

**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Great Houghton Parish Council held on
Tuesday 11 December 2018 in the Village Hall, Great Houghton (subject to
approval at next meeting)**

Present: Cllr T Bowler, Cllr R Shaw, Cllr M Barham

Also Present: M Billingham Parish Clerk, NCC Cllr E Bowen, R Bryan, N Hadler and P Hadler Residents

The business to be transacted at the meeting is as follows:

<p>654/18 Opening procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To receive and approve apologies for absence. b) To approve the minutes of the previous ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 13 November 2018 c) To receive declarations of interest related to the business on the agenda. d) Presentation of thanks to former Parish News Editor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Apologies were received from Cllr R Jeakings, Cllr W Garner NBC Cllr P Flavell, PC S Duffree b) The minutes of previous meeting were APPROVED c) There was no declaration of interests relating to agenda items. d) The Chairman thanked Roz Bryan on behalf of council for her many years of service as editor of the Parish News. He also thanked her on behalf of the new editor for her assistance and guidance with the hand-over.
<p><i>Members are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business</i></p>	
<p>655/18 Public Participation Section</p>	<p>Resident addressed the meeting regarding his planning application (See below 659/18 (a))</p>
<p><i>Members of the public are invited to address the council. limited to 15 minutes maximum with individual contributions limited to 3 minutes</i></p>	
<p>656/18 Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To receive a report from County Councillor representative b) To receive a report from Borough Councillor representative c) To receive a report from Police / Neighbourhood Warden d) To receive a report from Great Houghton Playing Fields Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The meeting was referred to report previously circulated which was discussed (see appendix A) b) The meeting was referred to report previously circulated regarding enquiries made with highways regarding planning permission Cherry Tree Lane. c) The meeting was referred to reports previously circulated from police and warden. No crimes November. Fly-tipping cleared away. d) The meeting was referred to report previously circulated. ACTION Clerk to write to GHPFA Secretary regarding Lease, Registration and Play equipment.
<p>657/18 To receive and adopt the Finance & Administration Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To receive and approve Receipts and Payment Accounts to end of November 2018 b) To receive report on payments to be authorised. c) Update on General Power of Competence and S111 payment d) To consider Budget 2019/2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Receipts and Payments accounts to end of November 2018 were APPROVED b) The Payments to be made for month were AUTHORISED c) The Clerk updated the meeting regarding General Power of Competence which would now be subject to the postponed elections in 2020. The 1972 LGA Section 111 payment relating to the former editor of the Parish News was APPROVED d) The draft budget previously circulated to be further considered at next meeting.
<p>658/18 To receive the Clerk's report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Postponement of statutory elections - Councilor Vacancies b) Website update c) Update on change of signatories for accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ACTION: Clerk to arrange alteration to councilor vacancy poster to encourage younger people to become councilors. b) Confirmed updates made to website c) No response has yet been received from bank. ACTION: Chairman to make enquiries at branch.
<p>659/18 To receive and consider the planning report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To consider the planning report – N/2018/1582 b) PAG report – c) DSAG Report – Design Statement d) Old School - update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Council was grateful for explanation provided by resident and had no comment to make. b) No report c) No report d) The clerk advised that the conservation officer was now making enquiries into this matter.

<p>660/18 To consider further NBC Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (Sites Consultation Paper) LAA1024, Gt Houghton School – LAA1098, The Green – LAA1107, Rushmere Road</p>	<p>No further update had been received</p>
<p>661/18 To determine replacement Vice Chairman for remaining year.</p>	<p>It was RESOLVED that Cllr Jeakings would serve as vice chairman for remaining year.</p>
<p>662/18 To receive Report on village maintenance matters: a) Disused railway / cycle way - Update</p>	<p>No further response having been received from NCC Property Office. ACTION Clerk to pursue with both NCC & NBC this matter and the lack of tree inspections</p>
<p>663/18 To further consider matters relating to GHPFA a) Renewal of Lease - Update b) Land registration - Update</p>	<p>a) The meeting was referred to response to solicitor’s enquiry who was now in contact with GHPFA solicitors. No further update received. b) ACTION Chairman to chase up registration with Conveyancer.</p>
<p>664/18 To receive updated report on traffic management issue a) Consultation – Cherry Tree Lane – update b) Car parking – Paget Close c) Missing HGV signs</p>	<p>a) The Meeting was referred to enquiries made by NBC councilor. Awaiting response from Highways b) Nothing further to report on parking issues at Paget Close c) Missing HGV sign reported through Street Doctor now being addressed</p>
<p>665/18 Further development of BT Telephone Kiosk – determine quotes for bookshelves</p>	<p>The Clerk reported that regrettably the further quote had not been received. ACTION Chairman to make enquiries with further carpenter.</p>
<p>666/18 To consider the monthly public messages.</p>	<p>Merry Christmas and Happy New Year</p>

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signature.....

Dated.....

Appendix A

Report from NCC Cllr E Bowen

There seems to be so much going on in Politics at present, both at National and at County level; but I will attempt to be as brief as I can on the County front!

As a bit of background in case some are not up to date:

At the beginning of the year a "Best Value for Money" inspection was undertaken by Max Caller. As a result of the negative findings on this; 2 Commissioners were brought in by Sajjid Javid (part time) to oversee the finance and governance of NCC. They are assisted by a senior civil servant to work as their chief of staff (not paid for) and have brought in support from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA ...also not paid for)

I am sure you will all be aware that NCC has been in a perilous state and was issued with a Section 114 notice. It is by no means the only Council in such a difficult financial situation. That is not to excuse to what has happened at NCC, but to explain the gravity of our County politics and which is something I only came into a year and half ago. What a time to join!

