

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall, Fenny Compton on 23rd April 2018 commencing at 7:45pm.

Present: Jon Dutton in the Chair, Derek Carless, Neil Andrew, Michael Guest, Sam Parkes, Cllr Bob Stevens, Cllr Chris Williams and Parish Clerk Lisa Andersson.

1. **To Accept Apologies for Absence:** Ian Hartwell.
2. **Minutes of The Previous Years' Meeting:** The minutes to the last meeting were agreed on at the Parish Council Meeting on the 15th May 2017 and minuted as such.

3. **Parish Council Chairman's Report:**

During the last 12 months there have been some significant changes in the Parish Council with the resignations of our chair, Deborah Lea, and our clerk, Catherine Lambert. Between them they had more than 40 years' experience, so it's been a big loss, but we have an excellent new clerk in Lisa Andersson and collectively we are pulling together to make sure that we continue to keep abreast of what seems to be an ever-increasing workload.

Planning continues to be a big issue and although Stratford now have an adopted Core Strategy that hasn't stopped developers putting in applications or appealing against rejections. For example, the application on Avon Dasset Road is now in its third iteration and will be discussed later in our standard meeting. Noises from central government and neighbouring authorities about the need for more housing mean this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future and we will continue to target our efforts at those applications with the most detrimental impacts on the parish.

Work is well underway to clear the Compton Buildings site, although planning permission for the new houses doesn't appear to have gone through yet. We will receive some money from this site towards outdoor leisure facilities and we will be asking the residents how they want to spend this money. Although the under 8's playground is relatively new, the rest of our leisure facilities such as the other play equipment and the sports pavilion are well beyond their design life as illustrated by the unfortunate collapse of one of the swings. We be keeping even closer eye on these to make sure that all our equipment remains safe.

Our roads are generally very well maintained and our relationship with the County Council works well; however, we have found that when the cause of a problem is not clear it becomes difficult to get it resolved as the different parties fight amongst themselves. It took well over a year to get the running water on Mill Lane attended to, and I'm still not sure it's fixed. Similarly, we have been pursuing various parties regarding the leak on High Street for even longer but no sign of a resolution there. Back to the theme of obsolete infrastructure, and the other issue we must address is our streetlights. Many of these are more than 50 years old and when they have a fault they need to be replaced. This has been an increasing trend over the last few years and we have now reached the point where we need to be proactively replacing lights to make sure it remains affordable. We will do this in priority order starting with the ones where the columns have the highest risk of failure, and have had to increase our parish council precept in order to do so.

I looked back to what we said this time last year about the allotments and I hoped to report significant progress. We have formally established an allotments association, we have done a lot of preparatory work, and all we are waiting for now is access to the land. Unfortunately this remains painfully slow and although in some respects we are much closer, it also feels just as far away. However next year I expect to report

that the allotments have been established, are fully occupied and are working well. Finally I would like to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Parish Council for all their efforts this year, and to Lisa our Clerk for really hitting the ground running and keeping us all organised.

4. Annual Accounts of Fenny Compton Parish:

The Clerk gave an account of the income and expenditure for the past year, as well as noting the amount currently in reserve. The Clerk is at present calculating the Annual Accounts, which will be presented to the internal auditor in due course.

5. To Receive Reports from Local Organisation:

Aqueous: Michael Guest reported that Fenny Compton survived another year without serious flooding. Although some gardens and fields were flooded, no property damage has been reported. The existing attenuation pond in Hall's Yard continues to perform well.

Progress to install further flood prevention measures continues to be painfully slow. Drawings for a new attenuation pond to the West side of the Avon Dasset Road, and an extension to the pond in Hall's Yard have been put out for quotation, in order to prepare a business plan. I am not convinced that an extension of Hall's Yard pond would be the best use of money.

Our thanks go to Brian Peers for continuing to organise the maintenance of the ditches and waterways in the village, supported by the local landowners, and a team of volunteers.

We received a grant of £400.00 from Warwickshire Council, and our thanks go to Councillor Bob Stevens. The money will be spent on the maintenance of the attenuation scheme in Hall's Yard.

Our thanks go to Julian Leslie for his contribution to Aqueous over several years. I am delighted to say that Jane Ainley volunteered to join our small group.

Footpath Group: Roly Whear gave the following report on behalf of Brian Peers:

The Footpath Group has had another steady year with regular monthly work sessions for its 10 Group members. The group is now 21 years old, the local paths and bridleways are in good order and we generally have a good working relationship with the landowners.

Last year, in addition to our usual work, we also tidied up the land around the sub-station by the doctors' surgery which included strimming, laying a gravel path and repairing the fence.

We have funds in our bank account and have no need to ask for additional funding. We continue to enjoy the support of the Parish Council and WCC and intend to continue our work for the foreseeable future.

