

Minutes of East Farndon Parish Council Annual Meeting of the Parish held on Tuesday 17th March 2020 at the Village Hall commencing at 7.45 PM

PRESENT: Mr R West (Chair), Mr R Burton, Mr P Hodgetts, Mr M Curtis, Ms J Cooper (via video call) and Mrs. C Burton (Clerk to the Parish Council)

OTHER RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE: One

1. Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Councillors Prew and Crifo, Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift, Gill Kirby (Secretary to the PCC), Lynn Deacon (Chair of the Village Hall Trustees), Nigel Haynes (Chair of East Farndon United Charities), Richard Green (Burial Ground Committee), Bob Osborn (The Parish's Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator), Alan Langley (Footpath Warden), Jean Westwood (WI), David Thake (Amenity Land Committee), and Judy Hodgetts/Jessica Oakden (Tree Wardens).

It was noted that the high level of apologies were as a result of the Parish Council's decision to hold the meeting, but to encourage people not to attend (and any reports to be submitted via email), so that business could be transacted with appropriate social distancing in light of Covid-19.

2. County Councillor and District Councillor Report

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift:

- Due to Covid-19, the West Northamptonshire Council elections were postponed for a year until May 21. As soon as we know more, it will be on NCC Website.
- NCC budget for 20/21 was set at full council in Feb 2020. It went through scrutiny with the main focus on the robustness of the financial position.
- Key facts :
 - 3.99 % increase of precept (1.99% for adult social care).
 - Focus on vulnerable children and adults.
 - Creation of a children trust
 - Working together with Police, Doctors and District In order to get NCC in the best position ready for the Unitaries.
- Now, as from today, the Council is making new arrangements for its employees regarding Covid-19 in order to be able to deliver its services and to prepare its emergency services when (I wish I could say if) they will need to act.

3. Chairman's report

Councillor West thanked everyone for attending, and reported as follows:

- One of our biggest issues continues to be speeding. We have again participated in two Community Speedwatch sessions, co-ordinated by Bernie Fallon. We have also had enforcement visits with the police issuing penalty notices. The Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been moved to a better position, plus we have been in contact with Highways to see what other measures we can use to combat this major issue.
- During the year a working party was set up to help manage the transition of responsibility for maintenance of the churchyard from the Parochial Church Council to the Parish Council. This means we are prepared for when the transfer takes place probably sometime over the next year.
- Our Clerk, Caroline Burton, has worked closely with our new Tree Wardens, Jess Oakden and Judy Hodgetts, to make sure the trees in the village which have TPOs - that's a 'Tree Preservation Order' - are being properly looked after by their owners.

- Councillors Russell Burton and Julia Prew have undertaken Fixed Asset Audits during the year to make sure that we are properly looking after things like our lampposts and benches.
- We have made a good start on improving the area around the spring, and hope to make further improvements over the next year.
- We have also been keeping our eye on wider issues, such as Local Government Reorganisation, so we can understand the impact next year of being part of West Northamptonshire.
- Finally, I would like to thank all of our Councillors for the work they have done over the year, including looking after the War Memorial and Defibrillator, and reporting issues to do with verges and drains.
- I would also like to thank all of those in the village who have supported the work of the parish council and wider life of the village: the Burial Ground Committee, United Charities, the PCC, the Village Hall Committee, the Fete Committee, the Village Website, Women's Institute, Community Speedwatch volunteers, the Footpath Warden, the Litter Pickers, the Amenity Land Committee, Neighbourhood Watch and anyone else I have failed to mention.
- Last but not least I would like to thank Caroline Burton, our Clerk, who keeps the Council running smoothly and keeps all of us Councillors on our toes.

4. Reports from village organisations: -

a) Parochial Church Council (PCC)

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

- The PCC met six times during 2019 with the APCM being held in April. The revision of the Electoral Roll also took place in April with a total number of 25 people currently on the Roll.
- £1900 was received from the proceeds of the Fete held in June. No firm arrangements are at present in place for 2020 but it is hoped volunteers will come forward to enable a further event to take place or be combined with another event in the Summer.
- A donation of £129.00 was sent to both Rainbows and The Children's Society from collections at the Christmas services, and £103.10 was sent to Farm Africa from the Harvest Festival collections. A Bring & Share lunch followed the Harvest Festival service in September.
- The Village Hall continues to be fully utilised by regular local groups and monthly Coffee Mornings continue to support local organisations and good causes and also help to raise funds for the Church. A very popular Fish & Chip Supper & Quiz was held again in January.
- Work began in October on repairs to the Church roof following the theft of lead, which was replaced with stainless steel material. Grants were received and together with insurance monies and generous donations we were able to complete and pay for the cost of the work, together with the installation of a roof alarm.
- A new time clock has been installed for the heating in the Church.
- Following various meetings with the Parish Council, an application for closure of the churchyard was finally submitted in October and the boundary fencing has been tidied up thanks to Mr Paul Hodgetts.
- Mr John Bush kindly volunteered to take over the Parish Magazine until a replacement editor could be found.
- We are grateful to all those who continue to help in the running and maintenance of the Church and village communities and give of their time for this and also the tidying of the Churchyard. We are grateful too to Reverend James Watson for his work and ministry in our parishes.

