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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Church with Chapel Brampton Parish held on  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April commencing at 7.30pm at the Brampton Primary School.

Minutes taken by the Clerk, Sarah Stock

Attending: Cllrs JS, RGn, RGt, MM, SC, WS. MOP x 18

Apologies received from: Cllr Margaret Green, Northants Police.

Item 1: Welcome address and introductions by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Jill Slinn

Item 2: Minutes of the 2023 Annual Parish Council Meeting approved.

Item 3: Annual report from the Chairman of Church with Chapel Brampton Parish Council

We have had a reasonably quiet year at the parish council. With various matters taking our attention.

I'd like to thank those members of the parish council who have worked hard to maintain matters within the village. To Robin my vice chair who is on hand to help wherever he is needed. To Mick McMMain and Steven Crane who help manage the playing field and pocket park. Richard Gent works tirelessly in the background to manage the village newsletter as well as being part of the parish council and is an integral part of the village's communication. To William whose knowledge of all things planning is such a big help and Margaret for her steady thoughts and opinions. We are grateful to the litter pickers, who do a great job. Finally, a big thank you to Sarah our Clerk who is so very efficient making all our lives a little easier.

The work on the new road has proved challenging but overall, we have found Balfour Beaty helpful. The only problem we have had is that any timescales they have given us have moved and the work is quite fluid and dependant on the weather.

New poles installed for speed monitors have been put up. We have applied for grants to provide us with a sign at the top of Pitsford road to warn of the junction and on Harlestone road by the war memorial. We may have to pay for one of them but have budgeted for this.

Traffic monitoring is taking place this week and we then intend to go to Highways and safer roads Northampton to apply for a 20-mph limit through chapel Brampton passed the school once these figures are in.

I plan to step down as chairman in May and hope one of my colleagues will take up the role. I will continue with the parish council until next year when there are elections. We currently have one vacancy so encourage you to join us.

Item 4: Presentation of the accounts

Council started the year with a bank balance of £32.5K (councils are advised to hold one year's precept). The council raised a precept of £29,000, and received WNC grants for grass mowing and litter picking (£2,236). We closed the year with £32.5K remaining. Broadly, the council spent on the following:

£4,220 on grass cutting.

£3,170 Village maintenance  
£2,550 on Speed Indicator Device (Grant Received to cover costs)  
£5,700 on Street lighting\*  
£18,900 Scheduled running costs (last year £18,927)  
Council is about to submit the annual audit for YE March 2024.

\*Council had benefited for many years from an undercharge on the street lighting, as E-on/Yu energy was not charging for all our streetlights. However, Yu Energy spotted the error and we had to pay costs related 2022/23 (£1,215) and meet the new charges. This combined with an increase in energy costs, resulted in huge costs increase for the council.

#### Item 5: Reports from West Northants Councillor (WNC Cllr John Shephard) (report rec'd by email and noted in minutes)

The year has been dominated by my service as chairman of West Northamptonshire Council, from 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024. There have been some 120 engagements. Of those, the most memorable are community and other memorial events, together with the "Choirfest" concert held in the Derngate at Easter and the visit to the district of HRH The Princess Royal in the summer. There were 6 chaired meetings of the council: a great honour overall.

1<sup>st</sup> April was the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the new WNC council. It is in excellent health – in that its basic organs are well oiled by finance. Indeed, its financial performance in amalgamating the various balances of the four predecessor authorities has exceeded our expectations. A WNC finance team was recognized nationally as being one of the best in the country. The 2024/5 budget (excluding schools and housing) is £383.5m, funded by council tax as to £244.9m, business rates £90.8m, grants from HMG of £39.9m and reserves of £7.9m. The single largest challenge remains the contribution to the Children's Trust, a body set up at the same time as WNC, to administer children's services across the county. The budget allocation is £83.3m, some 22% of the whole. The second challenge is funding adult social care specifically identified on council tax statements we have all received. For my band "G" house, the ASC element is £400.

Some specific highlights have been:

- Active trading standards prosecution involving seizure of 200,000 cigarettes and 35kg hand rolled tobacco.
- Public health prosecution of a restaurant resulting in a fine of £33k
- £5m distributed in the form of household support, for 12,500 families with children continuing to receive meal vouchers during school holidays and support for food banks and larders.
- Delivery of a 250 pupil special school for SEND pupils in Towcester
- Opening of a new night shelter in Northampton
- Commencement of work on the NNRR

Whilst not saying the benefit has yet been seen, a JCB Pothole Pro machine was bought, completing pothole repairs four time faster than before.

