

**EAST FARNDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AT THE VILLAGE HALL
GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2024 COMMENCING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL
MEETING OF THE PARISH**

PRESENT: Mr M Curtis (Chair), Mr B Fallon, Ms E Pepler, Ms M Duke, Mr P Hodgetts, Ms S Beesley, Mr T Knott

Mrs C Burton (Clerk to the Parish Council)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE – WNC Councillor Harris and three residents

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received and accepted from WNC Councillors Irving-Swift and Parker.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 17th January 2024

The Minutes of the above meeting were agreed by all Councillors and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

ACTION	PROGRESS
Councillors Beesley and Knott to gather information from other Climate Action groups in nearby parishes, to inform possible future action.	Ongoing
Councillor Curtis to scope proposals for Spring renovation work and possible costs.	Carried forward
Councillor Curtis and Clerk to develop a village story, covering heritage information, for the website.	Ongoing
Councillor Beesley to organise work on the village hall bin.	Carried forward
Councillor Hodgetts to obtain advice on wild flower planting in the Burial Ground Extension.	Done. Wildflower planting and associated budget of £150 was agreed by the Parish Council via email, and work will be carried out by the Burial Ground Committee.
Councillor Beesley to organise renovation of the Lubenham Road bench, subject to Parish Council agreement to costs.	Added to agenda
Clerk to arrange a gift for Phil Cooper (BRM).	Done
Councillor Fallon to progress agreed speed reduction measures.	Added to agenda
The Parish Council to consider whether it needs to respond to the initial consultation on HDC's Local Plan, based on advice from WNC Councillor Parker.	Done. Based on advice received, no response required at this stage.
Councillor Pepler to report other known blocked footpaths to Mr Dargie, and to enquire about dog-friendly access to footpaths.	Done – Mr Dargie is investigating.
Clerk to add Village signage to the March 2024 agenda.	Done – added to agenda

ACTION	PROGRESS
Clerk to draft a biodiversity policy and action plan.	Done – added to agenda
Councillors Curtis and Hodgetts to co-ordinate the D-Day Event on 6 June 2024.	Ongoing
Councillor Hodgetts to liaise with the PCC for a decision on the Church fete.	Done – added to agenda
Councillor Duke to advise the PCC and the footpath warden about cars parking on the path to the church.	Done
Clerk to submit 2024/25 precept requirement and payment requisition form to WNC.	Done
Clerk to update the Risk Assessment to reflect an annual fixed asset audit.	Done

5. Roads and Transport

- **Progress Update on speed Reduction Measures**

Councillor Fallon reported that SpeedWatch starts in April for four weeks and there are enough volunteers.

Additionally, Councillor Fallon reported that Highways engineers had agreed in principle that physical speed reductions measures could be introduced at the north end of the village. Further, a reduction of the speed limit between the parish and the Market Harborough border had been agreed in principle, subject to provision of further information.

ACTION: Councillor Fallon to continue to progress speed reduction measures.

6. Planning and Development

- **Applications granted - None**
- **Applications for consideration**

2024/0359/TPO Works to Trees (Preservation Order) - Land adj to 1 Farrer Cottages Main Street East Farndon LE16 9SJ

The Parish Council had considered this application and commented as follows: The tree report refers to work required on a neighbouring TPO tree (T1), the removal of the Ash (T2 - this application) and planting of a replacement. The removal of this tree is partially based on the fact that T1 then stands a better chance of survival; therefore, the recommended work on T1 should also be carried out. The Parish Council cannot see in the application proposals for replanting, and the works recommended on T1 are not covered by this application.

Therefore, it would only support this application if these issues are addressed.

Michael Venton subsequently contacted the Parish Council to confirm that replanting will be a condition of approval and the work on T1 will be a separate application.

The application was granted on 12 March 2024, subject to various conditions including the replanting and an application being required for T1.

7. Other Matters

- **Footpath Report**

The Clerk had circulated the footpath report from Jonny Dargie to all Councillors. In summary:

Path maintenance and signage: A couple of improvements have been made and one new addition to the list of issues has been added and reported to the council contractors (detailed list provided).

Access: The ROW network is very wet and muddy given the recent weather but is accessible in all areas. As Spring approaches some warmer and drier weather would help the network become more accessible.

