

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2021-22

COUNCILLORS

We have 8 seats which were all filled at the end of the year. Our current Councillors are Paul Reedman, Steve Howat, Lyn Dyett, Rachael Johnson, Stephen Davies, David Hall, Antonia Collins and Margaret Anderson. Thanks to all Councillors for their work in the last year but particularly to Stephen Davies as Vice Chairman and to Lyn Dyett who is stepping down after 4 years.

MEETINGS

In the year we have had 10 normal meetings and a finance sub-committee meeting. Following a long period of virtual meetings we resumed physical meetings in May 2021 in the Methodist Chapel.

A sub-committee created to deal with the June 2022 Jubilee celebrations has had 4 meetings so far and is chaired by our Clerk.

Unfortunately the Annual Meeting of the Parish which involves residents, clubs and village organisations could not take place in 2021 due to Covid restrictions.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

18 planning applications of various types have been examined and commented upon. There have been no major applications.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

We received no additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and the balance of our CIL fund has been spent this year.

GRANTS

No Parish Council Grants have been awarded during 2021/22.

PLAY AREA

The play area continues to be well used and some minor work has been undertaken including replacing the seats to the covered blue seat unit and installing additional grass reinforcement carpet adjacent to the Zip Wire start platform.

Thanks to the team of councillors who carry out a weekly inspection of the play area.

GRASS CUTTING

2021 was the 2nd year of 3 year contracts for our two grass cutting contracts. Maximow continued cutting the village hall playing field and Countrywide Grounds Maintenance continued to cut road verges, the churchyard, the play area, the area adjacent to the village hall car park, the public open space adjacent to Hammonds Mews and the off road paths from High Street alongside the allotments and between the village hall and Cottesbrooke Road.

BUSES

Buses operated by UNO provided a 60 service from Naseby to Northampton on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and 59 service to Market Harborough on Tuesday and Friday.

Parish Councils along the routes contributed to the operational costs with the balance provided by West Northamptonshire Council. Naseby's contribution was £1,604.

Following the refusal of some councils to contribute, the 60 route towards Northampton changed to pass through Brixworth rather than via Chapel Brampton and the stop at Cold Ashby was removed.

BENCHES

Three benches were installed around the village hall playing field. These are constructed from recycled waste plastic and should require little or no maintenance.

VEGETATION CLEARANCE

Extensive clearance of shrubbery and vegetation was undertaken to open up view's of the historic Battle Obelisk from Clipston Road.

Clearance of overgrown vegetation in the All Saints churchyard was also undertaken to enhance its appearance.

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

A housing needs survey was carried out by West Northants Council and a report was issued in August 2021. This indicated a need for 5 additional affordable housing units over the next 5 years.

CCTV

A CCTV system has been installed on the outside of the village hall which covers the playing field, car park and play area.

KELMARSH WIND COMMUNITY BENEFIT

The charity has 8 trustees who are nominated by their respective parish councils and serve for a period of 3 years. There are two each from the qualifying parishes of Kelmarsh, Haselbech, Clipston and Naseby.

Richard Nicholson and Scott Westaway served as our two trustees during the year however Scott stepped down in March 2022 and has been replaced by Stephen Davies.

PRECEPT 2022/23

The parish council precept has been maintained at £31,500 for 2022/23, the same figure as for 2021/22.

VILLAGE HALL

The village hall opened up in early 2022 after the relaxation of Covid restrictions and an attractive programme of events has been put in place by the Village Hall Committee. Improvements to the hall kitchen and some additional paths and paving are planned for the coming year.

A Wind Farm grant for a 2nd village defibrillator has recently been awarded to Naseby Football Club. It is to be mounted on the village hall wall and will be maintained by the Parish Council.

GYM EQUIPMENT AREA

We are investigating the provision of a small exercise area within the village hall playing field containing a number of exercise machines. We would hope to obtain grants towards this.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

West Northamptonshire Council became operational on the 1st April with its 93 councillors elected in May 2021. It's responsibilities cover those previously exercised by Northamptonshire County Council and the 3 former district councils (Northampton Borough, Daventry District and South Northamptonshire). Naseby sits within the Brixworth electoral Ward and our 3 Councillors are Jonathan Harris, Cecile Irving-Swift and Kevin Parker.

There has been little apparent change so far in the way the new Unitary Council relates to constituent parish and town councils. Refuse and rates are being collected, schools are operating, parks and car parks are open etc.

Our main point of contact is on planning applications where we are consulted on applications within our area. To date there has been little change in the systems being used or the council staff involved. There are 3 separate Local Plans, one for each of the former district / borough councils and there are currently 3 distinct online planning application recording and management systems which do not all offer the same functions. A new common system is proposed which will require West Northants Council to install a new computer system.

A second area of parish interest is Highway Maintenance which at the moment is still being carried out under the former county council contract covering both North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire areas. New contracts are being tendered during 2022 for the separate North and West councils areas.

A substantial body of work has already been undertaken on a programme of transformation of the organisation and functions of West Northants Council but this has been hampered by work from home guidelines. It will potentially take 5 to 10 years for the full efficiency savings of the new council to be realised and will entail wide ranging changes to contracts, staffing and property.

There have been hints at devolving some additional functions down to parish and town councils but details are not yet available. A survey of West Northants Council assets within parishes and of services provided to parishes is currently under way.

VOLUNTEERS

Many thanks to

- Geoff Capell for moving and maintaining the speed information display unit.
- Roger Carter and Daron Locke for the weekly defibrillator inspections.
- Margaret Anderson for organising the Xmas tree event.
- Liz Capel and the team who deliver Naseby News.
- The Naseby Good Neighbours Group for arranging help, support and assistance for families adversely affected by Covid restrictions including loss of employment.

PARISH CLERK

Many thanks to Josie Flavell our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for her sound advice and for coping so efficiently with the changes caused by Covid regulations.

Paul Reedman
Chairman
Naseby Parish Council

31st March 2022