

FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 12th April 2017 at 7.30pm
in Farthinghoe Village Hall



Councillors present: Mr Mick Morris (Vice Chair) (MM)
Mr John Grant (JG)
Mrs Jenny Forbes (JF)
Mrs Sally Thomas (ST)
Mr David Dashwood (DD)
Mr Henry Bankes-Jones (HBJ) (late arrival)
District Cllr Rebecca Breese (RB)

There were 15 households also in attendance.

Apologies: Mr Ross van Geest (Chair) (RVG)
County Cllr Ron Sawbridge (RS)
Mrs Philippa Clayton (Clerk)
Farthinghoe School
Safety Community Team

Guests: Chris Wragg, Northamptonshire Highways

ITEM	
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>A warm welcome was extended to all speakers, representatives of village organisations and villagers by Cllr Morris.</p>
2.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Ross van Geest, County Cllr Ron Sawbridge and the Clerk, Mrs Philippa Clayton, plus Farthinghoe School and the Safety Community Team.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th April 2016</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by Paul Rogers and seconded by Cyril Jarvis and were signed by the Vice Chairman as a true record.</p>
4.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
5.	<p>Reports:</p> <p>a) County Councillor Ron Sawbridge</p> <p>The County Council report was read by Cllr John Grant in Cllr Sawbridge's absence. Cllr Grant offered Cllr Sawbridge thanks for all he has done for Farthinghoe. (Appendix D)</p> <p>b) District Councillor Rebecca Breese</p> <p>District Councillor Rebecca Breese provided her report, of which a written copy is provided (Appendix C).</p> <p>Cllr Breese reported the main points to the parishioners.</p> <p>The question was asked as to who owns the waste collecting vehicles, "Cherwell & SNC"</p>

	<p>working together? The response was that each own their own vehicles.</p> <p>c) Chairman of the Parish Council Ross van Geest – read by Cllr Morris</p> <p>Cllr Morris read Cllr van Geest’s report, of which a copy is provided (Appendix A). A thank you was added by Cllr Morris to Jim Jones for his tireless work in keeping the village tidy and litter-free.</p> <p>d) Safety Community Team (written report – Appendix E)</p> <p>Cllr Morris stated that no one was available from the Safety Community Team due to shift patterns so a written report had been provided, copies of which were available to take away.</p>
6.	<p>Reports from Village organisations:</p> <p>a) Farthinghoe Church and Almshouses</p> <p>Reverend Simon Dommett summarised his written report (Appendix F & G), copies of which were available to take away.</p> <p>b) Farthinghoe Village Hall</p> <p>Wendy Hancock read the report (Appendix I) provided by the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, Philippa Clayton. A special thanks was also given to Duncan Richardson for his help with the storage area. Anyone who is not yet a member of the 150 Club was invited to see Wendy Hancock after the meeting.</p> <p>c) Mothers Union</p> <p>The report was read by Rosemary Jarvis.</p> <p>d) Church piece allotments</p> <p>The report was read by Ruth Dashwood. Allotments are available for use, please contact Ruth Dashwood.</p> <p>b) Farthinghoe School (Appendix H)</p> <p>A written report from the school was available to take away.</p>
7.	<p>Update on proposed Farthinghoe Bypass – Chris Wragg</p> <p>Mr Wragg explained that in January 2016 a report was taken to cabinet about road projects, where they reviewed priorities. At the meeting, it was said that Farthinghoe would be added if the project was supported by the village.</p> <p>Following consultations, support for a bypass was given by the village and support for the northern route was also given by the village.</p> <p>At the 9th November 2016 NCC Cabinet meeting, the Farthinghoe bypass was elevated to the status of Major Project Developments. A delay until March 2017 was caused by the late arrival of the notice of Central Government Project budgets.</p> <p>This late advice caused the delay in the moving forward of all projects and by chain reaction this affected progress of the start of planning for the Farthinghoe bypass.</p> <p>Mr Wragg stated he was confident that the scheme will be prepared for. When the scheme is taken forward it will be necessary to look at points raised by people regarding the northern route with a potential need to “tweak” the route.</p> <p>There is still a lot of environmental work to be done which is likely to take 18 months. This will lead to an Environmental Statement to be submitted alongside the Planning Application for the</p>

	<p>bypass.</p> <p>There will be statutory orders regarding road closure and regarding taking control of the land. Compulsory purchase could happen but there will be negotiation with landowners/homeowners.</p> <p>With regard to funding, it will cost £1 million to get the project to the point where it is ready to construct. Good points are that the bypass is a straightforward route with modest costs making it more viable. Construction costs are likely to be in the region of £12m/£14m.</p> <p>A Farthinghoe Bypass is realistic for the early 2020s. It will need ongoing support from government funding. It would be advisable for the Parish Council to contact the new County Councillor after the elections for their support.</p> <p>The following questions were asked:</p> <p>Q. Does our late acceptance on the “list” mean that we are way down the list? A. Maybe, but the list is not a long one, the project is 3rd on the list.</p> <p>Q. With the increased traffic from building in Banbury and Brackley, there are a lot of lorries, especially diesel. Do we have a case for measuring pollution? A. The “air quality”, “sensitive receptors” e.g. schools will be looked at by environmental specialist as the scheme is progressed.</p> <p>Q. How will HS2 impact our village, traffic-wise? A. The A422 is not on the HS2 construction traffic route. Additional traffic will switch to the A422 from other routes. A major problem is foreseen on the Brackley Tesco roundabout, which will be a challenge. HS2 will probably begin to affect Brackley next year. Mr Wragge has not had sight of the construction project plans yet.</p> <p>Q. Traffic monitoring? A. More traffic monitoring will take place. Mr Wragg will action this.</p> <p>Q. Can we do something to monitor pollution? A. The Environmental Department at SNC could be contacted about this.</p> <p>Q. “Euro Garages” – concern was expressed about the impact of this planned development on the Farthinghoe side of the M40 at Junction 11. A. Rebecca Breese stated that SNC is against this development. Cherwell and SNC have different, and sometimes conflicting, policies.</p>
8.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There was no other business and no questions from the public.</p>

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at **8.45pm**.

FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Parish Meeting
Village Hall
19.30 12th April 2017

I would like to start by welcoming everyone attending the 2017 Farthinghoe Annual Parish Meeting. I am also delighted to welcome back this year our County Councillor Ron Sawbridge MBE and our District Councillor Rebecca Breese. I would also like to welcome Chris Wragg who is responsible for transport planning at Northamptonshire County Council. Chris is kindly attending this evening to update the parish on progress with the proposed bypass.

This year has been another busy year for the parish council and am pleased to report that solid progress has again been made.

Traffic

One of the major issues impacting our Parish continues to be traffic. As such, traffic remains a high priority to the Parish Council and I would like to specifically thank Councillor Grant and Councillor Morris for their continued hard work on behalf of this parish in relation to this ongoing issue.

At the 2015 APM we reconfirmed our commitment to obtain a bypass for Farthinghoe, having been passed over for around 30 years. Over the past 12 months we have made real progress with the village bypass being added to the Northamptonshire County Council list of major projects. Furthermore, funding has now been allocated to undertake the technical work required to identify the exact routing of the preferred 2.3km northern bypass. Considerable additional funding will now be required in order to make our bypass a reality. This is a huge opportunity for the village and we must now campaign as hard as we possibly can for funding.

At the last APM we advised that a 30mph speed limit along with new signage would be put in place around the upgraded village playpark. The actual implementation of the speed limit and signage was heavily delayed by Northamptonshire Highways. However, Councillor John Grant has worked tirelessly to make the speed limit a reality and to ensure additional safety for our children and this is now in place.

Village Hall

This year has seen considerable change at the village hall. At the October AGM, Pip Clayton was appointed the new chairperson of the village hall committee taking over from Pete Hampson. Pete has served the committee for 15 years, 10 of which as chairman and we thank him profusely for all the hard work he has put into running the village hall over that time. At the same meeting, Dave Hancock was appointed as clerk and four new committee members were appointed.

I have no doubt that Pip will very quickly take the village hall to the next level and indeed this has already been visible. The reporting, procedures and transparency that Pip has implemented for the Parish Council are now being replicated within the village hall committee to great success.

I would like to thank everyone on the village hall committee for their ongoing hard work to maintain and enhance it for the benefit of the parish. I would also like to thank Jon Hampson who resigned in January. Jon has been a big supporter of the village hall putting in a considerable amount of time whilst also maintaining the grounds. I would also like to specifically thank Dave Hancock and Mike Phipps for designing and building the new storage area and bar which is a fantastic addition to the hall. Thanks also to Duncan Bragg and Duncan Richardson for their help with the project.

Maintenance and Parking

The visual appearance of our village is something that the Parish Council attempts to maintain with extremely limited resources. There is also very limited assistance from NCC which we must fight extremely hard to obtain each year and a very small parish budget for maintenance. I would therefore

like to ask again this year that everyone in the parish does their bit where possible to help with the public areas near to their own homes whilst also treating the rest of the village with respect.

Please be aware of the following issues around the village and do your part to reduce them:

- **Dog fouling**, is continuing and there really is no excuse for this. Please bag it and put it in one of the dog fouling bins around the village.
- **Business signage**, whilst it is important for local businesses to promote themselves to villagers and passing traffic, any such road signage should only be placed on the business's own land/property and not encroach highways. The amount of illegal signage in the village is on the rise and detracts from its visual appearance. We have also experienced illegal signage from other villages which has been dealt with by the Parish Council.
- **Obstructive Parking**, more and more cars are parking near junctions and bends which is forcing vehicles into the path of oncoming vehicles or simply blocking access to other resident’s properties. Parking that blocks the highway is an offence under the road traffic act 1988 so please be considerate to other residents and road users. If accidents occur due to illegal parking, then the offending person can become liable for the accident and associated costs.
- **Parking on verges**, continues to damage the verges around the village and in many cases the grass is unlikely to grow back.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a personal thank you to everyone that gets involved in maintaining the appearance of the village.

Street Lights

We continue to investigate the potential benefits of upgrading the streetlights in Farthinghoe to LED’s as well as different options to fund the upgrade. We hope to be able to report progress at the next APM.

Precept

I am pleased to report that the precept has been maintained at £7,150 against a backdrop of rising council taxes across the county. Indeed, whilst the village precept remains the same the actual cost per household has reduced this year by 4.6%.

The parish council started the year with £5,230.50 of cash reserves and closed the year with £5,926.14 an increase in reserves of £695.64. The precept of £7,150 almost exactly matched expenditure of £7,174.86. However, the parish council benefited from additional income of £720.50 some of which was due to the successful application for grant funding.

