

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Boughton Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 10th April 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in Boughton Village Hall, Butchers Lane, Boughton

Present: Parish Councillors: J Clarke (Chairman), K Greatorex (Vice-Chairman), A Dale, Mrs R Mc'Donnell, Mrs J Shephard, R Wilson and T Wright

In Attendance: District Councillor John Shephard
Mrs J Bunting – Parish Clerk

Other Attendees:

Mr Steve Broadbent	Obelisk Spinney Pocket Park
Mr Steve Campbell	Obelisk Spinney Pocket Park
Mr M Stead	Neighbourhood Watch
Mrs Chrissy Boyce	Neighbourhood Watch
Mr David Whalley	Boughton Village Hall
Mr Gregory Quine	Chair of Trustees/Board of Governors Boughton Primary School
Mrs Mary James	Headteacher Boughton Primary School

Three Members of the Public

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs: S Potter, S Trott, District Councillor B Frenchman, Mrs S Greatorex, Mrs C Mackaness and Sergeant Sam Dobbs Northamptonshire Police.

2. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 11th April 2016

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 11th April 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

3. To Receive the following Annual Reports

a) Report by the Chair of Boughton Parish Council

Cllr John Clarke presented the following report:-

As Chairman of the Parish Council may I welcome you to the Annual Meeting of the Parish and thank you for your attendance this evening.

The Parish Council have met regularly through the year including extra meetings on planning matters.

I would like to put on record my thanks to the Councillors' for their attendance at meeting and for their time, contribution and support both on their specific roles and in Council.

The election of councillors to Boughton Parish took place on Thursday 5 May 2016. There were three vacancies, and Councillors Rosie McDonnell, Stephen Trott and Terri Wright were appointed.

The Parish Council have been supported by our District Councillors - John Shephard and Barry Frenchman- who share the Ward; and our County Councillor Judy Shephard. Councillor Shephard also serves as a Parish Councillor.

I know that all the Parish Councillors will join me in recording our appreciation to our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Jayne Bunting, for her guidance, commitment and professionalism through the year, not only in the routine matters concerning the Council, but also in the proactive way that Jayne demonstrates that she has the wellbeing of our village at heart. We are indeed fortunate to have such an outstanding Parish Clerk. I am sure that Jayne will also join me in thanking Councillor Russell Wilson for overseeing our financial management so ably.

Representatives of the Parish Council have attended external meetings outside of those concerned with routine matters. These include various Planning Committee meetings and appeals at Daventry District Council, Northants County Council and Northampton Borough Council; regular meetings with Northamptonshire Highways representatives including the workshop on the options for the Northern Orbital Route; Parish Forums at Daventry District Council ; Boughton Charities including the Richard Humfrey Trust , the Village Hall, the Pocket Park; Quarry Liaison Meetings; Liaison Group Meetings with neighbouring Parish Councils concerning major developments to the North of Northampton; and the Buckton Fields Liaison Forum.

Before singling out some key matters it is worth recording some of the activities that have taken place;

Statutory Consultee response to 18 planning applications that affect the village. This includes our objection to Gladman Developments re- application for 75 residential dwellings off Holly Lodge Drive which is in our Parish. This application has been refused by the Planning Committee at Daventry District Council.

The Boughton Parish Council website is regularly updated by Jayne Bunting. Parishioners are encouraged to view it as a key communication tool for the village.

We have secured money from our County Councillor's Empowerment Grant to replace the metal signpost on the corner of Moulton Lane and Humfrey Lane with a wooden one.

At our request the Northamptonshire Highways Community Enhancement Gang has completed some small tasks which help keep the village tidy.

The updated draft Village Design Statement in consultation with the Planning Department at Daventry District Council, is still not finalised. It has proved to be a time-consuming task particularly for Jayne Bunting and Councillor Terri Wright but hopefully it is nearing completion. Cllr Wright will give a more detailed report at this meeting.

The key items to update on are;

1. Buckton Fields.

Phase 1 for 376 dwellings.

To date 73 plots have been completed and 35 plots are in build by Bloor Homes; and 28 plots have been completed and 35 are in build by Martin Grant.

The Liaison Forum meets quarterly for progress reports.

Phase 2 for the balance of 1000 houses is now progressing following Northamptonshire County Councils decision to sell the land under their ownership. It is understood that negotiations concerning Section 106 and other conditions for the development will take at least 3 months.

Central to these conditions is the Northern Orbital Route. There will a further consultation by Northamptonshire Highways on their options between May and June and one of the venues will in Boughton Village Hall in June.

