

Norton Lindsey Parish Council

Annual Parish Assembly held in the Church Room, Norton Lindsey at 7.00pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023

Present: Cllr J Stobart (Chairman); Cllr N Brown; WCC / WDC Cllr J Matecki; WDC Cllr A Rhead
J Bendall (Clerk/RFO)
4 members of the public

2023NLPA/01 Record of those present

Noted.

2023NLPA/02 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr K Elmhirst and Cllr M Neale who were both away, and Cllr R Mann who was unwell.

2023NLPA/03 Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 27 April 2022

The Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 27 April 2022 were discussed, confirmed and signed.

2023NLPA/04 Matters arising

None.

2023NLPA/05 Chairman's report

The Chairman presented his report (see Appendix 1).

2023NLPA/06 Action Plan update

See Chairman's report.

2023NLPA/07 Treasurer's report

The Clerk/RFO presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2022/23 (see Appendix 2). There were no questions.

2023NLPA/08 Report from WCC Cllr J Matecki

WCC Cllr Jan Matecki presented the Warwickshire County Council report (see Appendix 3).

2023NLPA/09 Report from WDC Cllrs A Rhead and J Matecki

WDC Cllr Alan Rhead presented the Warwick District Council report (see Appendix 4). Cllr Rhead discussed the failed merger between Warwick and Stratford Districts, and the likelihood of Warwickshire becoming a Unitary Authority.

2023NLPA/10 Any other matters

A resident has raised concerns about the condition of Norton Curliou Lane, and Cllr Matecki confirmed that he was in contact with them.

Concern was also raised about the quality of the forthcoming engraving on the QEII Jubilee Memorial, and assurances were made that Pollard Memorials had been recommended.

The location of the Best Kept Village noticeboard was discussed along with the reason why it is not on display in the Village Hall. Cllr Brown confirmed that it is safely in storage and that NLPC is investigation installing it in the Church Room.

There was a discussion regarding some of older trees and orchards within the Parish having Tree Preservation Orders on them to protect them for future generations. If the concerned resident advises which these trees are, NLPC will look into it.

2023NLPA/11 Open Discussion

A resident was concerned about how the South Warwickshire Local Plan would affect Norton Lindsey, which under the current Local Plan is only allowed to have limited infill housing. The new Local Plan currently going through consultation could see Norton Lindsey turning into a town.

There was a general discussion about the Community Shop which is due to open soon.

The state of some of the footpaths in the Parish was discussed, with specific concerns being raised regarding the one which runs down the side of Littleworth Wood from the Church Furlong field to Warwick Road. Some footpaths are the responsibility of the District Council, some the County Council and some the rural landowner.

2023NLPA/12 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

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APPENDIX 1

Chairman's Report

It has been quite an eventful year for the parish and the parish council.

To mark the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the PC joined other village groups in planting trees on the playing field. We will also be updating the inscription on the Jubilee signpost at Red Horse Corner and have ordered a new picnic bench to be placed on the playing field. Another bench is being acquired to mark the King's coronation. Aside from this, we have made donations to a range of organisations and facilities within the parish, including the village hall, playground, community hub/pub, and towards the maintenance of the churchyard and church clock.

There has been a total of fourteen planning applications in the parish this year, most of them relating to small-scale schemes. Of these, seven were granted, two were refused and another is pending; two related in trees or agricultural buildings so required no action. Our comments, of course, feed into the decision-making process rather than determining the outcome. Two larger planning applications have taken up considerably more time. First was the application for new chicken sheds to be erected on Warwick Road—on the site where old sheds have stood derelict for nearly 20 years. When this finally went to the Planning Committee of WDC, permission was refused, in large part because of serious shortcomings in the application identified by Councillor Jan Mateki, to whom we extend our thanks for his considerable work on this. We are hopeful that the site will be cleared soon, in accordance with WDC instructions. Second was the scheme to build ten affordable houses in the field behind Brick Kiln Close ☐ just outside but having significant implications for Norton Lindsey parish. This was eventually withdrawn by Claverdon Community Land Trust because they failed to receive support from any of the parish councils affected by the scheme.

In developing our response to this planning application, we conducted an online survey of parishioners. This year we continued and expanded this survey to get a more general picture of people's attitudes to development, especially housing development, in the parish. This has been very helpful in shaping our response to the latest South Warwickshire Local Plan (a joint plan for Warwick and Stratford District Councils), and we would like to thank everyone who responded to the survey.

This takes us to NLPC's action plan. One of our aims for the past year was to get a clearer idea of parishioner's views, which this survey and the current Housing Needs Survey, run by Warwickshire Rural Community Council, help to provide. The latter is especially helpful when it comes to formulating our response to applications for affordable housing. The second item on our action plan was to seek ways of reducing the speed of traffic through the village. Here, I am pleased to report that WCC has agreed to designate Main Street as a 20mph zone, which should make the road safer for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. The final action is the continued efforts to rewild parts of the parish. Success has been mixed to date, but we have high hopes for a section of the verge at the top of Ward's Hill which has now been taken off the Council's mowing schedule. NLPC are also in discussions with Wolverton and Snitterfield PCs about co-ordinating our efforts on this front.