Turning to the playpark fund the opening balance at the 1st April 2016 was £1,740.86. The playpark fund has been the beneficiary of £501.48 in income over the year primarily due to fund raising and with only £50 in costs the closing balance as at the 31st March 2017 was £2,192.34.

Total parish council funds as at the 31st March 2017 were therefore £8,118.48.

Financial Report Year Ending 31st March 2017

Please refer to the financial report dated 31st March 2017.

Resignation

It is with great disappointment that I must this evening announce my resignation as Chairman of the Farthinghoe and Steane Parish Council after 3 years as Chairman. Over the last 3 years I feel that I have achieved the goals that I set when taking on the role which were:

- 1) To put in place strong communication between the parish council and the parishioners whilst also installing trust and confidence in the parish council.
- 2) Enhancing Farthinghoe, we have seen a brand new playpark, major road improvements through the village and considerable enhancements to the village hall. Hopefully we are also now well on the road towards a bypass for the village.
- 3) Protecting Farthinghoe, there have been numerous risks to the village with none greater than the proposed solar park which was fought off by a highly organised and united village. This has undoubtedly made us even more prepared to combat future risks.

Sadly, due to considerable work commitments I can no longer give the parish council my full commitment and it is therefore time for a new chairman to take the parish council forwards. I will though be remaining on the parish council and I look forward to personally supporting the new chairman who will be appointed at the next parish council meeting in May.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors, David Dashwood, John Grant, Mick Morris, Sally Thomas, Jenny Forbes and Henry Bankes-Jones for all the hard work and sacrifices that they continue to make on behalf of the village. I would also like to thank them for their personal support to myself over the last three years which is greatly appreciated. Last but certainly not least I would like to say a very special thank you to our parish clerk Pip Clayton. Pip has not only transformed the organisation of this parish council over the last three years but she has also dramatically improved communication. Thank you Pip for your support during my time as chairman.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to attend tonight’s APM.

Ross van Geest
Chairman

APPENDIX B – FINANCIAL REPORT 2017

In the financial year to 31st March 2017, the Parish Council continued to provide for precept funds and playpark funds separately within the accounting process to ensure that the funds raised so diligently by parishioners can be clearly accounted for. The Financial Report therefore reflects this accounting process.

Precept funds

Opening balance at 1st April 2016: £5,230.50

The precept for the year to 31st March 2017 increased to £7,150 after there had been no increase for the previous six years.

Income received in the year:		Expenditure in the year (incl. VAT):	
VAT refunds	£260.44	Street lighting	£1,356.96
Interest	£0.06	Grass cutting	£840.00
The Fox (Chronicle advertising)	£120.00	Subscriptions	£36.00
Transparency fund	£340.00	Administrational costs	£2,318.27
		Clerk's costs	£1,700.00
		IT equipment	£736.43
		General maintenance	£187.20
Total income	£720.50	Total expenditure	(£7,174.86)

Opening Balance	£5,230.50
Precept	£7,150.00
Income received	£720.50
Expenditure	(£7,174.86)
Closing Balance at 31st March 2016:	£5,926.14

Item	2015 costs (excl. VAT)	2016 costs (excl.VAT)	% increase (where applicable)
Street lighting			
- Electricity	£701.93	£855.24	22%
- Maintenance	£359.00	£382.47	6.5%
Administration			
- Insurance	£640.23	£720.70	12.6%
- Internal audit fee	£155.00	£162.00	4.5%
- External audit fee	£0.00	£200.00	
- NCALC subscription	£247.75	£245.74	-0.8%
- Chronicle printing	£795.60	£795.60	
- Election fee	£78.00	£0.00	
- Clerk's salary	£1,400.00	£1,400.00	
- Clerk's expenses	£300.00	£300.00	
- Clerk training	£150.00	£0.00	
- Website domain name renewal	£41.65	£41.65	
- Website hosting and support service	£61.88	£61.88	
- IT equipment		£613.69	
- Land registry		£30.00	
Mowing	£800.00	£840.00	5%
General maintenance			
- Dog waste disposal	£78.00	£156.00	100%
- Refurbishment of noticeboard	£45.00	£0.00	
- Playpark safety inspection	£42.30	£0.00	
Council for Protection of Rural England subs	£36.00	£36.00	

Explanation of increases

The 22% increase in electricity costs are due to the unit costs charged by E.ON increasing from 12.4p per kWh to 14.4p per kWh which applied from 1st July 2016. We continue to investigate the option of LED street lights, which is an ongoing agenda item at the Parish Council meetings. Due to the considerable investment required and the fact that we have received conflicting advice, we will not move forward with this until we are sure that we are following the right route to ensure we receive the best return from the investment.

Maintenance contract costs on street lighting have remained static with the 5% increase coming from a required repair that was not covered until the contract.

The insurance increase is triggered in the main by the fact that the playpark equipment cover was for a full 12 months, whereas the previous year it had only been insured for 8 months, due to the installation date.

NCALC is the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils. The subscription fee pays for membership of NCALC and of NALC, the National Association of Local Councils. The subscription is based on the number of electorate, which for Farthinghoe and Steane dropped from 347 to 329, resulting in the cost reduction.

An external audit is only required where expenditure is over £10,000 in the year. Because of the playpark project, we fell into this category and so had to pay for an external audit in addition to the statutory internal audit.

The increase in mowing costs were due to an additional cut of the playing field being required. Having carried out a tender process for the mowing in 2015, we are confident that we are still receiving a very cost effective and efficient service in this area.