- The PCC extends thanks to you all.

b) Village Hall Trustees

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

- The Village Hall finances remain healthy with current balance of £25,353.03 in the Building Society. Unfortunately, I cannot produce the Annual Financial Report until April.
- This year there were no major improvements needed in the hall or expenses.
- The Hall has regular bookings, which include Play Group, Pilates, Dance classes, Art Group, Yoga, U3A and WI. It is popular for family gatherings and social events.
- This year the trustees organised a Summer BBQ, which proved to be very popular. The Pub Night was a great success. The trustees invited the villagers to join them to celebrate Christmas with mince pies, cookies and mulled wine. As usual the Fish and Chip Supper followed by a Quiz was very well supported.
- Letting remains the same at £5/hr for villagers but now £20/hr for non-villagers.
- The Hall continues to be maintained to a high standard with the help of a hired cleaner once a month but the trustees will continue to keep a check on day to day running.
- The Trustees for the last year were, Lynn and David Deacon, Sheila Fox, Jan Cooper, Stephanie Hook, Sue and Jim Grant and Bob Osborne. Marlene Hook retired, we were grateful for all her help over the years. Judy Hodgetts has now joined us and is a great asset.
- The Trustees plan to continue managing the Village Hall and organise social events for the Village.

c) East Farndon United Charities

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Nigel Haynes on behalf of the East Farndon United Charities:

- The trustees meet on a twice yearly basis with other informal meetings as required.
- The charities income for 2019 was slightly higher than for 2018.
- Grants are available for new babies, for funeral expenses, when starting primary, secondary school and higher education, for the purchase of books, equipment and educational trips. Other discretionary grants can be awarded as the need arises.
- There is normally a two year residency requirement before grants are given.
- At all times the Trustees must adhere to the original terms of the Charities Governing Document before grants are made.
- During the year four educational grants and one funeral grant were awarded.
- Together with the Christmas giving a total of 25 grants were issued during the year.
- Finance - an annual update form has been sent to the Charity Commission. Annual Accounts are available for inspection by written request to the clerk of the charity.

Summary-Annual Charity Accounts 2019

	<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
DIVIDENDS	£7615.35	CHARITABLE GIVING	£5100.00
RENT	£92.00	ADMINISTRATION FEES	14.97
TOTAL	£7707.35	TOTAL	£5114.97

Surplus income to expenditure £2592.38

- The present trustees are Nigel Haynes (chairperson) Adrian Hill, Richard West and newly appointed Chloe Wright who replaces Richard Wright.
- Clerk: Pamela Haynes, Harebell House, East Farndon, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9SG

d) Burial Ground Maintenance Committee

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Richard Green on behalf of the Burial Ground Maintenance Committee:

- We have had 2 burials Mrs Brenda Hyde and Mr Roger Fox. There has also been an alteration to a memorial stone. The burial ground extension has been properly fenced with post and rail plus sheep netting. A stile is provided to access the field foot path. The trees, hedges and grass have been cut. 2020's contract for grass cutting let.
- Account

	IN	OUT	BALANCE
07/05/19 Burial	70.00		
29/06/19 Interest	9.06		
09/09/19 Payment for fencing etc (cheque no 308600)		1,520.00	
02/01/20 Head stone alteration	120.00		
06/01/20 Hedge and trees cut (cheque no 301574)		180.00	
25/02/20 Burial	70.00		
Balance at 17 th March 2020			371.95

- With the council takeover of the church yard I feel that all contracts for mowing tree and hedge cutting should now be the responsibility of the parish council leaving the burial committee to look after burials and pay for incidentals.

e) Neighbourhood Watch

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Bob Osborn as the Parish's Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator:

- Apart from the round bale arson a week ago there has been nothing notified to me regarding crime in the immediate area of East Farndon; that said, there may well have been incidents that I know nothing about.
- I have been forwarding relevant notices from Daventry to Alan Langley for the village website.
- Sgt Sam Dobbs has moved from the Daventry Neighbourhood Policing Team and his replacement has not been confirmed.

f) Footpath Warden

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by the Footpath Warden, Alan Langley:

- Conditions this winter for farmers and those who walk the paths across their fields have been worse than for many years. However it is obvious from the