There are growth pains. One of the greatest challenges has been the fusing of four professionally independent planning departments into one. The planning service is not yet operating as we would wish. It is a priority.

The more attractive news to parishes is that the local plan to 2041 seeks to build just 6,000 houses, with villages left alone.

Democratically, the council is reducing from 93 members to 77 with effect from the next election in May 2025, with 3 members remaining representing Moulton Ward.

On balance I believe the fusing of the three district and half of a county authority has worked very well but there is certainly work to be done.

Turning to parish matters, there remain complex issues in Boughton, namely:

- Negotiations with developer on the community centre to be provided in Buckton Fields
- Traffic calming to be provided through the planning permission for the NWRR
- Parish boundary reviews
- Allocation of CIL delivered by Buckton Fields

In the other villages in my ward outside Moulton itself I think you have a quieter life. You might like to see your respective council tax precepts:

Boughton	£60,000-£4,000	£48.89 Band D
Bramptons	£31,000+£2,000	£76.87
Hannington	£11,025+£525	£76.03
Harlestone	£35,000nil change	£166.75
Harlestone Manor	£32,156nil change	£104.40
Holcot	£21,500+£2,000	£117.49
Moulton	£457,483+£26,483	£215.70
Old	£18,226-£147	£81.22
Overstone	£86,940+£18,402	£92.46
Pitsford	£38,000+£1,950	£118.97
Spratton	£54,000+£10,925	£115.12

The total council tax precepted by parishes in West Northamptonshire for the current year is £12.3m with an overall average band D of £90.63. [Previous year £12.2m and £85.61.]

As always, I am happy to come to parish council meetings when called upon to do so and speak with your clerk or chairman at any time.

#### Item 6: Report from Northants Police (rec'd by email and noted in minutes)

The Daventry Neighbourhood policing team remains at the heart of all policing activities across the district. We continue to be based primarily from Daventry Police Station in the centre of our largest town with a smaller team working from Brixworth, covering the more rural communities in the north of West Northamptonshire.

2023 has seen several changes within the Daventry neighbourhood team at both supervisor level as well as amongst the team. In April we said a fond farewell to Police Sergeant (PS) Matt Moore, who left to join Norfolk police. We welcomed PS Lewis Judd to the team as his replacement; Lewis is responsible for the rural areas at both the north and south of the district. This includes Brixworth, Moulton, Welford, Naseby, Weedon, Woodford Halse and Byfield. PS Judd manages several PCs and PCSOs' based at both the Brixworth office and Daventry Police station. PS Greg Harrison remains the sergeant responsible for Daventry Town, Crick, Kilsby, West Haddon and Long Buckby areas with his team based at Daventry Police Station, along with numerous response officers on duty 24/7 across the district.

We have also welcomed PS Josh Ellard to the neighbourhood policing team, running Operation Fragment, which is Northamptonshire police's response to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and associated

issues on the Southbrook estate within Daventry Town. The team are trialling a number of initiatives to reduce the rates of crime and ASB on the estate; he is supported by three PCs on this operation.

The Team continues to benefit from having sponsored PCSOs who are dedicated to parishes around the area. Les Conopo and Duncan Cumming cover the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) and Crick providing a high visibility presence and maintaining good partnerships with the largest business estate on our district. This helps deter crime and reduce ASB as well as providing the village with points of contact for any emerging issues. PCSO Paul Miller has taken over the sponsored role in Woodford Halse. He has spent several weeks ensuring he is a familiar face around the village, making effective partnerships with the schools and local business and targeting the issues raised by the village around anti-social parking and shoplifting. If any parishes would like to seek further information on the sponsorship scheme or are interested in joining, please contact one of the supervisor team. PCSO Emma Teagles has been dedicated to Daventry Town for the past year bringing with her a wealth of local knowledge and contacts that have proved invaluable.

All of this has meant we have a larger team and are able to dedicate more time and resources in tackling the issues that mean the most to you, our residents. Whilst our officers and PCSOs have defined beat areas in which they spend much of their time, we are able to be flexible in order to respond to emerging issues and areas of risk if needed. We also now benefit in having staff trained in a variety of skills including off-road motorcycling, response and pursuit driving, drug testing, method of entry, as well as Taser equipped officers. This allows us to provide a suitable response to every situation we attend.

