

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall, Fenny Compton on 15th April 2019 commencing at 7:45pm.

Present: Jon Dutton in the Chair, Michael Guest, Derek Carless, Sam Parkes, Roly Whear, Alan Payne, 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 21st May 2018 and minuted as such.
3. **Parish Council Chairman's Report:**
Welcome everybody, thank you for coming and I will keep my report brief this year.

During the last 12 months we have operated for most of the year a councillor short, but I am pleased to report that we are now up to our full complement and I welcome Roly Whear and Alan Payne to the Parish Council. Our thanks go to Neil Andrew who has left the Parish Council during the year. This year is election year for the Parish Council, where all councillors are up for re-election. However, we only had as many nominations as there are places, so there is no need for an election and all councillors are returned unopposed.

I have looked back at my report from last year and the major issues are the same.

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 Dassett Road which we discussed at last year's meeting has gone to appeal again. Noises from central government and neighbouring authorities about the need for more housing mean that the threat of development in the parish 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.

The Compton Buildings site has pretty much been cleared, and although detailed planning permission for the new houses doesn't appear to have gone through yet, outline permission has been given for another 20 houses on the site. 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. We will be keeping an 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. However it does look like the issues on Mill Lane and the High Street may have finally been resolved.

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 did agree our first set of replacement columns at our last meeting, but have had to pause due to the work on Dog Lane, but do we expect to replace our first columns in the next few weeks.

We also need to start surveying our trees, so if you see a man wandering round looking at trees over the next few weeks, it's nothing to worry about, he's working for us.

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, we haven't quite signed the lease, but we do now have access to the land and hope to have the allotments fenced and marked out in the next couple of months. Next year I expect to report that the allotments have been established, are fully occupied and are working well. I said this last year!

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 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:

Allotments: The following report was read on behalf of Simon Gooding: On behalf of the Fenny Compton Allotment Association I would like to thank the Parish Council and particularly Jon Dutton for the continued support and guidance in the creation of the new allotment site.

It's been a slow and very frustrating couple of years since the start of the building plot and the promise of allotments, but at last we are within touching distance.

With the support of the Parish Council and the allocation of funds from the council's budget we are now a few weeks from erecting the perimeter fencing and prepping the land as the beginnings of each working plot.

Once announced all plots were taken and allocated quickly and our Fenny residents are keen and eager to get working and growing their own produce.

Aqueous: Michael Guest gave the following report: It has been another year of slow progress. In June 2018, Barry Ridgeway of Warwickshire County Council made a presentation to the Parish Council, and various residents in attendance, outlining an attenuation scheme in the field on the west side of the Avon Dasset road.

As a result of a subsequent objection from a resident, a modification to the proposal is being evaluated. We await the outcome of this work.

In the meantime, our thanks go to Brian Peers and his working parties for their work in keeping the ditches and water courses in the village in good working order. There have been no reports of flooding, other than some surface water in Memorial Road.

Our thanks go also to Councillor Bob Stevens of Warwickshire County Council for the £400.00 grant, which is spent on maintaining the Attenuation scheme in Hall Yard.

Footpath Group: Roly Whear gave the following report on behalf of Brian Peers: The footpath Group has had another busy year with regular work sessions. The footpaths in the parish are in generally good order and we continue to have good relationships with the landowners and WCC. We have increased our membership to 10, most of which regularly attend the work sessions. We are well supported and equipped by WCC who reimburse our expenses and we have no need to ask for additional funding this year.

The Group is now 22 years old and we look forward to continuing through 2019.

Fenny Compton Water: Roly Whear gave the following report: It's been an eventful year for The Company and significant progress has been made on our two major challenges, namely Bentazone contamination and water loss from the system (leakage).

We fitted the new filter in early February and have just had the "official" verdict from Environmental Health that any residual Bentazone is now below the limit of detection. We also passed our first test for all contaminants under the new government regime with flying colours and can now confirm that the water we supply meets the UK's stringent drinking water requirements in every way possible.

Unfortunately we had a spate of leaks in Avon Dassett Road in February and before that the one in October in the High Street. We apologise for any inconvenience caused. We believe these are old failures of the pipe that eventually break out from the surrounding clay as we have had another significant drop in consumption to the point where we can consider taking on new customers. Daily abstraction has reduced from 40 to 5 cubic metres per day.

