issues:
 - Two oak trees were felled without permission at 2 Rectory Court (T4 and T5). The owner is happy to replant and is still waiting to hear from Michael Venton with advice. Tree wardens have chased him and are awaiting a response.
 - Ash tree in the field opposite The Manor: Due to the dry weather conditions in August 2021 and the general state of the tree, several large branches became rotten and fell, leaving little left of the tree. Mr Cowan contacted Michael Venton at WNC, who agreed that the tree could be felled, with replanting to take place in autumn 2021. There is no evidence of this to date and the tree wardens continue to monitor.
- No trees with TPOs were damaged during the storms in February 2022.
- It is planned to plant a tree to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the proposal is to plant a small, native species on the road-side bank of Marriott

Green. The tree wardens will meet with Caroline Burton and Sonya Fraser (Trustee of Marriott Green) over the Easter break to discuss this further.

5. Finance

Clerk reported that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 were successfully audited both internally and externally. Accounts are in good order and the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 will be finalised and will be brought before the Parish Council at the May meeting for approval.

6. Any Other Business/Public Participation - None

Date of next meeting – 15th March 2023 - Annual Meeting of the Parish (provisional date)

Councillor Burton thanked everyone for sending their reports to the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record

Chairman _____

Dated _____

Councillors Report - prepared for East Farndon Parish Meeting

Jonathan Harris - Brixworth Ward

March 2022

Background

West Northants Council has been up and running since vesting day on the 1st April last year with Councillors being elected the following month. The current make-up of the council is as follows:

- 65 Conservative councillors
- 20 Labour councillors
- 5 Liberal Democrats
- 3 Independents

The council is run in 'cabinet' style meaning that the vast majority of decisions are made by the cabinet made up of a Conservative administration. Cabinet meets once a month and is open to members of the public to make statements and councillors to question/comment on the deliberations of the cabinet.

It is fair to say the council is still finding its feet, and operating to some degree in silos. There is work taking place to address this, and it is worth remembering that although there was an extra year for the council formation, COVID came along and certainly did not help in the preparation or transformation process.

The council continues to evolve and there is ongoing restructuring taking place in planning, transformation and sustainability.

Brixworth Ward

The Brixworth ward is made up of 20 plus parish councils and/or parish meetings, serving the following:

Arthingworth, Brixworth, Clipston, Cold Ashby, Cottesbrooke, Creaton, Draughton, East Farndon, Elkington, Great Oxendon, Hanging Houghton, Haselbech, Kelmars, Lamport, Maidwell, Marston Trussell, Naseby, Scaldwell, Sibbertoft, Sulby, Thornby, Welford and Winwick. Some 5,000 dwellings and an electorate of around 10,000 people.

My year as Councillor

The primary focus of my twelve months has been working and serving the needs of parishes and residents alike, dealing with issues as needed and working a wide variety of case work. I have attended 30 plus parish council meetings since the May elections.

My council responsibilities include representation at the following committees and working groups:

Committees:

Strategic Planning

Democracy and Standards

Planning policy

In addition I have responsibilities on the following **Working Groups:**

Equalities board

Boundary review

Welford Education Trust (council nominated position)

Bus Service Improvement

Bus Enhanced Partnership

Norse Liaison

Constitution Review

New from April 2022

Sustainability oversight group

In addition to these committees and working groups, there are regular briefings and training sessions and my group regularly attend meetings with officers, including Director of Place, Director of Adults, Childrens Trust, S151 Finance Director. I attend regular monthly cabinet meetings - usually 2 or 3 Lib Dem councillors - where we make statements, ask questions and challenge thinking of the cabinet with a view to encouraging them to see an alternative perspective to the issues that they are debating.

Some of the Lib Dems areas of focus and campaigns:

- Our equality motion to ensure access to services for those without internet access was successfully supported in July 2021 - still ongoing work and challenge.
- We are fighting for focus on climate - finally resulting in council signing UK100 net zero pledge & holding council to account on their yet to be published strategy
- We are fighting for greener planning policy
- We are continuing to push for council to become White Ribbon accredited in the campaign for the prevention of violence against women and girls.
- We have a petition and campaign for pension divestment away from fossil fuels to greener portfolios
- We campaigned to save Fraser Park (Northampton) green space from developers (the inspector in local planning is now insisting that equivalent green space must be found)
- We've campaigned for pension divestment from Fossil fuels to greener funds and for more ethical investments, particularly on light of the war in Ukraine
- Myself and my team have carried out a number of 'knock and drop' survey visits to villages within the Brixworth ward to get views on local resident issues and we plan to include East Farndon in this approach during the Spring.