The LGA are also offering considerable free support and Theresa Grant has been appointed as our Chief Executive Officer. This makes up a now significant body of experts to assist the transition to 2 Unitary Councils and which will see NCC and all seven district and borough councils cease to exist in 2020. Our Auditors have also been changed for this financial year to Ernest and Young, and a new Chief Financial Officer, Ian Duncan joined recently.

The 2 Unitary Councils will comprise of an organisation in the North merging Kettering, Corby, East Northants and Wellingborough, together with services provided by the county council, and an organisation in the west comprising Daventry, The Borough of Northampton, South Northants (which is currently disentangling itself from its Cherwell alliance) and again services provided by the county council.

A stabilisation plan has now been put forward by the Commissioners which seeks to identify how transformation will take place. More information will follow.

In terms of day to day activity, all spending above a certain level has to be signed off by a strategic spending panel. Any spending is scrutinised at a level not experienced before. You will have seen in the papers that streamlining of some services is taking place. However as far as the libraries are concerned, there has been a reprieve and most libraries will be kept open. Highways has also been given a one off sum of £6.77m to use this year. Next year highways will have an additional £5.6m.

Moving onto some of the other challenges occurring; I have recently attended 2 big public meetings re the 2 Rail Freight applications for my area. These were open meetings to allow residents to submit their views and ask questions. In attendance was Andrea Leadsom MP for South Northants and Chris Heaton Harris MP for Daventry and whose area dovetails into Milton Malsor. Mark Redding and Rod Sellers; "chairs" of the 2 action groups were also on the panel. Please refer to my Facebook page where full updates are provided.

The 2 applications; Ashfield Land's Rail Central project to the one side of Collingtree and Roxhill's Northampton Gateway project is just over the M1 at junction 15. The implications are enormous given the A45's current capacity issues and the negative environmental impact aswell. Furthermore we have very very low unemployment in the Nene Valley ...less than 4%, so that will mean massive increases in traffic for those commuting in to work. There is no doubt that building more rail freight terminals is a good strategy; to get the ever increasing number of lorries off the road; but the benefits of doing this are seen more at the Sea terminals.

The Ashfield land application was initially turned down by the new Secretary for State; James Brokenshire and the Planning inspectorate. It however has been resubmitted answering all 80 pages of questions.

At the above meetings it was highlighted that both MP's are supporting a call for a review of the Governments National policy statement on Strategic Rail Freight Terminals (SFRI) This is because current modus operandi seems to work on a developer led approach, rather than looking at the Strategic requirements for the Country with a proper national plan. It is hard to make the argument that so many rail freight terminals are needed in the middle of the Country and that they can be classed as Strategic when this applies more to the ports.

The Borough Council have also sent a letter to Government, calling for an urgent review.

I recently attended a Finance Scrutiny meeting on changes within Adult Social Care finances. This being one of my main interest in the County, it is worthy of a brief update. The Government " Green paper" on "Social Care funding" has been put back again with the likely launch in the New Year. This is very frustrating for us all; I understand it is ready for launch but the Government want to make sure it is given a high profile when it is out and because Brexit is on everyones minds this would not be the "right" time.

Probably the biggest challenge today and even more than elder care funding, is the escalating costs of supporting young adults transitioning out of children's care services. There has been a massive escalation of costs with the increases in more babies surviving at birth; who in years gone by would not have survived. This is a difficult area to discuss, because advances in medicine are such a wonderful thing. Meeting these escalating costs is however ever more challenging and something being looked at by Government. The budget for Learning Disability alone within NCC ASC is £60 million. Currently, there are 104 young adults under NCC's responsibility, with an average care package costing £132,000 each as well as three very complex clients who cost over £200,000 each with one at £280,000. This is against a back drop of traditionally low wages for care staff and which I am keen to see rise significantly.

NCC's Adult Social Care budget until this year was almost the lowest in the UK. It did have a significant boost in March of c£23m which I fought for, but coming from a base of low funding, has meant staffing levels particularly in Commissioning (negotiating contracts) has been very low and hence the manpower to review and renegotiate contracts has been limited. The Treasury is working with us to try and resolve the historical inherited PFI contracts, which are incredibly inflexible and no longer fit for purpose. These are just some of the many challenges the team are contending with and my sincere gratitude goes to Anna Earnshaw and her department for persevering in such a difficult climate.

As we live in such changeable times and if you have issues you wish to be resolved, I would urge you to attend Parish Council meetings when you can. You are very lucky with your PC team at Great Houghton, who work tirelessly on your behalf and who have considerable drive and expertise in many areas. I am in awe of the work they do so diligently. The team are often looking for volunteers to sit on the Parish Council as are Wootton, Collingtree and Hardingstone ...all part of my Nene Valley remit.

I continue to meet many residents across the Nene Valley to discuss concerns and want you to know, that I am committed to getting the best service for you all in these very difficult circumstances. I am available 24/7 should you wish to talk or meet.

If anyone is interested in inputting or becoming more involved with the running of your County then do let me know. We need more residents to engage with us.

If you would like to attend our Cabinet meetings, they run on a monthly basis at the county council offices at One Angel Square in Northampton and I would be delighted to sit with you at those meetings and to talk through how it all works.

Do also go and follow my Facebook page Lizzy Bowen ...Cllr Nene Valley for regular updates!

And finally best wishes to you all for the forthcoming festive season. I remain hopeful that 2019 sees a more stable picture on the political front!

E Bowen

County Councillor.. Nene Valley.