Fenny Compton Water: Roly Whear gave the following report:

It's been a busy first twelve months for the new directors getting to grips with the various aspects of regulatory compliance, understanding the system and putting plans in place for the future.

The treatment plant has passed its first anniversary and shown its worth with all water testing showing no signs of chloroform contamination through an unusually dry year which has traditionally been the worst time for bacteriological growth.

We have also fitted a water meter at the request of the Environment Agency to help manage abstraction. This combined with combing the extensive company archive

has confirmed that the system above the village is relatively new and has negligible water loss. The lower system is showing some loss and by a process of isolation we have identified the section along Bridge Street and Northend Road requiring attention which we plan to undertake in the near future.

Looking ahead The Company is in a sound position with the main focus being on the maintenance and improvement of the pipework system within the village.

Neighbourhood Plan: Michael Guest reported that it had been a tough year for the Neighbourhood Plan as they were now down to 4 members. The NP had held a very successful open meeting, inviting members of the Parish to come and see what the NP are working to achieve. As a result of this open meeting, there was a show of support and some offers to volunteer time at various stages of the process.

The next step is to compile a questionnaire. Help will be needed with this phase.

There will be a business, environmental and young person's surveys. The aim is to have the surveys out at the end of May, in order for the report to be completed by the end of July.

Village Hall: Kate Carless reported that the Village Hall was run by a small group of volunteers. They had decided not to request a grant from the Fenny Compton Parish Council this past year, and will do some fund raising this coming year to try to bolster funds. It had been decided that more effort would be put into trying to hire the hall out more often. There were a number of regular users, but it was thought that the occasional users (for parties etc.) should be targeted in order to increase usage of the hall. All additional volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

6. **Report from Trustees of Charities:**

None received.

7. **District and County Councillors' Reports:**

Cllr Bob Stevens gave the following report:

Fenny Compton County Councillor's Report 2018

This time last year we were running up to the County council elections and the Article 50 for Brexit had just been signed. The County Council elections produced a large Conservative majority, unlike the following months snap general election, and we are now less than a year from leaving the European Union. The County Council are still facing significant reductions in the government grant and the cap on Council tax, whilst welcome to tax payers, is putting additional strain on non-essential services. However the Council is up for the challenge and our finances are in a well-balanced state. A recent proposal to replace government grant with the areas business rate has temporarily been postponed so the present system will continue.

Warwickshire has become a popular place to live and the economy continues to be healthy. Both Coventry and Birmingham are experiencing an industrial revival with much government money being invested into their infrastructure. Last month, together with a group of fellow councillors, I met with Andy Street the West Midlands mayor. As it was a private meeting I cannot divulge the content but suffice to say the prospect of Warwickshire joining the West Midlands Combined Authority is, to some people, still a distant dream. But it is not dead. Warwickshire is presently an associate member and statistics show that unemployment across the County is low, the economy is booming and inward investment is high with a continued growth in new businesses start-ups. The priority is for the West Midlands to improve its

infrastructure and transport networks and Warwickshire is receiving some of that investment. This necessarily involves more housing as Warwickshire is taking the overspill from Birmingham and Coventry. As well as encouraging devolution to the bigger Metropolitan regions the government is investing through Local Enterprise partnerships. The Coventry Warwickshire LEP is one such partnership and major funding is also available through the LEP. In my opinion the jury is still out on the Regional authorities but I have always been a supporter of any partnership working between Coventry and Warwickshire. Locally this last year has been dominated by the large number of housing developments that are taking place. We welcome the new residents to our village/area but with the population growth comes the extra strain on the infrastructure. Roads are becoming impossible at peak periods, our schools, especially secondary provision becoming overcrowded and medical facilities stretched. Developer contribution (S106) monies have been spent on improved traffic calming measures and also promised for school expansion. In some cases money has been made available for communities to enhance their local facilities via CIL. Coming soon will be the additional disruption caused by HS2 construction and associated traffic. An idea of this will be experienced when a trial cutting, some 18 metres deep is constructed near Wormleighton later this year. At a briefing this week we were advised that locally construction work will not start until mid-2019 with a view to completing it by end of 2022 when the track is handed over to HS2 for them to construct the railway line. There will be considerable disruption during that period in particular around Hunningham, Codemasters and the A46 at Stoneleigh. The Fosse will be their preferred access route until they can use the line of the track. Where major road diversions are planned wherever possible the new road will be constructed before the existing road is closed. The contractors Kier and Balfour Beatty are keen to work with the 46 parishes along the routes and will be holding Public briefing meetings in conjunction with local councils starting later this year. They estimate along the whole of phase 1 there will be about 10,000 construction workers and additional office staff. At this moment in time only 50% of the planning process is complete and the interface with the public utility services continues to cause concern. The planning will complete in November when a more accurate cost and scale of disruption known.