We are also joining with Wolverton PC to organise a public meeting in June to find out more about what actions that we can individually and collectively take within the parishes to enhance our local environment and alleviate wider problems of climate change. Of course, we are always happy to hear suggestions and comments from parishioners who are welcome to attend any meeting of the PC ☐ the first fifteen minutes are always earmarked for representations from members of the public.

Finally, while we did not have a contested election this year, there has still been some change in the make-up of the PC: Roger Mann and Amy Birch have stepped down, and their places taken by two new councillors: Judith Gilmore and Robert Pocknell.

APPENDIX 2

Treasurer's Report

The Receipts and Payments are self-explanatory, but a few items of note are:

The bulk of the Depot Fund remains invested in a 95-day notice account which currently offers an interest rate of 3.00% Gross/AER. During the previous financial year, the interest rate was only 1.00%, but it has been increasing over the last few months and we should see the benefit of this when the interest on the account is next paid in August. For information, the Depot Fund now stands at £12,835.31.

Our general reserves include a sum of £3,500 retained for contested elections and the Asset Fund which is for the inspection, repair, replacement and purchase of assets and which currently stands at £ 5,494.83.

Receipts during the year included the Precept which remained at £10,000, £182.74 in bank interest, the bulk of which was on the Depot Fund reserves, and a VAT refund of £550.87.

Regarding expenditure, our subscriptions and insurance costs remained pretty much the same as the previous year, and staffing costs and administration costs were a little higher than in 2021 / 2022. Staffing costs increased due to an NJC national salary award for 2022/23, back dated to 1 April 2022, and admin costs were higher due to the Clerk's expenses from January – March 2022 being paid in the current financial year.

Finally, there was again no audit fee to pay as we were able to declare ourselves exempt from sending the completed Annual Government and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review.

NORTON LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL PARISH ASSEMBLY 25 APRIL 2023 Receipts and Payments April 2022 to March 2023

BROUGHT FORWARD

Brought Forward: Current Account	£	12,928.11
Brought Forward: General Reserves and Depot Fund (includes sums retained for possible electoral expenses and asset register renewal)	£	22,860.21
TOTAL BROUGHT FORWARD	£	35,788.32

RECEIPTS

Precept	£	10,000.00
Bank Interest	£	182.74
VAT refund	£	550.87
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£	10,733.61

EXPENDITURE

RUNNING COSTS

Subscriptions (WALC, ICO, SLCC)	£	275.00
Insurance	£	264.00
Clerk's salary	£	3,687.84
Administration costs	£	140.75
VAT (to be reclaimed)	£	44.92
Total NLPC Running Costs	£	4,412.51

DONATIONS / GRANTS *

Section 137 Payments	£	30.00
Grants under discretionary powers	£	1,002.00
Total NLPC Donations	£	1,032.00

SPECIAL ITEMS

Platinum Jubilee Memorial	£	57.00
Annual Parish Council Report	£	104.00
Total Special Items	£	161.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£	5,605.51
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CARRIED FORWARD at 31 March 2023

Current Account	£	16,673.47
General Reserves and Depot Fund (includes sums retained for possible electoral expenses and asset register renewal)	£	24,242.95

TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD

£ 40,916.42

Donations / Grants

Section 137 payments:

Norton Lindsey Village Hall - donation towards the cost of defibrillator maintenance	£	30.00
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Grant payments made under Discretionary Powers:

Norton Lindsey Playground	£	375.00
Norton Lindsey Church Clock servicing	£	185.00
Norton Lindsey Church Room	£	100.00
Norton Lindsey Churchyard maintenance	£	200.00
Purchase of Christmas decorations	£	42.00
Honorarium for Millennium Green maintenance 2022 and 2023	£	100.00

APPENDIX 3

Warwickshire County Councillor's Annual Report - April 2023

The year has been dominated by the cost of living crisis. As well as providing advice to families, Warwickshire County Council has supported residents with financial support through various grants and schemes. £3.47m of grants was made available through the Household Support Fund, and a further £180,000 was made available to voluntary and community groups to establish projects that helped address the cost of living crisis.

The new all through school in Bishop's Tachbrook, Oakley School, was granted planning permission and work started on the school in December 2022. It is on target to open in September 2024, with the first year 7 intake scheduled to start in September 2023 spending their first year in Myton School's new 6th form centre, which is also currently being built and on target to be ready for the pupils to start in September 2023. There was no catchment area set for pupils wanting to start at Oakley school in September 2023. September 2024 will see the arrival of the September 2024 year 7 intake, as well as the year 8 pupils move from Myton 6th form centre. There will also be an intake of reception year children in 2024.

On the theme of education, a Task and Finish group has been set up to look into the inequalities of education throughout the county. The group are investigating why certain schools have children that underperform, while others in predominantly deprived areas perform well. I am part of the group and a report is expected to be issued later in the year.