Parish council actions and feedback: There were two queries forwarded as below:

- Muddy rights of way access: it was noted that a number of the fields, gates and stiles had become very muddy. This was discussed with the council contractor on the recent site visit to East Farndon, and it was agreed that as the village is in the countryside and that many of the rights of ways pass through working farm fields that it was inevitable that some would get muddy during periods of heavy rain. Nothing more could be done until the weather improves or unless access becomes severely restricted – the issue will continue to be monitored.
- Parking on the church access path: without photographic evidence it was difficult to report the issue to the council contractors. In addition, it was not clear if this was a matter for the church authorities or a matter for the council highways team as opposed to it being a rights of way issue.
- In both of the above instances, if photographic evidence could be provided for any future issues that would be very helpful. Also, council members and villagers can report any issues that are rights of way, pavement or highways/road related concerns to the FixMyStreet website themselves at any time - which will result in Kier, the council contractors, being obliged to investigate and undertake remedial action as required.

- **West Northamptonshire Local Plan - Parish Engagement**

As part of the development of the new West Northamptonshire Local Plan, WNC are consulting parishes on settlement hierarchy and how to define settlement confines. The former Daventry and South Northamptonshire authorities developed their own approaches to these, and now a single methodology for West Northamptonshire is needed.

A settlement hierarchy is a way of categorising settlements based on factors such as the range of services and facilities they provide and access to public transport. The purpose of a settlement hierarchy is to help direct new development to the most sustainable locations. East Farndon is currently classed as 'Other Village' under the existing Daventry Local Plan, as it has minimal facilities.

Settlement or village confines represent the extent of a settlement's main built up area and where certain policies apply. They are used to direct development to the most sustainable locations whilst protecting the character of the countryside, villages and towns. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, East Farndon currently does not have an agreed confines map in place (although WNC have confirmed previously that our old map from 2003 is a good guide to work from); when considering planning applications, WNC currently rely on the 'Other Village' Daventry planning guidance, which is 'woolly'. As part of the development of the Local Plan, this initial consultation is asking whether confines maps should be agreed with parishes.

The Parish Council reviewed the consultation document and agreed its response, together with a map detailing where it believes the village confines fall.

ACTION: Clerk to submit the Parish Council's response to WNC's Parish Engagement consultation on the new Local Plan.

ACTION: Councillor Curtis to organise publication on the website of the Parish Council's response to WNC's Parish Engagement consultation on the new Local Plan.

- **Renovation of the Lubenham Road Bench**

Jack Beesley and Will Evans, in attendance, have offered to renovate the Lubenham Road bench, as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. The Parish Council gratefully accepted their offer, and agreed the design and cost of up to £100.

ACTION: Councillor Beesley to supervise the renovation of the Lubenham Road bench.

- **Village Signage (including The Lealand signage)**

Councillor Beesley raised the possibility of getting a bespoke village sign, to reflect the heritage of East Farndon. The Parish Council agreed that a village emblem should first be developed.

ACTION: Councillor Beesley to investigate the development of a village emblem.

A resident had raised a query on re-instatement of The Lealand road signs. Councillor Fallon had been advised by WNC that this matter was in hand.

- **Draft Biodiversity Policy & Action Plan**

The Clerk had circulated to all Councillors a draft Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan, based on NCALC's model. She had also circulated DEFRA maps covering the parish of all the biodiversity-related mapped datasets. The Parish Council resolved to adopt the Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for the Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan to be placed on the website.

ACTION: Clerk to meet with Nigel Haynes to discuss the DEFRA biodiversity-related maps.

- **2024 Fete Arrangements**

Councillor Hodgetts had confirmed with the PCC that they did not intend to organise a fete this year. Consequently, the Parish Council agreed that it would organise it this year, and Councillors Duke, Fallon, Beesley and Knott, and Julia Prew (PCC) have formed a community group to manage this. The date of the fete is 15 June 2024 and will take place on the Haynes field. This will be a PC event, covered by the PC's insurance. Separately, the PCC will organise a raffle with the draw taking place at the fete.

The Parish Council agreed that it would cover up to £500 upfront fete costs, to be repaid from fete proceeds; in the event of a loss, the Parish Council will fundraise to cover any sunk costs.

ACTION: Clerk to apply for a Temporary Event Notice for the 2024 fete.

- **East Midlands Airport Future Airspace - Stage 2**

Councillor Fallon had attended meetings on this issue in January 2024, and provided all Councillors with a handout, highlighted the next stage consultation. In summary, the proposals may result in increased noise and level of aircraft traffic in the parish.

ACTION: Councillor Fallon to organise a website article to seek feedback from residents on the East Midlands Airport Further Airspace proposals.

ACTION: Clerk to add East Midlands Airport Further Airspace proposals to the May 2024 agenda.