The team endeavour to remain as visible in the community as much we possibly can, utilising several locations to hold community surgeries and drop in events so that you can speak to us in person. We are also continuing to utilise the force's Beat Bus to visit villages and areas where it has been traditionally hard to base ourselves and be visible.

As well as responding to reported incidents as they occur, officers take on crime allocations for offences that have taken place in our policing area. The focus of our team is driven by locally identified priorities, which are updated quarterly throughout the year.

2023 has seen these alternate between Rural Crime, Drug Dealing & Misuse, Burglary, Auto Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. In addition, Road Safety and Traffic Offences consistently feature as a priority. Sadly, we have once again seen several fatal and serious injury road traffic collisions on the roads of the district and the team remain committed to working to reduce and prevent these in any way we can. We provide a high visibility presence on the roads with a fleet of marked police vehicles and have been able to carry out speed enforcement using our handheld devices to both deter and detect offences. Also working with other teams from across the force as well as the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA), we have been able to establish pop-up check sites where cars are pulled over for document and defect checks at the roadside.

This has led to numerous vehicle recoveries and offences being detected on each occasion. However, it should be noted that many cars on the road are being driven legally in accordance with all legislation. Residents may have seen several high-profile enforcement days that have taken place in Daventry Town and surrounding villages as part of our ongoing efforts to reduce the supply of illegal drugs in our community. Over this year, the neighbourhood team have executed numerous warrants in the early hours of the morning, as well as during the day to best target when offenders are in possession of drugs. This helps to disrupt the supply of drugs into the community. Currently, we have a few ongoing investigations and court cases that are due to report on sentencing soon. These warrants are based and secured on the intelligence we receive from the community. It is the key factor in assisting with building a wider picture of everyone linked to drug supply and giving us the foundation to apply for and execute warrants to reduce

the harm that drugs inflict on our community. A key example of the direct effect this enforcement has had is the link to a reduction in violence in our weekend night-time economy.

At present we are finding that a lot of our time is consumed in dealing with crimes perpetrated via social media. The vast majority of this involves children of school age but is not exclusive to them. Children may not be aware that sending of malicious communications – nasty, abusive messages on platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, Snap Chat etc. are criminal offences. The same principal applies to the sending of intimate images between children. We urge parents to take an overview of the chat groups that children join or just who they are communicating with online. There is a wealth of support available for these situations which parents can find via West Northamptonshire Council and organisations such as Service Six. We also work closely with schools to try and disrupt and deter this sort of behaviour as it often stems from relationships developed within a school environment.

We strongly recommend that all living and working within our communities sign up to Northamptonshire Talking. This is an email messaging system that all Schools, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch and community members can join. In registering your email address, you will receive up-to-date information regarding crimes, policing activity, crime prevention advice and much more. This system is a two-way process and offers you a chance to respond to information provided as appropriate. If most of the community sign up then we can create a virtual network of additional eyes and ears, watching out for suspicious activity, looking out for vulnerable friends, family and neighbours, and receiving information about local events and activities that can help alleviate fear of crime and promote a safe and secure lifestyle.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that even the simplest home safety measures can prevent you becoming the victim of crime, we have seen several opportunistic offences being committed across the district that could be prevented if cars and houses are left locked overnight.

Should you wish to discuss a particular issue that is of concern to you or meet a member of your Neighbourhood policing team then please contact us using our team inbox:

[NeighbourhoodTeamDaventry@northants.pnn.police.uk](mailto:NeighbourhoodTeamDaventry@northants.pnn.police.uk)

#### Item 7: Report from Helen Frampton, Althorp Estate

Althorp has been awarded a Higher-Level Stewardship accreditation.

The estate has submitted a planning application to create a flood alleviation scheme and conservation project on Brampton plain, adjacent to the railway line between Harlestone and Brampton. There will be an opportunity for councillors to attend a presentation about the project in the coming weeks.

The estate continues to breed short horn cows, and there were 27 calves this season. It is hoped there will be more sheep in future. Althorp is still fully organic, spraying organic compost instead of fertilizers. Althorp invite the children from Brampton School to walk and talk the farm at the estate.

For MOP with concerns about footpaths in the area a new email address has been created to report issues to: [Footpaths@althorp.com](mailto:Footpaths@althorp.com) (tbc) email address.