A new on 'on demand' bus service, IndieGo Plus, was introduced to replace the old No.16 bus service. Residents in an area from M40 to the south, A452 to the north, A46 to the east and A4177/Five Ways Road to the west can use an App or telephone to book a bus journey at times they need. Journeys can be booked within the area, or to Kenilworth and Warwick. Residents in Warwick can also book journeys into that area. It has been dubbed by many residents as the 'Uber' bus service, and has received a very positive response. It is hoped that the service will be expanded to other rural communities if it continues to be successful.

The annual public health report has been issued. It highlights how the cost of living is starting to affect the health and wellbeing of residents, and that there is a risk of exacerbating further the health inequalities that already exist within the county. The newly formed Integrated Care System has been given recommendations on how to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis, and involves focus on food, housing and transport. The full report is available online.

The Warwickshire Minerals Plan was adopted, which included the Wasperton site for the extraction of sand and gravel. A planning application has been submitted for the site, but it is not expected to be presented to committee for consideration before autumn 2023. I continue to object to a quarry being at this site, and I am working with the local sand and gravel committee in their fight to have the application refused.

The WCC Council Tax increase for 2023-24 was set at 3.94%, which includes 1% for the Adult Social Care levy. The budget included investments of:

- £24.8m to protect elderly and vulnerable adults
- £8.2m for home to school transport
- £5.4m for children's social care services
- £1.8m to support children and young adults with disability placements
- £1.2m in the Waste Management service to meet increased demand
- £0.8m in Fire & Rescue Service to review current strategies and processes.

More locally, I have secured funding for a 20mph speed limit to be introduced in Main Street, which should mean pedestrians can walk along that stretch of road in more safety. I will also be looking at issues with the road along Norton Curlieu Lane, as local residents are reporting that the recent works were not complete, or completed unsatisfactorily.

Cllr Jan Matecki

APPENDIX 4

Warwick District Councillors' Annual Report - April 2023

Warwick District Council, (WDC), froze the District Council element of Council Tax for the second year running. The opposition, as they did last year, wanted to increase it by the maximum amount allowable, despite the Council generating around £1.5m per year through a joint venture by the local housing company that the Councils owns. £52,000 was allocated to food banks, which is £1,000 per week, as well as other measures to help the most vulnerable in our society.

A new Development Policy Document, (DPD), has been submitted to Government for approval. The DPD will force any new developments in the district to be built to a much higher environmentally friendly building standard, which will reduce carbon emissions and also provide more energy efficient homes. The Inspector has had a public review of the DPD, and we hope it will become part of the Local Plan by the autumn of 2023.

WDC will be moving out of Riverside House in Leamington. The backroom function will be moving to offices in Saltisford, Warwick, with a front office facility being introduced in the Pump Rooms in Leamington Spa. It is planned to have 'floor walkers' in the Pump Rooms to meet residents and help them with their enquiries. There will be private meeting rooms available and a member of the housing team will also always be on site to deal with any urgent housing needs. The move is planned to take place around June 2023. A purchaser of Riverside House has been found, who will develop the site to include 40% affordable homes and retaining the protected trees.

The District hosted the Commonwealth Games bowls and men's and women's road cycle races. These were a great success bringing a lot of tourism and business into the district, as well as showcasing Warwick and Leamington to the rest of the world. Bowls England are hoping to host more international events at the newly laid international standard greens in Victoria Park, and there has been an upsurge in interest from filming companies wanting to film around the area. This will bring more revenue into the local economy and into the Council.

An Additional Licensing proposal has gone out to consultation to look at making all houses of multi-occupation, (HMOs), licensable. Currently, only homes that have 5 or more occupants from 2 or more households need to be inspected and have a license. The proposal is that all HMOs, defined as 3 or more people from 2 or more households sharing a property, in the district should be licensed. The extra revenue from the licensing fee will self-fund the extra staff required for inspections and enforcement. The scheme will also penalise those landlords that do not fulfil their duties in managing HMOs in an appropriate manner. It is hoped the scheme will be approved by October 2023.

Two brand new leisure facilities in Kenilworth have started to be constructed. The sports centre at castle Farm and the swimming pool complex at Abbey Fields have been demolished and work started on the new buildings. The new swimming pools at Abbey Fields will have a pool with a moveable floor so that younger children and those with disabilities will be able to use the pool with depths to suit their needs. It will be a first in the district for a pool with such facilities.

A grant of £250,000 has been secured from WDC for the new proposed Youth and Community centre in Barford. Locally, WDC gave a grant of £75,000 towards a new community shop on the grounds of the New Inn. Work has started on building the new shop which should be ready to open later this year.

Objections were raised against affordable housing on the edge of the village to meet Claverdon's need. These objections led to the planning committee deferring a decision, which ultimately led to the withdrawal of the planning application.

And finally, after almost 3½ years, the planning application for a poultry farm on the edge of the village off Warwick Road was finally heard. The strong objections from residents, the local Parish Council and your District Councillors resulted in the planning committee refusing the application. The applicant still has the right to appeal the decision, but with WCC Highways finally hearing our arguments and also objecting to the application, it is extremely unlikely that the application will be successful due to highways safety concerns.

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