

PARISH OF HOLCOT

Mrs Lisa Callan (Parish Clerk)
2 Walgarth Court
Holcot
Northamptonshire
NN6 9TL

MINUTES OF THE HOLCOT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, BACK LANE, HOLCOT NN6 9SL, ON SUNDAY 5 JUNE 2016 AT 3 P.M.

Present: Councillor Walker (Chairman), Councillor Buckle (Vice-Chair), Councillor Sinclair, Councillor Fountain, Councillor Gunnett, Councillor Wilson, Councillor Scordellis, Councillor Carter (District Councillor), Councillor Shephard (County Councillor), L Callan (Clerk).

Also in attendance: Approximately 30 Parishioners

Apologies: None

Parish Council Chairman's Report: Councillor Walker, recently elected Parish Council Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Parish Councillors were introduced, and the Chairman explained their sectors and responsibilities. Councillors and the Clerk were thanked for their work.

Councillor Walker talked about various activities and projects that the Parish Council have been involved in over the last year, including a Defibrillator that has recently been installed in the village, a new footpath from Holcot to Walgrave, and the Photographic Year 2015 which is a record of life in the Parish in photos, taken by parishioners. Councillor Walker also spoke about the upcoming Queen's Birthday Celebrations and encouraged parishioners to get involved.

Councillor Walker reported that Holcot are now on the 'Lorry Watch' scheme organised by the Northamptonshire Police Safer Roads team, where we are one of only 3 parishes in the County that receive visits from an ANPR van that logs passing vehicles. Julie Dawe is currently undergoing her Personal Development Portfolio in the area, and she will be an independent Parish Special Constable focused on Holcot which is good news for the village.

The white lines in the village are due to be repaired over the summer. Other topics mentioned were the impacts of the Overstone Leys/Overstone Green developments, lighting in the village, the village website, the recent litter pick, and more.

Councillor Walker spoke about some of the priorities of the Parish Council over the next year, including spending more time on road safety related activity, monitoring house building, maintaining the Parish, Neighbourhood planning and the opening of the new footpath.

Councillor Walker ended his report by thanking officers and members at Daventry District Council, and Northampton County Council. Thanks were given to Ken Winter, who had been the Parish Clerk for 11 years when he retired in December. Councillor Walker also thanked Roger Gunnett for his hard work and contributions not only as a Chairman over the last few years, but also as a parishioner.

To view the full report of the Parish Council Chairman, please click [here](#).

County Councillor's Report - Judy Shephard: Yet again NCC is under considerable financial pressure, and has just set the most challenging budget yet! We have been asked by Government to find efficiency savings of more than £65M this year, and £131m over the next 4 years! This has led to some very difficult decisions. Added to this pressure is a combination of significant reduction in Government funding, and the rapid increase in the population of Northamptonshire, which is growing at the moment at the rate of 1200 new people per annum, or put another way by 1000 new people a month, which is the equivalent of a new village in Northamptonshire every 4 weeks!!

There also is a huge growth in the number of children and young people in the county, including those born here and those moving here with their families. New arrivals are sufficient to fill a primary school each month, and as a consequence it will be necessary to plan to build 31 new schools in the county by 2020!

With this increased growth comes increased demand for Children's Services. For example, from 2012 – 2015 there has been a 42% increase in the referrals to Children's services and a 24% increase in the number of children in our care. There has been an increase of 17% of children in the social care case load, presented as unaccompanied asylum seeking children since April 2015.

In line with the Next Generation Council, Children's Services have begun work with the Department for Education to look at setting up a Northamptonshire Children's Trust which will enable services for children, particularly the most vulnerable, to be improved and sustained over the medium to long term. Through this programme of change, services will be re-commissioned to provide a seamless level of support to families.

We are also working on restructuring and radical transformation of the council and at the same time improving provision and delivery of the services that NCC provide. Quite a balancing act! The council tax has been set at 3.95% and included in this is a 2% precept increase announced by Government to increase council tax for those authorities with responsibility for Adult Social Care. This is in recognition of the increasing burden placed upon Local Authorities due to the rapidly increasing and ageing population in our County.

There is a significant rise in the number of people with more complex needs. Currently, for example, the top 100 Adult Care packages cost the County Council £12m per annum! A new Accommodation Strategy is being developed that will work with providers and developers and Districts and Boroughs, to provide more care places, develop services for those with dementia and to develop a Care Village. Walgrave village has trialled the successful development of a Community Connector Scheme which will now be rolled out across the county.

The number of visitors to our Country Parks has steadily risen over the past 9 months and is 400,000 above the target for the year. The number of Library visits in the first 9 months was almost 2.4 million. I am sure this number will be improved upon when the new Moulton Library is completed!

Over the past few years, Environment, Development and Transport has already moved a long way towards its new role within the Next Generation Model. Its partnership working with Kier WSP has resulted in many of its staff transferring to this organization whilst at the same time seeing improved performance across the whole service area. The Directorate is recognized as being one of the most cost effective in the country with 90% of roads being maintained in a proactive approach.