- bootprints that some walkers are still using the paths. Going round all the paths over the past two or three weeks has been tougher going than usual.
- Over the past year I have reported the fingerpost on the 'village green' triangle near the church, because when the copper beech is in leaf, the sign is not visible from the church direction. Bewildered walkers have been seen, wondering which way to go. I have been told via StreetDoctor that something will be done in the spring – either re-siting the sign or setting up a new one. So please look out for that.
 - Also there is a fingerpost next to The Dales on the Marston Road which has lost one of its fingers, which is now on the ground. The post itself is insecure and always seems to be leaning one way or another. This, I am told, is being investigated.
 - Following pressure from the Open Spaces Society, Leicestershire County Council made Avant Homes create an alternative route through their site for the bridleway, a continuation of route CP1 from the Lubenham Road. For many months it was blocked at the boundary. You can now get through, certainly on foot, though on horseback would be a squeeze. There is now a new warning that the route will be closed from 20th March, but I'm not sure what this means. My guess is that there will be an alternative route for the bridleway.
 - In response to a suggestion from a villager, I asked Robert Gowling if he would install a handrail on a footbridge just on the north side of the Marston Road – which he did, so thanks to him. There are a couple of new problems within his fields in the same area, a wobbly stile and a broken handrail – and I will ask him if he would deal with these at his convenience.
 - The path behind the village hall gets badly overgrown with nettles. The contractors did come out and clear it and will do so regularly, they say. Whether it will be often enough is more doubtful, as the nettles grow very quickly.
 - Just last week I reported via StreetDoctor that the footbridge at the foot of the 'Gosse' on path CP8 is rotting and has holes in the middle section. I suggested it should be looked at before it gives way when someone treads on it. This will be investigated.
 - I complained before in these reports that although the rights-of-way contractors had compiled a list of Parish Path wardens, they had done nothing with the people on the list, such as communicating with the wardens about work carried out or regularly asking about the state of paths in their parish. The situation is still the same – nothing has happened.
 - Once again I would urge anyone who walks the village paths to take a pair of secateurs with them from time to time to cut back brambles round stiles and gates.

g) Women's Institute

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

- Once more a year has flown; EFWI has had a good one. We enjoyed our 86th Birthday outing in April.
- In June we had a very interesting talk about volunteers who transport, by motorbike, donated organs, blood and baby milk to hospital. We learned a lot from this talk.
- The origins of beekeeping go back into antiquity and the information we learned from this excellent talk and slides was well worth knowing.
- Slides showing the gardens created by Capability Brown were much appreciated, especially by gardening "fans".
- David Deacon very kindly stepped in to give us a talk and film on his working life as a pilot, which was greatly enjoyed. Several of us had the previous evening

been to Clipston WI to watch a film about the exploits of Amy Johnson. The contrast between the two aeroplane eras was very interesting.

- We ended the year with an enjoyable Christmas lunch at Market Harborough Golf Club.
- We have tried to support village activities and coffee mornings. Some members took part in a ceremony to replace the plaque on the tree on the Village Green, which was originally given by EFWI to mark the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1937.
- This year we have welcomed two new members. Unfortunately, like most of our members they do not live in the Village but we are glad to have them.

h) Amenity Land Committee

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by David Thake:

- All is fine, although, not surprisingly, the grass has been rather wet this year.
- To keep the land in trim, we have spent £600 this year, which includes mowing, gardening, a new gate post, and stones for the steps.
- We also have an annual cost of £228 for third party insurance., totalling about £828.
- We have received donations and fund raised with coffee mornings, film shows etc., but we do have an annual shortfall in our accounts. If the parish council can see their way forward to helping us with a donation it would be much appreciated.

i) Tree Wardens

The Clerk presented the following report submitted by Jessica Oakden/Judy Hodgetts:

- The first quarterly inspection was carried out on 18th October 2019. There are 30 trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them (some are in groups under one TPO). All the trees were photographed and the state of them noted. We found that one tree had been lopped without permission and we were unable to locate four other trees. Michael Venton, Tree Officer for Daventry District Council, has been notified via East Farndon Parish Council. He has also been advised that the roots of a sycamore are damaging the retaining church wall in Rectory Court.
- The second inspection took place on 10th January 2020, and due to the absence of leaves, we noted that three further trees appear to have been lopped without permission. Michael Venton confirmed that he will inspect all of these issues when he visits East Farndon.
- All homeowners with trees on their land under a TPO were advised in writing by East Farndon Parish Council in November 2019, and a guide to tree preservation procedures was included with this. This guide plus a TPO map and list are both available on the village website.
- Michael Venton has also been asked if a TPO can be put on the historic beech tree at the top of Main Street.
- On 17th February 2020, Michael Venton visited East Farndon and the tree wardens accompanied him on his site visits. He confirmed the following:
 - The beech tree at the top of the village won't have a TPO placed on it because the land is owned by the Parish Council, and as such, no one can work on the tree without its permission.
 - Re: the four trees with TPOs that we were unable to find, Michael confirmed that two came down in previous storms. Another two were felled without permission, and the homeowner has agreed to replant.

- Re: the trees lopped without permission, a yew is to be re-pruned by a tree surgeon; an ash has regenerated and looks to be healthy; two beech trees are small trees, and Michael is taking no further action.
- Re the sycamore pushing against the church wall in Rectory Court, this tree acts as a buffer against the wind and is protecting two limes and a horse chestnut. Michael felt that these trees would become vulnerable if the sycamore was felled. We have agreed to monitor the situation.

5. Finance

Clerk reported that the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2019 have been successfully audited both internally and externally. Accounts are in good order and the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 are being finalised and will be brought before the Parish Council at the May meeting for approval.

6. Any Other Business/Public Participation

None.

Date of next meeting – 9th March 2021 - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
(provisional date)

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

Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record

Chairman _____

Dated _____