With the money from the transparency fund, the Parish Council purchased a laptop, printer and external hard drive. This provides us with the equipment required to comply with the transparency code.

The dog waste disposal service has moved from a fortnightly to a weekly collection. Whilst this has obviously doubled the cost, it also helps to make a safer environment for all parishioners and we would urge dog owners within the village to act responsibly and use the bins provided.

A full breakdown of the accounts is now uploaded monthly to the website so that at any time, parishioners will be able to see the current funding status for the parish.

Playpark funds

Opening balance at 1st April 2016: £1,740.86

Income received in the year		Expenditure in the year	
Race night fundraising	£203.00	J Hampson	£50.00
May Day fundraising	£185.00		
Church fete fundraising	£60.00		
VAT repayment	£53.48		
TOTAL	£501.48	TOTAL	(£50.00)

APPENDIX B – FINANCIAL REPORT 2017

Opening Balance	£1,740.86
Income received	£501.48
Monies paid out	(£50.00)

Closing Balance at 31st March 2017 **£2,192.34**

TOTAL CLOSING BALANCE AT 31ST MARCH 2017:

Precept	£5,926.14
Playpark	£2,192.34
TOTAL	£8,118.48

I hope this gives an indication of how the Parish Council spends the precept on your behalf. The Parish Council will be pleased to answer any questions.

Pip Clayton, Clerk to Farthinghoe Parish Council

2nd April 2017

Farthinghoe Annual Parish Meeting 2017
Report from District Council
ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS

A Great Place to Live

South Northants District continues to be ranked as one of the best places to live in the country. The Halifax survey rated SNC area as 16th, they have changed the methodology from previous years.

The waste and recycling record is very good having achieved a 60% recycling rate. This put SNC in 11th position in the country.

SNC Financial Highlights

Funding continues to be reduced from central government, we are getting less money from grant but with growing housing numbers, growing business rates we continue to balance the books.

The government gave SNC a four-year financial settlement in return for ongoing efficiency savings and we have a little more certainty but there are still many levers that government can pull to control expenditure. One of these is.....

New Homes Bonus

New Homes Bonus continues to be paid by SNC into separate parish ring fenced funds. SNC is one of the few Councils that pass 50% of this money back to directly benefit the areas of housing growth.

Changes made by the government mean that in 2017/18 new homes bonus will be paid for 5 years not 6 as pre 2016/17. It will reduce further in 2018/19 to 4 years. There is a new "deadweight" factor, that means in effect the first 155 houses built in SNC will not qualify for new homes bonus.

For 2017/18 the current allocation process will continue dividing the available pot by the number of houses per parish. This will be reviewed during the year.

The money accrued to date is safe and is still available for the parish to use. The rate of growth will slow in future years and should be flagged early.

2017 will see another £703,192 been added to the allocations to the parishes. In the previous years, £2.2 million has been allocated bringing the total to £2.9 million. So far £1.35 million has been spent leaving £1.54 million awaiting a bid from the parishes.

In addition to the Parishes the voluntary sector has also benefited from a funding allowing SNC to continue, and increase, the levels of support within the district.

Council Tax

The SNC part of the Council Tax bill was raised by £5 a year for a Band D property. The total now is £180.37 per year. Just in terms of your bin collections it is 87 pence per bin per week to have it emptied. (Based on Blue, Black, Green, Food)

Chief Executive

Sue Smith resigned from the Chief Executive role in mid-April. She was the first Joint Chief with Cherwell and has served SNC and CDC well since 2011. Under her leadership the joint working by Cherwell and South Northants has achieved combined staffing savings for the 2 authorities of £750,000 in the last financial year alone.

A replacement Joint Chief has been recruited. Her name is Yvonne Rees and she joins the combined authorities in mid July. Yvonne has extensive experience in introducing commercial drive to local government, which is a key element of council funding going forward, in order to a) reduce reliance on central government funding and b) keep council tax increases to a minimum.

Planning

The Local Plan Part 2A is now being discussed. The draft of this is public and available. SNC request feedback on this draft before a formal consultation will begin in the summer. In particular, there are maps showing the village confines which in large part have not changed much but do take into account any changes where for example a development has been allowed on appeal. There is a general desire to have clearer confine lines that can be followed on the ground.

The next steps for the plan are:-

- Summer 2017 – formal consultation
- Autumn 2017 – analysis of the comments made and changes (if any) made to the draft
- Early 2018 – Public Examination with the Planning Inspector
- Publication of the Plan with the Inspector Comments
- Autumn 2018 – Adoption of the Final Part 2 Plan.

There is a new Central Government White Paper that proposes changes to the planning system and the way that numbers of houses are assessed, until we know the details of these it is impossible to say if SNC plans are adequate or need revision. We continue to keep a watching brief.

One of the main areas of contention at planning appeals is the issue of the 5-year land supply. Developers often argue that this development should or should not be included in the formula. The White paper suggests there will be a standard method of assessment that all can follow. This should bring welcome clarity and mean there is some comparability between local authorities.

SNC have a land supply sufficient for 8.2 years. The land supply is based on assessing the number of houses we plan to build per the Core Strategy document, versus the number of planning permissions granted. We must have a minimum of 5 with a buffer for under delivery. At 8 we are well outside the bounds of argument.

Brackley Leisure Centre

Work has begun on the new Brackley swimming pool. The new 6 lane pool, with learner pool and other improvements to the gym areas should be completed by the end of the year.