In early 2017 over 2000 members of staff will have moved to the new Project Angel Building in Angel Street. This will allow NCC to vacate 12 properties in Northamptonshire and save the council £51m over the next 30 years.

The budget was subjected to a robust and rigorous public consultation process which, following public concern, enabled the Countywide Traveler's Unit to be saved (£65k) along with the reversal of a £500k Fire & Rescue saving proposal. The popular Empowering Councillor Grant is to continue albeit at the reduced amount of £5000 pa. I would be delighted to hear from the Parish Council or any Community Groups who wish to be considered for a grant.

I have now completed 19 years as your local County Councillor for the Moulton Division which consists of 13 villages, and at present I am Chairman of the Health Adult Social Care and Wellbeing Committee and serve on the Development Control Committee which I love.

District Councillor's Report - Ann Carter: Each year, as part of the APM proceedings, both District and County Councillors are asked to give a brief summary of Council activities throughout the previous year, together with aims and aspirations for the future.

We are privileged to live in such a beautiful corner of the County and whilst I am a strong advocate for affordable starter homes for our local people, would always try to protect the Ward from inappropriate housing development. This is always difficult to achieve as to try and balance the needs of the local community against the commercial needs of developers and local opposition, is becoming harder and harder to reconcile. Recently, DDC put forward its Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Consultation document and invited residents to put forward their views and comments.

Following on from that, it is proposed that the final document will be put before the Secretary of State with formal adoption scheduled for October 2018. It is hoped that this document will ensure the continued protection of our rural environment whilst at the same time, allowing sustainable growth as needed. Part of that document encourages villages to put together a Neighbourhood Plan to help deliver what local communities want to see for their village.

Another consultation document recently put out is the future of our Waste and Recycling service. We currently enjoy what is becoming increasingly rare throughout the country - regular kerbside collections of alternate green and grey bin waste, together with weekly recycling boxes and food waste. From 2018, it is proposed to change this regime as it has become too expensive to operate in its present form. The contract is due to expire in 2018, and it is vital that we put in place a viable and affordable alternative. It is worth noting that Councils do not have a statutory obligation to collect green waste at all and many Councils have already adopted a payment system for those who wish to opt in. We have also taken the view that the recycling boxes have now come to the end of their useful life and have become somewhat of a liability with our frequent inclement weather. It is proposed that the boxes are replaced with one bin for all recyclates and a custom fitted box for paper which can be slotted inside, underneath the lid. Those residents who do not require a green collection service are under no obligation to opt in. Those who can access the DDC website will find a link to a pictogram on the home page, which illustrates how the new system would operate and I urge you to access this.

From the District wide point of view, we continue to attract major inward investment resulting in low unemployment, stringent financial management and continuing low Council Tax which is well below the national average. The new expanded carpark at Long Buckby rail station is a typical example of how important our District is as a commercial and commuter hub as well as continued expansion of the DIRFT infrastructure which is a major source of income for the District.

As your District Councillor, my primary objective is to advise and guide all residents with whatever concerns they may have. My advice may not always be what you want to hear but you can be assured that this will always be fair, truthful and impartial, and as I am always fond of saying, **“I am not a politician but merely carrying out the rules laid down by Central Government and the EU to the best of my ability”**.

To achieve this, I continually take advantage of the frequent Member training sessions organised at DDC to keep abreast of constantly changing legislation as well as taking an active role in other aspects of Council business.

Currently, my roles within the Council structure are:

Chairman of the Licensing Committee which covers a whole raft of Licensable activities

Member Development Committee

Affordable Housing Sub-Committee

Outside representative on the Rural Services Network (Part of the Local Government Assoc.)

Frequent participant on various Task Panels put forward by the Scrutiny Committee

As well as these, I am a frequent participant at Parish Council meetings and always available to visit, help and advise any resident who contacts me.

I very much appreciate your faith in my role as a District Councillor for the last 13 years, and take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support.

Questions and comments:

Keith Burrell addressed the Parish Council, to say that they should be investing in the Parish as a whole, not just the village. He also commented on traffic issues relating to the Northern North Orbital road, and said that since authorities tend to have particular entrenched views, the Parish Council should look at this as a hurdle. Councillor Gunnett responded to say that the Parish Council have gone to great lengths at the consultations, trying desperately to address certain issues.

Councillor Wilson said that the bollards at the Causeway are creating more parking in the village on grass verges either side of Brixworth Road. Deryck Watson also said he had noticed an increase in parking outside the village hall since the bollards have been in place. This will be added to the next Parish Council agenda. County Councillor Judy Shephard offered to take this up with Highways on behalf of the Parish.

Finances: The clerk circulated a copy of the Holcot Parish Council annual financial report for 2015/16, and there were no questions.

Councillor Walker ended the meeting by thanking everyone who had attended, all of the groups that had presented a table and the WI for teas, coffee and cake.