- **Rotation of Parish Council Chair**

Councillor Curtis reported that he believes that it is healthy to rotate the position of Chair on a regular basis and therefore he intends to step down as Chair at the May meeting having held the role for 3 years, but will remain as a Parish Councillor.

8. Finance

- **Bank Reconciliation as at close of business on 17 March 2024**

Balance as at 15 January 2024

Current account

£6,313.51

Deposit account

£11,713.10

£18,026.61

<u>Income</u>			
Refund of Section 50 Licence Fee		£321.00	
Interest		£25.88	
			£346.88
<u>Expenses</u>			
C Burton		£50.00	
The Doodle Cloud		£54.00	
C Burton		£198.40	
Yu Energy		£65.39	
Yu Energy		£12.54	
Yu Energy		£11.02	
C Burton		£1,157.60	
Yu Energy		£10.31	
Yu Energy		£57.61	
Yu Energy		£11.69	
WNC		£116.00	
			-£1,744.56
<u>Balance as at 17 March 2024</u>			
Current account		£4,889.95	
Deposit account		£11,738.98	
			£16,628.93

The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Councillor Fallon.

• **Actual v. Budgeted Spending as at 17 March 2024**

	Precept Agreed	Expenditure to Date	Balance
Streetlighting and Maintenance	£1,480.00	1088.06	£391.94
NCALC	£280.00	£283.32	-£3.32
Insurance	£715.00	£800.82	-£85.82
S137 Spending	£600.00	430.44	£169.56
Training	£100.00	£48.00	£52.00
Mowing of Burial Ground/Hedges	£3,000.00	2711.82	£288.18
Clerk Gross Salary	£3,650.00	3728.34	-£78.34
Parish Council/Clerk Expenses	£700.00	788.11	-£88.11
Bin Collection	£630.00	£633.60	-£3.60
Defibrillator Expenses	£200.00	£135.00	£65.00
Churchyard Maintenance	£600.00	£600.00	£0.00
TOTAL	£11,955.00	£11,247.51	£707.49
Spending from Reserves (see below)		£11,065.75	
VAT		£1,601.13	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£23,914.39	

RESERVES		Receipts	Payments	Balance
Lighting Replacement	£3,000.00		£3,986.28	Closed
Renovation of Village Spring	£1,500.00			£1,500.00
Burial Ground/Churchyard Maintenance Work	£4,260.00		£880.00	£3,380.00
War Memorial Maintenance	£1,950.00	£6,540.50	£5,000.00	£3,490.50
Coronation	£250.00		£121.80	Closed
Fixed Asset Spending	£2,000.00		£1,077.67	£922.33

• **The following payments were agreed by all Councillors**

Payee	Reason	Amount	Chq no
C Burton	Gift for P Cooper	£50.00	Online
The Doodle Cloud	Website Domain Fees	£54.00	Online
C Burton	Backdated payrise April-November 2023	£198.40	Online
Yu Energy	Electricity	£65.39	Direct Debit
Yu Energy	Electricity	£12.54	Direct Debit
Yu Energy	Electricity	£11.02	Direct Debit
C Burton	December 2023 - March 2024 Salary and Expenses	£1,157.60	Online
Yu Energy	Electricity	£10.31	Direct Debit
Yu Energy	Electricity	£57.61	Direct Debit
Yu Energy	Electricity	£11.69	Direct Debit
WNC	Garden Waste Bin Licences for the Burial Ground and Churchyard	£118.00	Direct Debit

9. Correspondence

- WNC's Highways department is reviewing the arrangements for the payment of Section 136 grant – grant paid to town and parish councils for taking on responsibility for mowing grass in their parish. Parishes who do not take part in this were asked if they would be willing/able to take this on and receive the grant with the right support, and if not, to provide reasons. The Parish Council considered this via email and advised that East Farndon does not wish to be considered within the new framework for the Section 136 grant; the main reasons are because it means more administration for a small Council, plus the grant and costs will appear in the accounts, pushing them nearer to the £25,000 limit for audit exemption.
- All other relevant correspondence (e.g. NCALC Newsletter) has been circulated to Councillors and shared on the village website and Facebook page where appropriate.

10. Any Other Business

- Councillor Beesley advised that due to her workload, she needed to step down from the Climate Action work. Councillor Curtis agreed to take this over (with Councillor Knott).

11. Date of the next meeting – 15th May 2024 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
Provisional meeting date – 17th April 2024

12. Closure

The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record

Chairman _____

Dated _____