

2017 EVERDON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held at Everdon Village Hall on Monday 15^h May 2017 at 7:15pm

15 Residents attended the meeting. The Chairman of the Parish Council chaired the meeting and notes were taken by the Parish Clerk.

1. The chairman welcomed everyone present and thanked them for attending the Annual Parish Meeting.
2. The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 11th April 2016 were approved and will be placed on the website.
3. The Parish Council Chairman reminded Parishioners of the meeting schedule of the Parish Council and outlined the role of the Council and summarised the issues which had been dealt with by the Council over the last year. Full details of the Chairman's report are available on request or by visiting the Parish Council website www.everdonpc.co.uk
4. The following reports were received from the County and District Councillors. Copies of their full reports are available on request from the Clerk, or by visiting the Parish Council website www.everdonpc.co.uk

Summary of County Councillor, Robin Brown's, report

Rob Brown reported that, as Cabinet Member, his responsibilities have changed and that he has taken over the challenging Finance Portfolio. The County Council has fought to maintain as low a tax rise each year as possible. Since taking control, they have significantly reduced the cost of the council, stopping activities best provided by others, being much more efficient and reducing substantial areas of duplication, thereby reducing cost.

The Financing of the Council is changing significantly; the Grant from Central Government continues to reduce; the local council tax is capped at 2% with an Adult Social Care Precept of 3%. Next year the Council's gross budget will be in excess of £800 million, with a forecast to balance that will mean further efficiencies would be required. The budget is a 4-year plan and it is clear that for further savings to be made, a fundamental review of the structure of Local Government is necessary.

Future changes to funding will be via the Business Rates being 100% for use of local services, with Government grant reduced to nil. For the County Council to continue successfully delivering all its services, the use of their assets and the generation of income from them, becomes a greater priority.

The County Council was instrumental in sharing services and the "Back Office Services" now account for around 3% of the budget, much lower than any comparable Council.

Other highlights include:

- They are operating 'First for Wellbeing', a business 51% owned by the Council, with partners being The University of Northampton and NHFT, a NHS trust in Northamptonshire. This is delivering all their Public Health duties plus creating income that helps reduce their council tax;
- The Children's Trust will become live after May having just been awarded £4 million transition funding from Central Government;
- Olympus Care Services will now form part of the new Adult Social Service Partnership which will start the integration with the NHS for jointly working together to improve the services required by the frail and elderly;

- This year has seen more capital spending on roads in the county and using new machinery to help permanently fill potholes. The latest estimate is that at least £350 million is required to bring the roads up to standard, so it is a long-term, ongoing project;
- The County Council's Budget is driven firstly by the Statutory Duties the Council must provide, the two main areas being Children's Social Services and also the provision of Social Care to the Elderly who, within the "means tested" service, qualify for state provided care. During the last two years, both have seen an unprecedented increase in demand;
- The Children's Service, following a period when a Board of Improvement oversaw the required improvement of service, has now been stood down and the Service following an Ofsted inspection is rated as continuing to improve and now can move through to become a Children's Trust, a move fully endorsed by Government;
- The number of Asylum Seeking Children continues to be much higher than most other areas in England, by the very nature of our geography, and the council is looking after more than 1,000 children;
- The crisis in Elderly Care is a national issue and, in the recent national budget has been acknowledged as such, with a substantial increase in funding being allocated for the coming year (£11.7 million);
- The provision of local bus services will continue to be under pressure and where services are underused, unlikely to remain;
- In most cases Libraries continue to be very successful, acting as local community hubs, and they offer a very wide range of services. Once again if they are not supported locally they are at risk in this our ever increasing "digital world".
- Broadband is an issue where substantial investment has been made and, by end 2018, should have covered all areas.

Finally, Everdon Parish Council is very grateful to Robin for his generosity to Everdon over the years through his Empowering Councillors Grant Fund of Robin's aims is to see that the Fund continues.

Summary of District Councillors' report

Over the course of the past 12 months Daventry District Council (DDC) has initiated or progressed several projects of important strategic value to the local area.

- Construction of the Daventry Development Link Road continues on schedule and is due for completion in the summer of 2018.
- Daventry District Councillors approved in principle that the authority should enter into a joint venture with Norse Commercial Services Ltd to deliver environmental services when the current contract with Amey/Enterprise ends on 3 June, 2018.
- Plans to launch a community lottery in Daventry District were approved. DDCs scheme will see tickets sold online for £1, with a top prize of £25,000 for matching six numbers, down to £5 for matching two numbers. For every £1 ticket sold, 40p will go to the purchaser's chosen community group and a further 10p will go to supplementing DDC's Community Grant budget for distribution to local good causes. Of the rest, 30p will go in the prize fund, 17p will go to the lottery operator and the remaining 3p is the VAT on the operator's charge, which will be recovered

by DDC and used to cover the cost of running the scheme. Based on community lotteries operating in other districts, the Council estimates it could make 50,000 annual ticket sales each year, which would net £25,000 for local good causes.

- DDC set its 2017/18 budget at the Full Council meeting of Thursday, February 23, 2017. Spending of £14.993 million was agreed and, after the use of reserves, balances and central government support was taken into account, DDC's portion of the Council Tax bill was increased by about £4.69. This is £137.62 for an average Band D property - about £2.65 a week which ensures that DDC remains one of the lowest tax councils in the country.

Residents requiring their assistance, can contact District Councillors by emailing them: dsmith1@daventrydc.gov.uk / jamos@daventrydc.gov.uk / abrown@daventrydc.gov.uk

5. Lisa Hudson-Fryer, an Enforcement Officer at Daventry District Council's Environmental Health Service attended the meeting. Lisa gave an in-depth presentation on responsible dog ownership and gave the assurance that any matter reported to them, will be dealt with confidentially.

Dog fouling which is extremely un-social and remains an ongoing issue. The Law states that only blind people are exempt from picking up after their dogs and that neither age nor disability are valid excuses for not doing so. Residents are urged to report this and they are assured of confidentiality;

Some of the other matters they deal with include:

- As long as dog poo is bagged, it can be put into any litter bins;
- Reports of dangerous dogs;
- Strays, not under control – all dogs must be tagged and micro-chipped;
- Barking dogs causing a nuisance – residents' complaints will be kept confidential;
- Dog-on-dog aggression can be dealt with by anti-social legislation;
- Owners are responsible for keeping aggressive dogs under control, using muzzles where necessary and keeping them on the lead especially in farmers' fields where farm animals are grazing;
- Animal welfare, including neglect, mal-treatment, etc.

6. Parishioners open discussion forum

The following matters/questions were raised regarding item (5) above:

- Litter bin on the village green being used for dog poo has no lid and is smelly – council to investigate whether lids are available for the bins;
- Large dog in the village who is getting very little exercise, is quite aggressive – try speaking to the owner or report it;
- Dogs not kept under close control in fields with farm animals – if there is evidence, the matter can be reported to police who can use anti-social legislation to prosecute;
- Concern that dog poo in farmers' fields may be getting into the food chain;
- Fines/prosecution for not pick up dog poo carries a maximum fine of £100, but if they don't pay they can be prosecuted and fined up to £1,000;

7. The meeting concluded at 8:20pm, whereafter light refreshments were served.