Mr Stead raised concerns that the construction of the NNOR and North West Relief Road would not solve the existing traffic problems. He asked if NCC could be persuaded not to sell their land for the second phase of Buckton Fields. Cllr Judy Shephard confirmed that NCC are selling the land and financial pressures to fund such things as social care were driving the sale. Cllr Clarke stated that it was now important to get the best deal for the community from phase 2 of the development for schools, health care and additional traffic.

b) Boughton Parish Council Financial Report

Cllr Russell Wilson presented the following report:-

You may recall that, at this time last year, it was necessary to raise the Boughton Parish precept by 5% to reflect increasing costs in particular those associated with the additional demands on the parish council arising out of the Buckton Fields development. Over the past year we have worked hard to control our costs within that figure and I am pleased to say that we finished the year with a small surplus which will be added to our financial reserves. Probably the most noteworthy expenditure in the year is the £2,723 incurred on a new edition of the Village Design Statement which is close to being finalised and is expected to be published on the parish website in the summer. Details of our finances are posted on the website after each council meeting and I encourage you to look at these financial statements if you would like a greater

understanding of the expenditure undertaken by the council. We finished the financial year with bank balances of £28,143 which is only marginally lower than last year (£28,771).

It is perhaps worth noting that the most significant project undertaken this year has been the traffic calming measures at a cost of more than £30,000. However, this was funded by the Buckton Fields development and not through the parish precept.

On the website for the first time you will find the financial budget for 2017/18 which was approved by the parish council in support of the precept. I am pleased to advise you that there will be no increase in your council tax next year arising out of the parish precept. However, with the increase in the number of houses in the parish principally due to Buckton Fields the actual amount of income which we will receive increases proportionately from £30,608 in 2016/17 to £39,263 in 2017/18, an increase of 28%. There are no additional financial obligations on the parish associated with the Buckton Fields development (for example the parish is not responsible for the footway lighting) and therefore these additional funds can be directed towards projects which are for the benefit of the parish as a whole. We will monitor the impact of the new traffic calming measures and if considered beneficial extend some of these measures to other parts of the village but funded this time through the precept. Many of you will be aware that we no longer have a PCSO. We have been advised by the police that it may be possible to reverse this situation should we be able to fund the cost of a PCSO in conjunction with 3 or 4 other parishes. Any such initiative will need careful consideration and time to implement but the increased precept from the new houses at Buckton Fields could provide the necessary funding.

Finally, may I thank Jayne Bunting, the parish clerk, for the work she carries out on our financial records. We continue to receive excellent feedback from our auditors on the quality of our financial records and accounting controls.

Cllr Wilson reported that a copy of the budget for 2017/2018 was available to view on the parish website. The precept had risen by 28% for this financial year but this would have a zero-percentage increase on council tax due to the additional houses in the parish including the development at Buckton Fields

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 7.50 p.m.

c) Report on Boughton Village Design Statement

Cllr Terri Wright reported that in 2014 the Parish Council had approved the update of the Boughton Village Design Statement to consider new planning policies and new development. A final draft of the document had been submitted to Daventry District Council in December 2016 and this was to be considered by the Strategy Group at DDC on the 13th April 2017. If members recommended this for approval it would go before full council at DDC on the 17th May 2017 when it would be formally adopted. DDC had consulted on the document and there had been two responses to the consultation from a developer and local landowner. Cllr Wright was pleased to note that the emerging VDS had been cited in a recent application by Gladman Developments for land off Holly Lodge Drive which had been refused.

The Chairman confirmed that once adopted the VDS would be a supplementary planning document. Mrs Boyce stated that the VDS should be used by everyone in the parish.

Special thanks to Mark Wilkinson for providing most of the new photographs were noted by Cllr Wright.

The VDS, once adopted, would only be available on the parish website. However, following a question from Mrs Pearson, Cllr Wright confirmed that copies could be made available for parishioners without access to the internet.

d) Report by County Councillor Mrs Judy Shephard

County Councillor (Moulton Division) Mrs Judy Shephard presented the following report:-

I have now completed 20 years as your local County Councillor for the Moulton division which comprises 13 villages (Boughton, Pitsford, Moulton, Hannington, Holcot, Old, Overstone, Walgrave the Bramptons, the Harlestons and Spratton).

We are approaching the County Council Elections on the 4th May and have now entered a period of Purdah which will restrict the content of my report.

NCC have commenced the second year of a four-year budget and must make £66.9m savings over the next 12 months which is a substantial challenge.