Adult and children services are the biggest drain on the County council finances. Each year statistics show that life expectancy is increasing but the cost of care is also increasing. Standards in care homes are continuously monitored and the numbers who are not able to look after themselves without assistance rises each year. People are encouraged to stay in their own home for as long as possible and demand for affordable warden supervised homes outstrips the supply. Adult social care continues to be the responsibility of the County council and the government grant decreases although extra 3 % on Council tax which is ring fenced for Adult care is permitted.

The recent integration of Health and Adult services at government level has yet to make its effect felt but hopefully will lead to better cooperation between these two services with respect to Adult care.

The pressure on Children safeguarding and protection continues to grow. One of the biggest concerns is cyber-crime and the use of mobile phone to corrupt/influence teenagers. The incidences of child abuse in Warwickshire are presently low but with incidents occurring in adjacent authorities there is no place for complacency. The Multi Agency safeguarding hub (MASH) set up last year is establishing its reputation for protecting children.

Overall Warwickshire schools continue to be of a high standard and over 75% of the

secondary schools are now academies. Primary schools are now either becoming Free Schools or joining a Multi academy trust (MAT) either with another secondary school or as part of a trust run by the Coventry Diocese. (DMAT). Whereas I support acadamisation of bigger schools I am not convinced that MAT's which cross education authority boundaries will be sustainable in the long term, In the Feldon Division Southam College, now part of the Stowe valley MAT continues to be high performing and this year's Pupil admission number of 270 has been reached. Local pupils from the present catchment area are assured a place at the college for the foreseeable future.

The Warwickshire fire service has had a busy year and is expecting a home office inspection later this year. Standards expected of the Fire Service have been significantly raised since the recent national incidents in particular at Grenfell Tower block and some school fires. We have budgeted for implementing any recommendations in this year's budget. Police and ambulance are not controlled by the County Council although WCC works closely with both these services. The County Council is responsible for Public Health together with Public Health England. As your councillor I have been kept occupied representing residents throughout the Feldon division in particular over education, flooding and traffic issues. I try to attend as many of your Parish council meetings as I can

I am pleased to say that I have been able to obtain small grants for village organisations and some minor highway improvements. As the county Councils Armed forces champion I have been actively involved in supporting military veterans and the counties commitment to the armed forces covenant. I also chair the WCC pension fund investment committee which oversees where the funds are invested to gain maximum return for the fund within ethical guidelines. To conform with Government legislation, the fund is also combining with 11 other authorities to reduce costs and increase returns. The value of the combined fund, called "Border to Coast" and based in Leeds, is in the region of £45 Billion.

Cllr Chris Williams gave the following report:

Fenny Compton Annual Meeting – 23rd April 2018 District Councillor's Report

The District Council is enjoying the security that the adoption of its approved Core Strategy brings to everyone living in the district. The big issue within this Core Strategy was the number of houses that can be built between now and 2031. A year ago we all worked to a figure of 15,500 properties but we have now received strong indications from central government that all districts and boroughs will need to revisit this figure since it is not providing sufficient homes for the demand that exists for new housing. I believe that at some time in the next three years there will have to be a revised Core Strategy accommodating the government demands. Figures of an increase of some 8,000 houses are currently being discussed.

In addition to our own Core Strategy, we have received a request from Birmingham City Council, in the north of the district, for land sufficient to some 5,000 houses. The problem here is that the only land that might be available is Green Belt land. I am relieved that it is not in our area.

Policy Issues – Currently, the Council is considering the Stratford-on-Avon Area Transport Strategy. This document plans the strategy for the future. I must stress that this Strategy refers only to Stratford-upon-Avon and not to the whole district. The policy being considered contains many contentious proposals which, I believe, will not be accepted by full Council.

This year the District Council decided that the Council Tax would increase by 1%. This is lower than most other authorities and it is one-third of the 3% permitted by government without holding a referendum. This increase equates to £1.36 per year which is less than 3p extra for a property in Band D. As with most other local authorities Stratford is facing significant financial pressures through a reduction in government funding. Fortunately, due to healthy financial reserves, not only is the council able to set a low tax increase but also at the same time spend some of its reserves on helping the homeless together with investing in the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations and a major event in November commemorating the end of the First World War.

I hope this covers all the issues that will be of interest but if anyone has a specific question, I will be happy to answer it.

Cllr Chris Williams (Member for Napton & Fenny Compton Ward – SDC) 22.04.2018

8. Other Matters Raised By An Elector Of The Parish:

The Planning Application 17/03520/OUT for Land West Of, Avon Dasset Road was raised by a resident. A discussion ensued regarding this application, and the Chair reiterated that the role of the PC is to reflect the views of the residents. It was felt that the same objections applied to this application as the application that was responded to in January 2018. Although the number of houses has been reduced to 16 (from 39), none of the issues raised as objections in the previous application had been addressed.

The meeting closed at 20:38.