So, we end the financial and abstraction year with two of our major challenges under control meaning it's time to look ahead and the next steps in securing The Company's future. The pipe work isn't getting any younger and we need to start a programme of replacement to develop an infrastructure that is good for another 150 years. We plan to look into obtaining grant funding to begin and continue this process.

Neighbourhood Plan: Michael Guest gave the following report: With the support of the Parish Council, a Neighbourhood Plan Steering committee was formed towards the end of 2017. The current members of the committee are Cherie Southgate, Jason Wise, John Wickenden, Hilary Birkbeck and Michael Guest. The Parish Council is briefed on their progress every month.

The first step was to design a questionnaire to go to every household in the village. Following widespread publicity, including a stand at the village fete, and an open evening in the village hall, a number of volunteers were recruited to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Thanks to their efforts and the involvement of the residents of Fenny Compton, a very high completion rate was achieved.

Using the results of the survey, the results of a young person's survey, and the 2017 housing needs survey, as well as input from 2008 Parish Plan and the 2011 census, drafting of the Neighbourhood plan could begin.

The first draft has now been completed, and comments have been received from the consultant we are using. This will enable us to complete the second draft, which we hope to review at a meeting in the Village Hall at 6.30 pm on Monday 20th May (subject to confirmation), at which residents will have an opportunity to ask questions.

The cost of preparing the plan was funded initially by the Parish Council from an identified reserve, and subsequently from a government grant.

Village Hall: Kate Carless reported that the Village Hall had seen some changes to the committee. The new chairman is Paul Brand. The other committee members include Susanne Brand, Tracy Brand, Steven Brand, Jason Wise, Bonnie Wise and Kate Carless. The budget was as expected. The challenges for the year were that regular hirers did not use the hall as often as they usually did. This was offset by the Village Violin School starting to use the hall for practices, and a few party bookings. Further income is received from the Village Hall lottery scheme, as well as from the cinema that is run in the hall. The Parish Council provided a grant for £140 to replace the light outside. The Village Hall is not running at a loss. Reserves are kept fairly high due to the fact that if there are any problems with the roof, it will need replacing. Complaints have been received over the past year about lights being left on, hall users not being considerate about how they park, and noise levels during parties held at night. The church is currently making use of the hall while they raise funds to repair their roof.

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

Fenny Compton Relief in Need Charity: After many years of service Peter Hughes stood down as a trustee last year, passing all the documentation for the charity to me. We should thank him for his dedication. This means that there are now just two trustees: Rev'd Nicki Chatterton (ex-officio) and me. I understand that the Parish Council may appoint two trustees if they so wish, and would therefore like to ask if anyone would be prepared to become a trustee. There were no applications for support and therefore no payments made during 2018. The charity holds 67 investment units with the CCLA's COIF Charities investment fund. These were valued at £961.17 at 31st December 2018. They realised dividends of £33.39 during 2018. The charity's bank account balance at 31st December 2018 was £554.34.

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

Cllr Bob Stevens gave the following report:

Fenny Compton County Councillor's Report 2019

Did you know that Coventry and Warwickshire are rated as one of the best economic performers in the country? Our economic output has increased from £17.2bn in 2009 to £26bn in 2017. The productivity has also increased by 25% in the same period and employment by 16.5%. No wonder then that people want to live in the county and that developers are having a field day. Unfortunately as well as having a beneficial effect on our standard of living there is also the spin off of more housing, insufficient number of health facilities and utility provision as well as transport problems. It is these problems that the County Council has been wrestling with over the past year at the same time as having to find savings as a result of government austerity policies.

The whole of last year has also been overshadowed by Brexit, HS2 especially the road disruptions and financial restraints.

People ask me "What effect does Brexit have on Local government?" Firstly many major projects are funded by European money which will have to be found from other sources this is particularly true of major highway and transport related projects. There

is likely to be a shortage of workers to fill jobs in the construction industry, Seasonal agricultural employment, Staffing in Care homes and hospitals. Many bills reforming the way councils operate are being held up in Parliament in particular the Adult care provision; the bill for local Government funding and devolving of powers to local authorities including parishes. All this interferes with decision making and long term planning.

You may have noticed that there have been a large number of new houses built and possibly more to come. Your parish council are perusing possible S106 benefits from developers and also working with the county council, Severn Trent and the local water company to tackle the flooding problems.