This is being achieved by:-

- *Twelve headquarter buildings being consolidated into one (One Angel Square) (£51m saving). The new Council offices will be occupied next month.*
- *Exploring if we can become a unitary authority (duplication of services)*
- *Reducing front line services duplication (people receiving more than one service)*
- *Adopting a zero-based budget approach (instead of looking at existing budgets and deciding what cuts can be made we go to a position of each service having zero money and seeing what they need to deliver their outcomes) ensuring resources are deployed to the right areas.*
- *No cuts but managing demand*
- *Exploring government view that we can use capital receipts (property and assets)*

Our Highways maintenance alliance is recognised as best value and ensures that we repair over 40,000 potholes a year (28,000 miles road network)

We have established "First for wellbeing" the largest publicly owned social enterprise of its type which is revolutionising our offer to residents I the services we provide. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has indicated that Northamptonshire is to receive £11.5m extra for Social care in recognition of the demand pressures we face here on our service. As part of our Next Generation Model we are creating NASS for the provision

of Adult Social Care as a single entity (Olympus, Contracts, ASC combined) which will be fully operational by September of this year.

NCC are to run a further consultation on the preferred route for the Northern Orbital Route and the North-West Relief Road simultaneously. The consultation material will be available on the NCC website immediately before the start of the consultation which runs for 6 weeks from the 15th May until the 30th June 2017. There will be a number of exhibitions in several locations which will be in the parish magazine (Boughton Village Hall 7th June 9 am to 7 pm).

Locally I site on Harlestone, Raybell, Boughton and Pitsford Liaison Forums, the OMBBH Committee, the Buckton Fields Liaison Forum and in addition I attend all the Parish Council meetings within my Division and I have been a Boughton Parish Councillor for over 30 years.

I am at present Chairman of Development Control at NCC which deals with planning issues such as Schools, Road, Minerals and Waste. It is a job I love.

e) District Councillor Report

District Councillor John Shephard presented the following report:-

Daventry District Council was financially in good health and the council tax increase for 2017/2018 had been restricted to £5 on a Band D property.

It had been a significant success that Daventry District Council had now secured a five-year land supply. A recent application by Gladman Developments for land off Holly Lodge Drive had recently been refused.

Following a public consultation for changes to waste and recycling collection DDC will work with NORSE from June 2018 when the current contract with Enterprise ends. This would be a joint working partnership which was proving successful in Wellingborough.

An initiative for the collective funding, by neighbouring parishes, of a PCSO position was currently being explored with the Police & Crime Commissioner. A PCSO would be employed by Northamptonshire Police but day to day responsibility would be with the Parish Councils.

f) Report by Neighbourhood Watch

Mr Michael Stead (Senior Co-ordinator) presented the following report:-

The year has passed without major criminal developments overall. The communication through the police channels including the email notifications seem to be working well, and minor modifications seem to have produced improvements to the information style and content in news to neighbourhood watch channels.

There has not, as yet, been an AGM this year and 2016 had no AGM due to illness. It is proposed that 2017 AGM be held during the next two weeks. Of particular interest, currently, is the proposal to deal with the expansion of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme to include

recent housing developments within the parish boundaries at Boughton Rise and Buckton Fields. The Rise contains just under a hundred houses and Buckton Fields is of course several times larger and currently of uncertain ultimate size.

Our Neighbourhood Watch police (and general) secretary, Chris Boyce, has prepared a thorough and careful report on the options to consider for the way forward which I am very pleased to commend to the Parish Council. With your approval this will be considered at the coming Boughton Neighbourhood Watch AGM at which we hope a police representative will, as usual, attend.

Essentially the recommendation is the accommodation of the new houses at these two locations as part of the current scheme before moving to more self-reliant satellite sub-schemes connected with information flows through the Boughton Neighbourhood Watch police secretary. We trust you will consider the essential idea worthy of discussion at the coming Watch AGM and we can then accordingly place this on the agenda.

I would again like to express my thanks to my colleagues Chris Boyce and Susan Wilson (our treasurer) for their work and excellent continued support throughout the period since the last village AGM.

Chrissy Boyce reported that all the neighbourhood watch signage had now been replaced with new. She complimented the local PCSO Matt Taylor for the daily crime alerts which were invaluable. There were good communication links with Boughton Village Matters and the village website. Residents at Boughton Rise would like to be included in the scheme which was free to join.

g) Boughton Village Hall

Mr David Whalley (Chairman) presented the following report:-

On behalf of the Boughton Village Hall Trustees and Committee I am pleased to provide the Report for the year ended 31st January 2017.

Once again, it has been an active and satisfactory year with income improved £9570 (£8337) and where funds from lettings/hire has modestly risen £5,341 (£5,045). Additionally, a donation of £1,667 has been received from the developers of Buckton Fields.

Expenditure has been kept in control at £8,796 (£7,192) and which included an outlay of £1,950 to cover full external decoration.

The resultant surplus of £774 (£1,145) sees the General Fund at £15,107 (£14,333) which leaves an adequate cushion for future eventualities including some internal redecoration and resurfacing/improvements to the car park.

It is worth reflecting/reminding of the various activities that have taken place in the last year.