The new leisure contract is now in place and delivering substantial returns, SNC moved from a position where it was costing every year to run these facilities, to a financial return to the council each year from the new operator, Parkwood Leisure.

Brackley Town Expansion

The developments of Radstone Fields continue to deliver housing rapidly. SNC had the biggest increase in new homes in the past year than at any time since the building of Grange Park 20 years ago. I am aware that such rapid growth is creating pressure on infrastructure and I would seek to resist any further expansion in Brackley until this is resolved.

Moat Lane

Moat Lane continues to be developed with work starting on the corner site along Northampton Road for retail shops and apartments above. The work that has been done regards new housing around the site is of an exceptionally high standard and is a real enhancement to the town.

Horton Hospital Consultation

SNC have been working with Cherwell, Stratford upon Avon and Banbury Town Councils to challenge the proposals to reduce the services at the Horton Hospital. We have written to the NHS to tell them that the split consultation is, in our view, unacceptable and we need them to have a single consultation that reveals in full, the CCG's intentions. I don't think having a consultation which asks 'do you want to have the best possible healthcare for your family' as a yes/no question is a valid consultation in itself! In addition, you are probably aware that South Northants, Cherwell, Warwickshire and Banbury Town Council have decided to pool resources and challenge, via a Judicial Review the consultation process. Approximately one third of SNC residents use the Horton and other health services in Banbury, it is a vital part of our health provision.

Supporting Local Business

As Non-Domestic Rates income is going to be a key element of SNC financing SNC needs to encourage business to relocate to the area and business to stay in the area.

To help attain these objectives we have allocated large areas of land for employment use in Silverstone and Junction 16 M1. The Silverstone land was subject to another outline planning permission to reflect the change in the market place and the desires of the new owners MEPC.

MEPC have delivered several new units on the site and opened a metallurgy lab for companies to measure and test components and parts to exacting standards allowing machinery to be rented by the hour that would not be viable to buy for smaller companies.

To support retail business in our market towns, SNC has established a fund to refurbish shop fronts in Towcester. A fund is now being planned for Brackley.

Both our market towns have a new policy to help bring long term empty properties back into use. SNC will give rates relief on properties that have been empty for more than 6 months in the centre of Brackley or Towcester. SNC has the lowest unemployment rate in the country. A jobs club was established in the district some years ago to match job seekers with employers and has helped over 350 residents in finding employment in the district.

Car Parking

There is now plentiful parking at the Forum in Towcester with 160 free long stay spaces a short walk by the watermeadows, and 3 hour restricted parking adjacent to the Forum itself.

Trying to resolve parking in Brackley is proving more problematic. The County Council are enforcing the market square parking more enthusiastically now, but a search for suitable sites for longer term parking is ongoing.

Supporting Major Projects in the District

SNC have arranged a £3m loan facility for the Silverstone Heritage Centre which is being funded by £9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will provide an excellent tourist attraction for the area and is due to open in 2019. Work has commenced on the refurbishment of the Grade 2* listed Brackley Town Hall which has been funded by £2.3m from Heritage Lottery Fund and £500k from both Brackley Town Council and SNC. This will ensure the iconic building in the centre of one of our historic market towns is assured and will kick start the regeneration of the Town Centre.

Unitary Debate

One of the big debates in local government at this time. Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxford DC and Vale of the White Horse DC have put forward a proposal to reorganise local government in that county, against the wishes of Oxford City Council, Cherwell (who work with us) and West Oxfordshire (who work with Cotswold District Council). The model put forward of a single unitary fails to recognise in any way the joint working that goes on between Cherwell and SNC, West Oxford and Cotswold. As a joint working authority we are pushing forward with our strategic plan.

Northampton County Council is also commissioning proposals as to how Unitary Authorities could work in our district. I have seen the Wiltshire model, which has a single unitary authority covering the whole district, with separate 'neighbourhood boards' that for example, have planning committees to provide a sense of local involvement. At the moment however the picture nationally is, I feel, rather confused, but we do have to recognise the pressure that is being placed on top tier authorities who have to fund, come what may, expensive, unrelenting demand on social care.

My Role

I am no longer portfolio holder for planning, moving to Transformation and Commercialisation. This is coordinating the strategic goal of joint working throughout the two organisations, and working towards a council that can sustain more of its core services through commercial activity, rather than government grant and taxation.

APPENDIX C – CLLR BREESE’S REPORT 2017

I continue to work with residents in my ward on planning issues, in the main, but also as a CAB specialist adviser, I see residents from across this part of South Northants on a wide range of personal issues, mostly relating to welfare benefits.

District Councillor Rebecca Breese

**COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT FOR FARTHINGHOE AND STEANE
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Budget for the financial year 2017/18 was agreed at the County Council Meeting on the 23rd February. Preparation of the Budget has not been easy, with continuing financial pressures reflecting the reduction in the Revenue Support Grant from central government and the rising costs being created mainly by the demand led services. These are Care for the Elderly and Disabled, and Services for Children and Families. The County Council part of the tax paid by residents has been increased by 5% with over half of this being ring-fenced to fund additional social care costs. The total net budget for the year is £416.8m. This includes £153m for Adult Social Care and £134m for Children, Families, and Education.

During the last twelve months the council has helped provide a safe environment for over 3,000 of the most vulnerable children and there are currently about 1,000 children in the care of the County Council. At the other end of the age profile the demand for adult social care is as high as ever and care assistance has been provided for over 11,000 elderly people. During the past year the Fire and Rescue Service attended over 4,000 incidents. This number is continuing to fall year on year reflecting the success of the fire prevention programme carried out through Home Safety Checks. On Education, additional school places have continued to be created with 300 more secondary school places than the previous year.