The house opens 29<sup>th</sup> July.

Works at Old Smithy & associated road closure will begin during school holiday. Access for residents will be maintained using three-way traffic control. The estate removed 200tonnes of fly tipping from Dallington Grange and when reports of fly tipping are reported, try to remove it on the same day.

YR questioned the application of Althorp planning restrictive covenants – Althorp cannot withhold consent for reasonable modifications. However, recent staff shortages meant that some covenants were not enforced although that is not the case now and a review of some modifications is taking place. It was confirmed that only some homes in the Bramptons are subject to Althorp's restrictive covenants.

Cllr SC asked about replanting of Black Pines which have been lost over the years and need replacement. HF agreed to investigate.

Cllr RGN asked about Althorp's contribution to repairs to Chapel Meeting Room (clerk to resend GC letter).

Item 8: Reports from Brampton's clubs and societies (if provided) –

a. Brampton Primary School (John Gillet)

This is my 10<sup>th</sup> year as headteacher at The Bramptons.

Life has gone on at the Bramptons in the same way as usual over the past year. We have continued to do our best for ALL our children, whether from the Bramptons or further afield. We continue to provide education to facilitate academic achievement, but some would argue, more importantly, to facilitate personal growth.

Despite the political agenda being about 'catch-up', we continue to work on the belief that education is neither a race nor has a finish line. Our academic achievement speaks for itself, with external testing confirming that we are way above the county and national standards across the school as we have been for 9 years now. We recently received a letter from the DfE congratulating us on being in the top 1% of schools nationally. Sadly, for me, I chose to work in education and not banking where I would have received a fat bonus for these results.

I am sure you will be relieved to know that we do not have RAAC in the school structure, so the roof is unlikely to fall on you this evening.

We consider ourselves lucky to work in such a beautiful area with such an impressive school setting. Others must agree with this too, as again we are heavily over-subscribed for next September.

We are delighted that the Pilates club in the school has gone from strength to strength and that we have played a part in that. Please get in touch if we can help any other organisations with facilities.

b. St Botolph's (Jane Shearer/John Milne)

We continue to follow the now established pattern of services, whereby we hold a communion service on the third Sunday of the month and a lay led Worship for All on the fourth Sunday. In addition, we host a 'tea, coffee and chat' session on the second Thursday of each month between 10.30 am and 12.00 pm. We have improved the sound system and now have a digital hymnal which is a great asset when we do not have an organist available. We hope to hold an event to showcase this in the summer, so look out for updates in the Newsletter.

Our Rector Andrea was made a Canon of Peterborough Cathedral during the year, and our curate Kim was ordained and continues her training with us.

There continues to be a box in the church porch for donations of non-perishable food stuffs and other items which are passed on to the Hope Centre for their food bank. Many thanks to those who contribute to it and to Yvonne Rose who delivers the contents. We were delighted to again welcome the Bramptons Primary School for their Christmas service. Our Harvest Festival took the form of 'café church' when everyone enjoyed coffee, tea or juice and croissants as they celebrated – a format that was popular.

There are still some outstanding pieces of work identified in the five-yearly Quinquennial survey of the church carried out in 2021. These are likely to involve considerable expense and some fundraising will be needed. We planted the new Rowan tree in the churchyard as part of our late Queen's Green Canopy initiative. This, along with the new pathway lights in memory of Simon Schanschieff was dedicated by the Archdeacon. We also carried out repairs to several tombstones to ensure they did not present a hazard.

Churchyard tidy-ups have taken place twice a year and help is always welcome with this and other tasks, such as the rota for opening and closing the church, flower arranging and cleaning the church.

Looking ahead, we are holding a Fashion Show on 11 May, for which tickets are still available. Look out for news of other events as the year progresses.