- *Clubs using the Hall regularly are Yoga, Pilates, Gardening, Spencer and Karate*

- *The Hall has providing a meeting place for the Parish Council, Elections, Buckton Fields.*
- *The variety of events takes in children's parties, christenings, Family Fortunes, School Prom, Barn Dances and family parties and anniversaries.*
- *Finally, all the important fund raising has seen Quiz Nights in February/March, Vintage Tea Party in April (this year in May), Jumble Sale in September, Wine Tasting in October, Dance in aid of the Pocket Park and lastly the Boughton Bake-Off fund raising for Syria.*

In conclusion, I do wish to record formally my whole hearted thanks to members of the committee together with our Auditor, Russell Wilson. I commend each member of the team for their hard work which has ensured the continued success of the Boughton Village Hall.

Following a request from District Cllr John Shephard that the committee consider the use of the village hall car park as parking for additional village use, Mr Whalley agreed to discuss this at the next committee meeting although he stressed that he would not support.

h) Age Concern (Boughton Care for the Elderly)

On behalf of Mrs Sue Greatorex, the Chairman presented the following report:-

This year has, again, been fairly quiet with regard to the vulnerable elderly residents of Boughton. But it has had its moments.

A very popular character died recently. Kathleen (Nellie) Harris. She will be missed. Also, Jim Parker from Church Street. A sad time for the families.

A few others are becoming increasingly frail. Tony Webb, Audrey Phipps Walker, Kate Sturgess and Sandra and Roy Mynott. Barbara and I will keep our ears to the ground regarding these.

Joyce Harris and Pam Rapkin are both doing quite well, but again we will keep in contact.

I would like, again, to thank Barbara very much for her help and support and as long as we can keep helping this way, we will.

On behalf of the Parish Council the Chairman thanked Mrs Greatorex and Mrs Piggins for the invaluable service they provide to the elderly residents of the village.

i) Boughton Pocket Park

Cllr Greatorex read out a report on behalf of Mrs Charlotte Mackaness:-

The Pocket Park continues to be extremely well used.

During 2016, some important maintenance jobs were carried out, including repairing

sections of the perimeter path. Thank you to Kevin Greatorex for liaising with contractors and to the Parish Council and the Weatherley family for their donations that made this possible.

We had a number of successful fundraisers, including a fun evening in the village hall (almost unrecognisable thanks to Matt Potter), the bonfire and a calendar.

We continue to run several clear-sessions a year. These usually only last an hour or so. Although we've had a few more volunteers from outside the committee than in previous years it would be great to see more people who enjoy using the Park giving up an hour of their time.

Anti-social behaviour is a niggling problem that appears to be increasing. Fast-forward to 2017 and many will be aware of significant damage done to the maze that was repaired in 2015 following similar damage. We've had issues with graffiti, kids being a nuisance and a recent clear up found drug-taking paraphernalia. However, it is important to say that adult dog walkers making holes in the perimeter fence and hedging to avoid walking a few extra metres to the gate is also a problem!

Steve Bryan, who lives on Humfrey Lane, has been a huge assistance in keeping an eye on things and enabling issues to be reported to the Police quickly. I have made several appeals to our local Police team for more support with issues and, speaking frankly, I've been disappointed with the response. Compared to many villagers, we have a good sense of community and reasonable communication in terms of reporting issues, so I'm not sure what more we could do on this front. Advice I've been given has, at times, felt like teaching grandma to suck eggs if that's the correct expression! While I appreciate the Police force is stretched, a short but concentrated period of patrols might really help nip undesirable activities in the bud.

Steve and the Parish Clerk Jayne have also done a splendid job in ensuring unreliable rubbish collection in the Park has been reported and dealt with. Thank you.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for its annual grant and support, and I personally would like to say a big thank you to Kevin Greatorex, our treasurer, and all those on the committee. It goes without saying that we are always delighted to see new people – either at meetings or to help at events.

I have now stepped down from the Pocket Park Committee entirely. I sincerely hope that others with enthusiasm and energy will come forward, and I wish everyone involved the very best of luck.

Cllr Greatorex reported that Charlotte Mackaness was stepping down from her role on the Pocket Park Committee and he stated that he had major concerns along with other committee members because of the amount of work undertaken by Mrs Mackaness to transform the Park. It was important to keep her momentum going and she had been a great support with her energy and drive. The thanks of the Parish Council and the meeting were formally recorded.

j) Obelisk Spinney Pocket Park

Mr Steve Broadbent presented the following report:-

A grant of £250 had been received in the year from the Parish Council which has enabled us to continue our activities. Thank you to our six volunteers who help on the first Saturday of every month between 9 a.m. and 12 noon. These volunteers have supported the work activities this year and have completed 80 volunteer hours with the upkeep and maintenance of the Pocket Park. Some of the activities completed have been the clearing of pathways, tree maintenance, clearing ivy, rubbish clearance and planting. We are planning to spend more time maintaining the pathways this coming year which need refurbishment.