During the year I served on several committees including the Finance Scrutiny Committee. The council is facing continuing financial pressure and it is my firm belief that this pressure will not be lessened until a single unitary authority is formed. Do we really need to have the County Council, the Borough Council, and six District Councils? This arrangement requires about 350 councillors, and eight Chief Executives and senior management teams. To avoid significant costs in bringing about a change the experience of other authorities is being sought, particularly from our neighbouring county of Oxfordshire which has already prepared a study of the options. The recommendations resulting from this study are currently the subject of public consultation. The creation of a Unitary Authority is expected to save at least £100m over the next five years and a proposal to bring will have to be submitted to the government for approval after public consultation. The government would like proposals to be supported by the Borough of Northampton, the relevant District Council and Parish Council but I don't really think there is much chance of reaching a complete consensus on this in South Northamptonshire.

As my term of office comes to a close it is appropriate that I reflect back on some of the achievements of the County Council over the last four years. Not least is the hard work that has transformed our Children's Services from a poor service into one that is fit for purpose. The investment and sustained improvement programme relating to this service now enables the council to press on with the implementation of a new Children's Trust which will further enhance the care given to vulnerable children in the care of the local authority. In addition we have cost effective and good quality adult social care services, and our highways maintenance alliance with Kier is recognised as best value and ensures that we have the resources to repair over 40,000 potholes every year.

I am extremely pleased that we are slowly moving towards the eventual provision of a bypass for Farthinghoe. No village in the county deserves one more than Farthinghoe and I now think there is a strong chance of this being provided within about three years.

The only other item I'm going to mention, just in case you have heard about it, is the new office block which has been built just behind County Hall in Northampton. This opened in March and was built primarily to enable all the County Council staff to be located in one modern energy efficient office block. This will result in other now obsolete premises being either let or sold to other organisations.

This will be my last report to the parishes as I am not standing for re-election on May 4th this year. I was first elected for the Brackley West Division in 2001 and then re-elected for the enlarged Middleton Cheney Division after the boundary changes in 2013. During the sixteen years I have been particularly interested in services for children and education, have been chairman of numerous committees and, in 2011/12, I had the honour of being elected Chairman of the County Council. I have particularly enjoyed my time as a County Councillor and I thank all the residents of Farthinghoe for the support extended to me.

Ron Sawbridge MBE 12th April 2017



Brackley Safer Community Team
Brackley Police Station
St James Road
Brackley
NN13 7XY

Annual Report April 2017

Brackley and surrounding villages do not show any crime trends over and above any other similar size areas. There have been sporadic reports of thefts from vehicles, particularly from vans for tools. There are no specific patterns to these thefts and as such owners/operators should review the security of their vehicle and its contents. As warmer weather approaches we generally tend to see an increase in thefts from vehicles parked at beauty spots such as remote parks, wooded areas, churches etc.

We recommend that you visit www.police.uk to access up to date crime statistics for your area.

Northants Police support local social networks such as Brackley Burglary Crime & Prevention, Newbottle & Charlton Crime Prevention Group, Northamptonshire Street Watch and other village networks by providing information and advice for circulation. We recognise the value of these pages for keeping a two way flow of information between the police and the public. The above sites have provided very popular and all communicate with each other to increase their effectiveness. If you would like more information on how to develop a similar Facebook site for your area to assist in making the area less attractive for criminals please take a look at the above mentioned pages for examples of content and rules and for more information please contacts Sergeant Michaela Simons.

Members of the community that do not use the internet or social media can obtain this information from Parish Councils and NHW Schemes.

Brackley currently has an active Street Watch scheme that is always seeking new members. Street Watch, in a nutshell, is the equivalent of a mobile Neighbourhood Watch. In addition it can cover the entire Community and tackle issues such as; vandalism, anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and dog fouling. If you are interested in helping your community and setting up a Street Watch scheme in your area then please contact your local Police team at Brackley for details.

Visit our website for more information and updates:

<http://northants.police.uk/neighbourhoods>

Information is also sent out via Community Connect which is an email messaging system that all Schools, Parish Councils, NHW and Community Members can sign up to register their email address to receive up to date information. Sign up to Community Connect Messaging System at

<http://www.northants.police.uk/information/community-connect>

Contacting Northamptonshire Police in South Northants

999 for a crime or incident in progress and where someone is immediately at risk of harm.

101 to report non-urgent incidents, crimes and for all other enquiries.

A link to Northants Police Website allows you to report a non-urgent crime online
<http://www.northants.police.uk/page/do-it-online>

A further link also allows you to find details of your local officers and how to contact them
<http://northants.police.uk/local-update/contacting-police>

Brackley SCT SCT-SouthNorthantsBrackley@northants.police.uk
Twitter @BrackleySCT

Sergeant Michaela Simons micki.simons@northants.police.uk
Twitter @BrackleySctSgt

Brackley and Towcester Police Stations no longer have front offices for the public to visit.

Daventry Police Station still has an active front office which is open to the public 10am to 4pm Monday – Saturday.

Examples of when 101 should be used.



In an emergency or if a crime is in progress call 999.