John Milne and Jane Shearer continue as Church Wardens.

c. Footpath Warden (Duncan Slinn)

Any repairs can be reported to the PC or to FMS. It has been identified that fencing along the railway line is not sufficient to prevent pets from getting on the line. We hope to press NR & WNC footpaths.

d. Neighbourhood Watch (Cllr Richard Gent)

Thankfully, a quiet year with only a couple of incidents. Any concerns can be posted on the social media group, but posts should not include details of your property's location or vulnerability.

e. Cedar Hythe Residents Association (Jamal Osborn) (rec'd by email and to be noted in minutes)

Dear Parish Councillors and residents of Church with Chapel Brampton,

In December 2023 residents in Cedar Hythe voted to establish a Qualified Residents Association with the aim to support residents and to provide a unified point for engagement with local bodies and authorities such as yourselves. We believe that a collaborative effort between the Residents' Association and other bodies will benefit our community, improve the consistency of messaging, improve visibility, and improve alignment regarding various topics. As part of our annual planning process the residents of Cedar Hythe have voted on our priorities for 2024 and 2025. These are as follows:

1. Tackle improper parking on the verges at Cedar Hythe's entrance during school pick-up and drop-off times which is both restricting access for residents and damaging green spaces.
2. Increasing our collective understanding and awareness of proposed local planning changes, including recent consultations on devolved decision-making, which could affect Cedar Hythe in the future.
3. Prioritise efforts to address the failing road surfacing.
4. Resolving issues and discrepancies within the Cedar Hythe design guidelines.
5. Enhancing communal green spaces by establishing clear plans and agreements regarding maintenance.
6. Addressing noise disturbances from Brampton Halt during weekends and events

In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can email us at [info@cedarhythe.org](mailto:info@cedarhythe.org)

f. Litter Pickers (Grace & Noah Finney), (rec'd by email and to be noted in minutes)

Grace and Noah have continued to get a lot from their roles as Litter picking wardens. Their duties get them outside, all year round in all weathers. They get plenty of exercise, while feeling pride in looking after their village and the wider environment. The role also gives them a good work ethic and helps them to save for their future. This year has seen their school study time increase, but they have still made time to complete their picking routes. We, as parents, also keep our eyes peeled for litter when out regularly walking in the village and bridleways.

Recently we also took the opportunity when Sandy Lane was closed of extending the picking route to the road closure barrier. As this is usually a stretch that is too dangerous to litter-pick, there was quite a lot to gather. We managed to fill several bin bags. We also popped back and did another litter-pick before the road opened again as more had accumulated from those using the partially opened road. Fingers crossed it stays relatively clear for a while.

One thing that I think is worth mentioning is that occasionally we notice spots that have been adopted as preferred dropping locations for dog poo bags. I don't know whether it could be considered that more dog poo bins could be provided? Favoured locations seem to be Church Lane hedgerows and verge, including a recently discovered hidden haul of 20 plus bags just inside the alleyway that leads from Church Lane to Ten Cottages (see photo).

g. Northampton & Lamport Railway (no report rec'd)

Item 9: Open Discussion. Parishioners are invited to raise items relating to the parish, district, or county.

EM: Concern raised about the lack of information regarding progress of the road and sought information be regarding further development adjacent to the road.

- Cllr MM briefed that 3500 homes on Dallington Heath are already planned and approved is, plus NHS provision and a school. Council understand that the developer will begin work on the link between A5199 and A428 when they begin building the homes on Dallington Heath. Council asked to convey frustration to Cllr J Shephard and request an update on road and development of homes.
- Footpath access from the lower part of Sandy Lane to the Smith Farm Shop is not currently open. Temporary provision is in place, but a footpath will provide pedestrians with access. There is no footpath along Sandy Lane.

G: Halfway Thorn residents complained about speed of construction traffic passing through the village. They noted signage has not prevented HGV using the route. Residents requested presence of Speed Van.

- Clerk agreed to request speed enforcement camera to visit Brampton.

AG: Raised concerns about WNC planning approval granted for applications which do not meet the SPG.

- Cllr JS accept that this is frustrating, and that WNC do not always observe the council's objections or observations. Council have raised a complaint with WNC and convey frustration to Cllr J Shephard.
- MOP

YR: Raised concerns about the performance of WNC. MOP concurred with YR that Cllr Shephard has not served the community well, and that WNC are underperforming. Of particular concern is the response to planning applications and lack of attendance at public meetings. MOP noted Cllr Shephard's absence from last year's meeting and again this year.

YR: noted that publicity for meeting is not reaching all residents.

- PC agreed to make greater efforts to publicise the work and meetings of the PC. Meetings are publicised on the noticeboards, website, and WhatsApp group.

Item 9: Closing Comments

Cllr JS thanks all MOP for attending.

Item 10: To agree date for the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting.

Next year's meeting may be determined by local elections which occur in May 2025.

Meeting closed 20.45