We have seen some growth this year from projects undertaken some year ago including replanting of the hedge line.

The Chairman thanked Mr Steve Broadbent and Mr Steve Campbell and the volunteers for all the work they undertake to maintain the Pocket Park as such a wonderful asset for the parish.

k) Boughton Primary School

Mrs Mary James the new Head Teacher at Boughton Primary School presented the following report:-

Our Guiding Principles

- *To provide consistent, high quality teaching to enable children of all backgrounds and abilities to make good progress from their starting points;*
- *To maintain our whole child ethos to ensure moral, spiritual, academic, social development with a strong focus on Values Based Education, promoting fundamental British values and culture;*
- *To promote self-esteem, respect and tolerance towards others;*
- *To deliver and comply with the strict statutory demands of the Department for Education;*
- *To ensure the school remains a core member of the local community.*

This year's developments

- *New Head Teacher appointed July 2016, commenced role in January 2017*
- *Interim Head Teacher worked with school from May to December 2016, initiating some developments in practice*
- *Continued delivery of "one-form entry": 7 classes for 7 year groups, current number on roll 186*
- *Ofsted inspection March 2017 – awaiting publication*
- *Involvement in community arts' project, resulting in bespoke mural fitted in the school hall*

- *Strong focus on Values Based Education, to sustain improvements in behaviour within school and in the community*
All whilst maintaining the highest standards of care and education provision for our children

Our strengths

- *A highly talented and committed team*
Senior Leadership Team
The staff
The Board of Trustees/Governors
Supportive parents Fantastic children!
- *Wonderful environment and resources*
- *Community links developing and strengthening*
- *Our legal structure, allowing independence, control of our future*
- *Our pupil outcomes remain higher than national results*

Our challenges

NATIONAL:

- *Policy and statutory changes/demands*
- *Continued reduction in public sector funding*

LOCAL:

- *Maintaining excellent standards of care and education provision*
- *Protecting our independence*
- *Working with the PC and other groups, to ensure the school is at the heart of the local community; simultaneously ensuring school leaders can maintain their focus on teaching and learning.*

Mrs James reported that as soon as the results of the recent OFSTED inspection were published they would be made available to the Parish Council.

I) Richard Humfrey Charity

Cllr Mrs Judy Shephard (Chairman) presented the following report:-

I have now completed my fifteenth year of Chairmanship of the Richard Humfrey Charity. There are at present 10 highly valued Trustees comprising of 4 co-opted members, 2 ex-officio members, 2 members nominated by the Parish Council and 2 extra co-opted members. Mr Roy Palmer and Mrs Norma Pearson are our charity representatives serving on the RH Educational Committee as well. Fr. Stephen Trott also serves on our committee in an ex-officio capacity.

There have been two meetings in the last financial year. These are traditionally held in November and March. All meetings of the Charitable Trust are regularly attended by the Trustees, who remain very dedicated and committed members of the Trust.

Application of income was made to two individuals residing within the parish at Christmas and again at Easter, totalling £600 and two special £100 gift hampers were also presented to a further two recipients at Christmas. Another £100 hamper was due to be delivered to an individual at Easter but sadly this will not now be possible. In recent years' we have lost some of our well-loved and long-lived residents so our awards are dwindling. The Trustees have agreed to maintain the payment of £300 to each eligible resident.

Mr Oliver Mackaness has done an excellent job as our auditor and we offer our grateful thanks to him for his clear and accurate accounting. I make my usual plea that if you know of anyone, young or old, who is in need of benefit who lives within the Parish of Boughton please let me or any Trustee know.

I would like to record my special thanks to Mrs Sue Greatorex and Mrs Barbara Piggins who are our "Age Concern" representatives within the village. They are our "eyes and ears" on issues concerning the elderly, the infirm or those at risk within the parish and they do a sterling job. They continually ensure that parishioners health, safety and wellbeing are not compromised.

The chiropody service continues to be highly valued by those parishioners who use the service and special thanks must be recorded to Ms Shirley Morgan the Chiropodist whose foot ministrations are much appreciated. She is happy to see anyone in the parish by appointment so please feel free to contact her. There were 9 chiropody sessions during the year costing £20 a session to hire the Village Hall. The Humfrey charity will, of course, happily continue to financially support its continuance.

Mrs Jill Gist is our very valued secretary and treasurer of both Humfrey Charities. Her dedicated and professional approach to both charities has made her a most appreciated member of the team and I would personally like to thank her for all the extra assistance she so willingly and selflessly provides.

m) Richard Humfrey Education Foundation

Cllr Kevin Greatorex presented the following report:-

I have now completed my fifteenth year as Chairman of this committee.

Following the decision in 2015 to consider applications from applicants in difficult circumstances the Trustees did not receive any individual requests for financial grants in 2016.