Useful Links

Northamptonshire Police Website
<http://www.northants.police.uk/>

Check if a vehicle is taxed or untaxed and report if necessary:
vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk

Trading Standards – Advice and help for consumers – Don’t get caught out, find an approved trader:
<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Community/trading/Pages/default.aspx>

Contact CRIMESTOPPERS anonymously about crime:
<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

APPENDIX E – SAFER COMMUNITY REPORT 2017

Fearless is a site where young people can access non-judgmental information and advice about crime and criminality:

<https://www.fearless.org/>

Report to South Northants Council:

Fly Tipping , Dog Fouling, Street Lights , Litter ,Noise Pollution and other issues.

www.southnorthants.gov.uk

Advice on boundary disputes with neighbours:

<http://www.rics.org/uk/knowledge/consumer-guides/boundary-disputes-guide/>

Street Doctor:

<http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/northamptonshire-highways/roads-and-streets/Pages/report-highway-problem.aspx>

Brackley Safer Community Team

Rectors Report Astwick Vale 2016-2017

As a community of five villages, this past year we have seen our own share of ups and downs. Several members of our communities have died, some better known than other, but all missed equally by their family and friends. We have also seen communities come together for village fetes and for celebrations of our monarch's birthday.

As a church community we have much to be thankful for too. For those who clean our churches week by week, those who care for the churchyards, those who decorate our churches with flowers, those who serve on parochial Church Council and those who take the office of Church Warden. We can add those who have played the organ, those who have given refreshments, those who have rung the bells, sung in the choirs and benefice festival Chorus (BFC). Those who have distributed news letters, welcomed people at services, this list goes on and on and I thank you all.

As a group of churches we have managed this past year to pay all our bills, the nearly £10,000 to insure our buildings, the £55,000 to pay the cost of ministry, plus heating, lighting and £150,000 of repairs to the windows and roofs. This hasn't been easy, but with generous support and contributions from charities we have paid our way. I am very grateful for all who have supported us, with one off donations, and those who regularly give each week, in a timely and tax efficient manner. Thank you for your support.

We can also give thanks for Shemil and his ministry among us. 2017 sees him come to the end of his training here and he has now started as the Chaplain at Oxford brookes. We must also thank Heather for the work she has done with our young adults Routz, they have met regularly in the Rectory and around the place and Heather has lead the group and encouraged them as they grow. If they are to continue to grow then she will need some extra help.

Shemil and I have gone into the schools at Croughton and Charlton each week to take a themed assembly and have enjoyed services in church at the start and end of a term. We have also enjoyed inviting the school children at Croughton into church to experience Easter, Pentecost and Harvest, in practical and exciting ways. We also have a team who read the younger children bible stories going under the name of 'Open the Book'. If you would like to join please let me know.

We have also had the fun of the summer holiday club with two special guests from CSI in Melbourne and are very grateful to the head and governors at Croughton school for allowing us to use it in the summer and for all the other thirty strong team of helpers.

Our churches have also seen regular use this year with all but one church having at least three Sunday services each month and then sharing worship with the other churches on the fourth Sunday. Also there is daily prayer in our churches during the week, to which everybody is invited. We have had 20 weddings and blessings and 8 baptisms in our churches, and many funerals as well.

Over 30 people have met regularly for bible studies (Cuppa and Chat) during Lent and autumn and other meet all year round. So as you see, there has been a lot going on and even more to come in 2017.

So if you are thinking about what you might do to grow your faith, or what you might do for your church and also for your community. There are many ways to help and much to be done. But thank you one and all for all your heard work in 2016.

May God Bless us all in the coming year. Simon

Revd Simon Dommett
The Rectory
Croughton Road
Aynho
OX17 3bd
01869 810903

WWW.ASTWICKVALE.CO.UK

THE CHARITY OF THOMAS AMPHLETT

FARTHINGHOE ALMSHOUSES

The trustees of The Charity of Thomas Amphlett are pleased to confirm that the three Almshouses in Farthinghoe remain occupied.

Our commitment to maintaining and up-dating the Almshouses is ongoing which we hope provides the Residents with comfortable living.

As always a big thank you to the trustees, who are all voluntary: Andrew Bowyer, Jenny Forbes, Vic Tolchard and Merry Wadlow.

For further information, please find details on the Farthinghoe Parish Council website, or contact the chairman, Jenny Forbes on 01295 711942.

March 2017

FARTHINGHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL
Main Road, Farthinghoe, Brackley, Northants, NN13 5PA.

Report to Farthinghoe APM
Wednesday 12 April 2017

It has been another successful year for Farthinghoe Primary School.

We continue to be oversubscribed, with 43 pupils currently on roll, and we maintain our good reputation in the local community as well as further afield.

Sustainability of small schools is always high on our agenda, and having decided not to continue the collaboration with Greatworth Primary School we are currently exploring other options to secure our long-term future. Our aim is to work in a group that shares our commitment to high standards and community involvement to allow us to deliver the excellent outcomes for our children that we’ve come to expect.

Wendy Whitehouse has returned to Farthinghoe as our Head Teacher, employed on a part-time basis. She is very excited to be taking the school forward into new challenges. Catherine Farrell is our Deputy Head teacher and is currently promoting ‘thinking skills related to Mindset’ across the school. Wendy, Catherine and all of the staff (both teaching and support) continue to do a fantastic job for which we’re very grateful.