Budget Amendments

I recently led and presented the Liberal Democrats alternative budget priorities over and above those suggested by the administration. These included:

- A further £300K investment in the Childrens Trust for preventive, early intervention measures. This would help prevent children going into care unnecessarily and improve their early life chances. In a comparison group, Northamptonshire has the second highest spend linked to putting children in to care.
- A further £900k investment in climate initiatives and measures to kick-start the councils response to the climate emergency. The Conservatives pushed to redeclare a climate emergency last July, but we are yet to see their strategy
- Proposals for some organisational changes for the transformation team. The reorganisation was sold on the basis that a transformative programme would bring efficiencies and cost savings but these are extremely slow to materialise, especially given the fact that the council's formation was delayed by a year.
- £75K specifically on education programmes and to get the council White Ribbon Accredited on our journey to prevent violence against women and girls
- £80k to prevent car parking hikes of over 10% in our country parks. There is a stark contrast here with no proposed increases for our towns.

Our amendments weren't supported at the meeting but the council is making changes to the transformation team along the lines that we proposed.

Current general information

Recently the council launched a monthly newsletter for parish councils. Please provide feedback either directly or to councillors in regard to the usefulness of the format and content. It is proposed that a printed household magazine (similar to Daventry Calling) will be produced twice a year starting in the Summer.

In the latest newsletter, items to note, specifically requiring feedback include:

The BIG Conversation

Town and parish communities across West Northants are being encouraged to get involved in the biggest conversation yet about shaping local services and improving our community. This week West Northamptonshire Council launched the Thrive West Northants Big Conversation – an online forum where residents and businesses can have their say on anything and everything to help develop future plans to make our area thrive.

With our Corporate Plan in place setting out our bold vision and objectives, we have a clear view on what we need to deliver across West Northants and it's really important to us that we understand what this means to town and parish councils in our area and what your priorities are. Together we

- Will agree what we need to improve and focus on,
- Think about the future sustainability of West Northants,
- Shape good local services for your area and set out what we expect from each other.

We will use your feedback to help shape how we, at West Northamptonshire Council engage, involve and interact with local communities. The conversation forum is anonymous and open 24/7 over the next three weeks, enabling people to comment, discuss and suggest ideas. Residents who are unable to access the internet can join in the conversation by visiting their local library. The conversation runs until 21 March when the comments will be analysed. Please join in the big conversation at thrive.westnorthants.gov.uk

Consultation on Public Spaces Protection Orders

Residents have the opportunity to give their views on proposals for a new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to encourage responsible dog ownership in the Daventry and South Northants areas. Under the proposed new PSPO, dog owners could be fined £100 if they fail to:

- Pick up their dog's mess and dispose of it properly
- Carry the means to pick up after their dog
- Prevent their dog to enter public places from which dogs are excluded, such as play areas and some leisure facilities
- Keep their dog on a lead when required to do so, such as in cemeteries, car parks and outside schools on school days
- Put their dog on a lead when asked to do so by an authorised officer.

Other proposals for the PSPO include limiting the number of dogs that anyone can walk at one time to four, and prohibiting people from smoking in children's play areas, skate parks, and certain other leisure settings.

The six-week consultation period started on 21 February and runs until Monday 4 April. You can have your say on the [Council's Consultation Hub](#)

If introduced, the PSPO would apply across both the former Daventry District and South Northants authority areas until September 2023. An existing PSPO covering parts of the former Northampton Borough also runs until then, offering the potential for a single set of regulations to be introduced across the whole of West Northants from that date.

Green Waste Bin Renewals

How to subscribe

The annual subscription charge for the fortnightly service from April 2022 to the end of March 2023 is £42 per bin, and people have a range of options for how to subscribe.

Online: The quickest and most popular way to subscribe is via the website using a debit or credit card at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/gardenwaste

As most people are subscribing online, this can create a large demand which may occasionally cause issues with the payment portal. If this happens, please try again later – residents can sign up at any time before the new service starts on 4 April, and there's no deadline before then, so they won't miss out. We would encourage anyone who can sign up online to do so, as it's the quickest and easiest way to sign up.

Over the phone: People can also sign up by calling us on our main number 0300 126 7000, where a customer advisor will take their payment. Sometimes our lines can be extremely busy, but if this happens please try again later.

In person: Residents who do not have the internet, or who are not confident going online, can use the PCs in the reception areas of our offices in Towcester, Daventry or Northampton, where a customer advisor will be happy to guide them through the process.

Credit and debit card payments: Please be aware that banks have recently changed the way online and over the phone credit card payments are authenticated. Under this new process users are sent a code - via email, text or via an app - to verify payment.

Spacial Options/Local Plan Consultation next phase

The next stage of consultation on the local plan/spacial options, is likely to take place in the Autumn of this year.

Brixworth Ward information

We are planning to introduce a "Shopper Hopper" service around Brixworth, working in conjunction with Community MiniBus (a 14 seater minibus) The plan will be to bring shoppers to the new Aldi in Moulton/Overstone Leys or to Weston Favell Centre/Brixworth stop enabling them to travel and do their weekly shopping independently. Bus pass holders will be able to travel for free.

The route will be 'on demand' and will initially cover Cottesbrooke, Haselbech, Naseby, Cold Ashby, Thornby, Creaton and Brixworth. The pilot service will launch on Tuesday 17th May.

I hope that we will be able to run the pilot for two to three months to gauge demand with a view to running a regular weekly service from there on in.

Jonathan Harris
March 2022