At their autumn meeting although there were no individual students identified as being in particular financial hardship there was an application for funding from Boughton School for equipment and a grant of £450 was made to assist with the purchase of

playground equipment. The foundation remains in a healthy state at the moment with the prospect of being able to substantially help any needy identified applicants in the future. Advertisements will again be published in the village magazine and for inclusion on the noticeboards at the most appropriate time to have the maximum impact on potential applicants.

A copy of the final accounts for the Charities for as at the 31st December 2016 is attached for information.

Application forms will continue to be available from the Clerk to the Charity – Mrs Jill Gist and also from the Chairman – Kevin Greatorex.

n) **Northamptonshire Police**

District Sergeant Sam Dobbs had provided the following report:-

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE FOR ANNUAL MEETING

It's that time of year when the inbox fills with (welcome) invitations to annual meetings of our parish councils across the District. With 52 parish councils, the town council of Daventry and 20 Parish Meetings, you can see that if every council met monthly on a different day of the week, Monday to Thursday and I attended each one, it would take me around 18 weeks to get through them all! Unfortunately, I cannot attend your meeting tonight, as I am already booked to attend Stowe-IX-Churches Council.

Equally I am trying to dissuade my smaller team (of which more, later) from attending every parish meeting, and am trying to manage expectations around what information we can routinely give. This comprehensive letter seeks to give you an annual update so that there is a common understanding of local policing. It should complement the update I sent out last Christmas and messages you will be receiving from the new District Inspector for Daventry and South Northamptonshire Districts, Kev Byrne.

*My opening comment could be misinterpreted as downplaying our relationship with the parish tier of local government. Nothing could be further from the truth and some will already know my passion for local governance at parish level. It is **you** who know what's going on at street level, where the concerns are, and it is **you** and your Clerk/Executive Officers who know how to get things done. It is **you** who have the rapport and networks with the neighbourhood, and it is **you** who set local budgets according to local needs and concerns.*

When I compare these comments with my job as one of the local neighbourhood sergeants for Daventry District, in the current context and climate, I cannot do without a robust relationship with parish councils. And when I say 'robust', that includes a relationship which allows us to have a good understanding of our mutual business, as well as good disagreement on matters of contention, and an ability to offer each other good and critical feedback. At the now many parish meetings I have had the privilege of being invited to over the past year, councillors will have heard my pride in the relevance today of the principles of Robert Peel, the founder of policing, who talked of 'the police being the public and the public being the police'. He also talked of the effectiveness of policing being borne out not by the visibility of police on the streets but the absence of crime and disorder from them.

Whilst the local policing team has reduced in size over the past three years, the Force is entirely committed to neighbourhood policing – something the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) briefed police leaders on at a seminar I attended this week, when he said ‘Neighbourhood Policing remains core to our policing model and I’ll be checking it does.’

The context of these words was the review which has been ongoing over the past year to see how the force can balance the need to reduce budgets against a growing and insatiable demand for policing new areas – the areas of child sexual exploitation, safeguarding, online crime, fraud, mental health and missing people.

I don’t envy the Commissioner his job of balancing these demands – he has acknowledged the newer demand in the recent policing plan. As just one example of the newer and growing demands of policing, the PCC referred to the changing threats for which he has to commission police services. One of these is Child Sexual Abuse, of which he soberly reminded us:

- *Child sexual abuse reports are up by a staggering 417%*
- *69% of reports relate to victims who are 10 years of age or under*
- *3% of reports relate to victims who are 2 years or under*
- *Where indecent sexual images of children are involved, 34% of these are classified as Category A – which involve the rape or sexual torture of the victims*

These are shocking statistics but help to explain why and how we need to allocate our resources around the threat, harm and risk in the county to protect people (especially the most vulnerable) from harm, and therefore why areas of low vulnerability and risk may see different levels of policing, according to the new policing plan.

I can assure you of my resolve and energy, and that of all colleagues, in doing the best we can, within the resources we have, to deliver that plan. Whilst the recent inspection by HM Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) has identified areas for improvement in our ‘effectiveness’, I consider that you should be assured by our good rating in the previous two inspections of our ‘efficiency’ (are we using our resources in the best way?) and ‘legitimacy’ (do we police ethically, with integrity and according to our stated values?). For more information, do check out the HMIC website and look up Northamptonshire.

Neither the force nor I have been secretive of the fact that the staffing of neighbourhood policing teams has reduced. However, for the first time in my 25+ years’ service, this has been done in a scientific way, according to the vulnerability and harm of a locality. In other words, a practical and academic assessment of a locality’s vulnerability and harm has identified the makeup of the policing team it requires.

Equally, a similar assessment of its needs for response policing has identified when and where our officers are best deployed.