Our School Ambassador Roles are very important, providing pupils with a voice and the opportunity for the children to take on responsibilities within the school:

- The Environment Ambassadors have taken a lead in improving the playground and buying new resources for PE lessons. In the Autumn term we took part in a Steps challenge. Together the whole school focussed on how to get fit through walking. This term we have invited WADE gym into our school and this has enabled all children to learn new gymnastic skills.
- The Charity Ambassadors continue to raise money for a range of good causes; this year’s fundraising efforts have focused on ‘doing something funny for money’. The school is collecting money for the Red Nose Day charity through cake sales, film afternoons and sponsored events. On Friday the 24th of March the children celebrated the charity by holding a joke show and selling red noses. Some of the jokes were actually very funny!
- Our Communication Ambassadors are proud to write articles for the Farthinghoe Chronicle and they have extended their repertoire and publish a children’s magazine called the ‘School Dice Times’.

At the end of this term the school turned itself into a Dinosaur Museum. Parents and friends were invited into school to see the children’s work and learn all about this important period in History. Keystage 1 visited the Museum in Woodstock and enjoyed finding out about the work of the archaeologist. We were lucky that two villagers shared their extensive collection of fossils with Keystage 2.

In November we had a monitoring visit from Northamptonshire County Council. Their focus was on the learning environment, pupil progress and attainment, safeguarding and leadership and governance. One of the inspectors spoke with parents, all of whom gave positive feedback, which is very much appreciated. The inspectors highlighted a number of areas with which they were particularly impressed and in particular commented on the outstanding learning behaviour of all pupils, the level

of challenge given by teachers to pupils during lessons and the individual support available to all pupils.

Pupil attainment is high and above national expectations and has been consistently so over the last three years. We are very proud of our children and teachers. The school’s OFSTED judgement is Outstanding and this can be attributed to the hard work and dedication of all involved with the school: children, parents, staff and governors.

This year we said thank you and goodbye to Sid Atkins who has been a governor at the school for more years than he’d care to admit. We have a strong governing body but we always welcome and appreciate the support and involvement of the local community in school life; it’s your school and if you’d like to visit, get involved or know more then we’d be delighted to see you.

Graham Thorley
Chair of Governing Body

FARTHINGHOE VILLAGE HALL – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017

The year 2016-2017 has seen considerable change for the village hall. Following the redecoration in the previous year, new doors have been fitted to the hall, making it more secure, and over the last month, the magnificent storage area that you see at the back of the hall has been built. This has considerably improved the environment within the hall, allowing chairs and tables to be stacked away out of sight, whilst still maintaining a pop-up bar area behind the storage wall.

There have been a number of fantastic events in the hall over the past year.

Race Night raised a considerable sum and was a loud, fun night with the final "race" seeing various members of the community taking to their pretend steeds and re-enacting the onscreen battle. The fish and chips were awesome!

The May Day celebrations saw the hall transformed with a riot of colour from the magnificent hand-made paper flowers, garlands and all manner of amazing decorations. We were treated to may pole dancing, face painting and craft making, along with outdoor games and a bouncy castle.

Whilst the Farthinghoe-Down only made minimal profits, it was however a really fun evening, with the addition of the Western-themed Karaoke uncovering some hidden talent within the village.

The annual village show unfortunately suffered from low attendance, due in part to the awful weather but a profit was made, thanks to good raffle ticket sales.

At the AGM in October, there were a few changes to the committee. George Beasley was given an honorary life membership of the village hall committee, in recognition of the many years served as a committee member.

Pete Hampson resigned from the committee after 15 years' service, of which 10 were as Chairman. The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Pete, on behalf of the village, for all of the time and effort he has put into building the village hall and its facilities over such a considerable period.

Ross van Geest also resigned from the committee.

Existing members who continued on the committee were Stephen Bunce (Treasurer), Diane Jones, Ryan Jones, Jon Hampson, Dave Hancock and Pip Clayton.

New members joining the committee were Beste Bragg, Wendy Hancock and Lisa Wenmouth (representing the Church). The Parish Council representation will be done on a rotation basis amongst the councillors.

With the committee in place, Pip Clayton was nominated as Chair and Dave Hancock accepted the role of Clerk.

Jon Hampson subsequently resigned from the committee in January 2017 and in March 2017, we welcomed Jenny Johnston onto the committee.

The committee is working towards improved transparency on the hall activities; agendas, minutes and financial statements are now available on the Parish Council website. The 150 Club has been revitalised in 2017, with the membership increasing significantly. We are revisiting hiring

arrangements to create a uniformity across the hirers and to have clear contracts in place. All administration is being tightened up to ensure required information is easily accessible.

Throughout the next year, the Committee will be planning further improvements to make the hall even more attractive to all our users and will be identifying fund raising activities to support these improvements. We have some exciting plans for making it much more of a community asset of which we can all be proud.

I would like to thank all the committee members, who give up their own time and skills, to run and improve this community facility.

Special thanks go to:

Dave Hancock and Mike Phipps for designing and constructing the storage area. They volunteered their labour throughout, with the only cost being materials.

All of the committee, but Wendy Hancock in particular, for the revitalisation of the 150 Club.

Diane Jones for handling the bookings side of the hall, which can be, at times, a truly thankless task!

Jon Hampson for maintenance of grounds around the hall.

And Stephen Bunce for keeping us on the straight and narrow with regards to funds.

Please continue to support your village hall. We are a charity and whilst our regular hirers help to support the day-to-day running of the hall, we do rely on fund raising activities to keep the facility open and to make improvements aimed at benefitting you, our customers.

Pip Clayton

Chairman of Farthinghoe Village Hall Committee

April 2017