I cannot allow a resume of the year to pass without a mention of HS2. The early works contractors are reaching the end of their initial surveys .They are preparing to carry out further works in anticipation of the main contract being confirmed. This is not expected until the end of this year at the earliest. Their official start date for trains is now early 2027 –a year later than originally planned and they haven't started in earnest yet. This parish is not directly affected but the disruption created by surrounding road closures will have an effect on us all once the work gets underway. Especially at Wormleighton where a large trial pit is being constructed with work starting after Easter/early May.

As schools vote to become academies so the County councils responsibility for education diminishes. Indeed the council is now only responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient "Good" school places within the county for all children and that there is adequate provision of education for those with Special Educational needs. Over the past year. Southam College became an academy, (there are only 2 secondary schools in Warwickshire that aren't) and is part of Stowe Valley MAT. They are hoping to have completed a new sports hall by this time next year. Southam College is again oversubscribed and except for siblings of existing students they are not taking any pupils from out of County. Your primary school here has recently been subject to an Ofsted inspection.

The County Council is also the Fire Authority and a recent fire service inspection at a revised set of standards found that the fire cover and prevention services were good but that the back office provision should improve. Recently there have been discussions with the West Midlands fire service to combine these services. This includes training and the recent proposals to build a training ground in Southam have been shelved. The police station in Southam has now been sold to a sheltered housing provider and the police are located next to the library in Tithe Lodge. There is now a new, but permanent, police Officer for the area.

Unfortunately the Council tax was increased again this year with 2% of the total 4.9% being specifically ring-fenced to looking after the elderly. We are living longer and the cost of care continues to increase. The cost of children in care continues to rise as safeguarding standards are tightened. I am reliably informed that the council finances are in good health and we have sufficient unallocated reserves able to meet any envisaged contingencies. Capital spending is mainly on School expansion to meet the growing number of children and transport related projects, mainly road and more parkway type railway stations.

So what of the year ahead in the village? Hopefully we will see the end of major housing development in the village and we can progress with a solution to the flooding issues. This is a great village to live in and I congratulate your parish council on the way they have supported the village over the past 4 years and I wish the new Council every success over the next 4 years.

Cllr Chris Williams gave the following report:

Fenny Compton Annual Meeting – 15th April 2019 District Councillor’s Report

The past year was the fourth year in the annual cycle of the District Council with elections to be held on 2nd May 2019. For me, this marks the 21st year that I have served as the District Councillor for Fenny Compton, and my last! I have very much enjoyed my time representing Fenny Compton and I look back to it being a period of stability and as far as Fenny Compton is concerned no major issues have arisen and any changes have been beneficial to the community. I take pleasure in ensuring that Fenny Compton goes from strength to strength.

What of the past year? The Conservative Group appointed a new Leader to the District Council, Cllr Tony Jefferson who brings experience to the post. The Council has become very active in pursuing possible grant funds to pay for infrastructure improvements within the district. Our Budget increase this year was the lowest for any authority in Warwickshire and at 1.5% I believe that it represents ‘Value for Money’. A recent survey confirms that 90% of the respondents agreed with this statement. 63% of the respondents said it was important that the District Council maintains its current level of service.

Support for the Homeless, 69%, was the first choice of residents out of the new budget proposals, followed by UBUIS at 67% and the compulsory purchase of Wellesbourne Airfield to prevent housing development occurring where it is not supported by our Core Strategy. Interestingly, Stratford-on-Avon District Council already operates the Stratford Link Project providing :

- Housing Advice/Homelessness
- Benefits and Budget Service
- Debt Assistance
- Drug and Alcohol Advice
- Employment, Education and Volunteering Advice
- Health Advice
- Recreation Activities

In the main Stratford-on-Avon District Council continues to be a well-run local authority with ample reserves to meet any unexpected requirements. In the past year, we have appointed a new Executive Director (Head of Paid Service), Isabel Edgar Briancon, who has taken over from Dave Webb who had completed 40 years service for the District Council before he retired.

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) 14.04.2019

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

A resident enquired about the Speed Watch group. The chair responded that the

councillor who had been working on this had resigned, and that this responsibility would be reassigned to another councillor in due course.

Another resident asked if the Clerk could find out if Highways could repair the pavement in High Street (opposite the school).

The meeting closed at 20:26.