Daventry District is one of the safest places to live in the county and those of you that have heard me talk, you know of the some of the issues that face other Northants communities which just don’t affect Daventry. So, the shape of our local policing offer looks something like this:

- **Response policing** (where you call us for an ongoing incident or emergency) will be serviced by our 24/7 response teams based out of Daventry. Officers will have the mobile technology so that they don’t have to keep returning to the station. The teams have had their numbers tweaked according to the demand, threat, harm and risk,

which is why some of our neighbourhood policing team numbers have reduced (we were constantly backing up the response teams anyway)

- **Neighbourhood policing** The force has re-pledged its commitment to neighbourhood policing and that every community will continue to have a named local contact and neighbourhood presence. That presence may not be someone walking the streets of Great Oxenden at 3am (by way of example), but it may comprise an online presence (many of the local officers are now using social media), It may comprise regular email or online contact, bearing in mind that 88% of the population use the internet daily and 90% of 16-24 year olds use mobile data online. What it will absolutely rely on is accessibility to local policing services, and I refer to contact with us later on in this report.

Dedicated neighbourhood resources will focus on community issues – the hours spent on neighbourhood policing will not reduce even though there will be fewer neighbourhood officers. Whilst that sound like spin or marketing talk, it does make sense, and I explain this. Our team will comprise 2 sergeants, 5 constables and 6 PCSOs **plus** sponsored PCSOs, of which we currently have 3. There will be scope for further sponsorship later in the year and I am aware of a number of parishes asking more information about this, which we will have ready in time for parish budget-setting at the end of 2017. But the reduced officer numbers will work in a regime where they are ‘red-circled’ to their core role, rather than constantly being taken away to cover elsewhere (and the red-circling started at the beginning of April.)

Daventry Police Station remains one of four policing ‘hubs’ in the county and remains an operational station with a public Enquiry Desk which opens in accordance with public demand, Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm. (Telephone extension 341010).

We report to the new inspector (Kev Byrne) who will oversee the two districts of Daventry and South Northants. In reality, this is the team size we have been working with since Christmas, but with the added protection that these officers will not be drawn away to support response policing or myriad other abstractions – the red-circling I refer to earlier.

We will be able to concentrate on community engagement, problem solving, working with partners, visibility and accessibility, using a ‘what works’ principle and ‘hot times’ – our officers will patrol visibly according to patrol plans which maximise visibility and prevention.

- **Specialist support** – for specialist jobs, but also for backup and presence across our District, we are supported by regional teams – at a recent rescue incident at Pitsford water, for example, our response comprised officers from response teams, my team, an armed car from the A14 (deployed in unarmed mode), a Leicestershire officer from the M1 who works on our joint operations unit, as well as CID officers from the north of the county. This was in addition to resources from Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue, with whom we are working closer than ever.
- **Growth areas** – the force will be developing its demand and contact management to make us more efficient – better management of calls which don’t need an immediate response. This will include an appointment schedule so we can see people more quickly

at police stations or community hubs. Another huge area of growth is around our duty to safeguarding: our safeguarding teams will be centralised, a domestic abuse prevention/investigation team will offer a consistent, countywide service and a proactive team will support safeguarding and all areas of policing where threat, harm and risk dictates where they should be deployed. In Daventry District, whilst we have low crime and disorder, we spend oodles of our time dealing with vulnerable people, with low-level (but serious) domestic violence (or coercion), missing people, and people with mental health issues which put them at risk.

- From the many parishes I have visited, I recognise (as does the force) that our 101 system does take a knocking – sometimes justifiably, sometimes not. What we do know about our own District is that:
- People are reticent to call us to report suspicious circumstances and hesitate to use 999
- People think we are too busy or wouldn't be interested in the information offered
- People don't like it that there is nothing between a 999 and 101 call
- We could make better use of the Crime stoppers – the charity which welcomes anonymous information either by calling on 0800 555111 or sending a message online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

www.fearless.org is another website aimed at empowering young people with an option to pass on information about crime with guaranteed anonymity.

For those reasons, at Christmas I put together a guide to when and how to contact us, and this has been circulated to parishes with this letter in an updated format.

At one of his regular visits to the police station recently, I was proud to update our MP, Chris Heaton-Harris to some of the hard work that has been going on in recent months including:

- The arrest of rural criminals who have been targeting farms and stables stealing large quantities of farm equipment. Some of the equipment stolen from Northamptonshire has been seized in a Welsh police area and we are returning over £20k worth back to owners, with the immense help of the NFU
- The execution of warrants under the Misuse of Drugs Act and the arrest of local people suspected of supplying drugs. This follows successful operations to locate and close cannabis factories like the one at Crick, with the support of organisations like Neighbourhood Watch
- Working meaningfully with partner agencies to ensure that people who take up large amounts of police time receive the attention of the healthcare agencies which are the more appropriate people to help. We have also successfully prosecuted an individual for the wasteful use of police resources.
- Building rapport with local support groups (like the mental health wellbeing group) so that there is confidence in the policing service we offer.

I'll now turn my attention to some of the key areas which are regularly raised with us at parish meetings.

Speeding & Traffic matters: This is an issue which is raised in virtually every parish. I cannot endorse enforcement in every parish, and we concentrate our resources where the speeding is a factor in collisions where there is serious injury or death. When we

have less formal enforcement, we normally catch around one-third of local people. Community Speedwatch is a great way of engaging with the local community and providing a less formal sanction, and I commend it to your council if you haven't already adopted it.

Road JAG | A mantra of mine when addressing these issues includes the 3Es of Engineering, Education and Enforcement. Rarely will I allow enforcement to be the 'de facto' option, when there are other options. That is why I encourage parishes to be aware of the Roads Joint Action Group (JAG) – part of the Community Safety Partnership. This group meets regularly and comprises representatives from Highways England, the Highways Authority, councils, police, fire. Its recommendations are meaningful and definitive.

The Chair of that group is Kevin Fagan (kfagan@daventrydc.gov.uk), and the group can apply shared learning to other contentious issues in rural communities like parking around schools – so that solutions which work in one place can be recommended to others.

Statistics: In the old days, local officers used to pore over their computer screens for hours, to provide crime and statistics to bring to parish councils, and these days are now past. Firstly, much of these statistics are now available to members of the public on websites like www.police.uk or www.checkmystreet.co.uk. Secondly, at the (now many) parish meetings, I am rarely asked about the statistics as people are more interested in the qualitative aspects of the service rather than the quantitative. That said, we have a police volunteer who has taken on some of this 'nice to do, but not must-do' work, which is why some (not all) parishes receive a report. We are trying to extend this service.

Neighbourhood Watch is active on this District and the District coordinator, Andy Crisp (andycrisp@btinternet.com) would love to hear from any parish interested in setting up a scheme. We have had some good successes with our active NHW schemes, and a large number of coordinators meet here at the police station on a quarterly basis.

Visibility: Everyone wants the police to be visible (including me) but we need to be effective too. A recent spate of crimes in one of our villages has provoked a correspondence about whether we should increase patrols, and I have had to say that this is just not an effective use of resources. Accessibility to policing is key – do you know who your local officer is, and (more importantly), do you have the right rapport with him/her and vice versa. Parish councils can help with this, especially when there is a single point of contact. Most of my PCSOs now operate Twitter accounts, and this is a great way of finding out about news of what we are up to. Woodford Halse Parish Council posts the local PCSO's live Twitter feed on its parish Facebook page. I use Twitter and it's a great way of communicating both ways.

Responsiveness: A recent spate of quite unusual burglaries, targeting specific addresses across our district within the space of two hours one evening, has caused natural concern, and an understandable kneejerk reaction from the community to request increased visible patrols. As a resident of this community I do understand those concerns, but will not be responding by putting on extra patrols, as my professional judgment is that this will not prevent or detect these crimes. However, what we are doing is to increase plain-clothed patrols across the patch whilst encouraging the community to report suspicious circumstances. I am involving the parish council concerned, and the local NHW, in that message, which is why a good relationship with

parish council and community groups is key, and why I have taken the time to give you this report in its detail, which I'll use as the template for other meetings I cannot get to.

I appreciate this is a lengthy report, but given that I won't be able to get around all Parish Annual Meetings, I am hoping that this provides a more general update on the policing of our District – reputed to be the second largest rural district in England. If you would like me to come to a future parish council meeting at Boughton, please do ask me and I'll happily attend.

I hope I have made it clear that I see parish councils as key in the accessibility to policing I have described, as we do our best to protect all members of the county from harm whilst maintaining all the effective parts of policing to keep this District one of the safest places in the county.

- o)** The Chairman gave a special vote of thanks to all the volunteers who give their time and make such a contribution to the village.
- p)** The Charity Accounts (Boughton Village Hall, Richard Humfrey and Richard Humfrey Education) were available for inspection and are annexed to these Minutes.
- q)** The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for presenting reports.

4. Northampton Northern Orbital Route Consultation

The Chairman reported that dates for a further consultation on the Northampton Northern Orbital Route and Northampton North-West Relief Road have now been published on the County Council's website. The consultation will begin on Monday the 15th May 2017 and run until Friday 30th June 2017. During the consultation period a number of public exhibitions were planned and an exhibition will be held in Boughton Village Hall on Wednesday 7th June 2017 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

5. Matters for Report Only

None

6. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Monday 9th April 2018 in Boughton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed as a true record of the above meeting

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Chairman

Dated this 9th day of April 2018

DRAFT