

# LILBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 1900 hrs.  
in Lilbourne Village Hall.

Attendees: Chairman C Newhouse, Councillors Startling, Alexander, Chow and Morley.

Clerk Clare E Valentine

2 Members of the public and Unitary Councillor Humphreys

24/723	<p><b>APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE.</b></p> <p>Apologies of absence were received and approved for Councillor Robertson (Personal) To note the resignation of Councillor King and Councillor Hoare. Both members were thanked for their time on the council and in particular Dr King’s help including with the village defibrillator.</p>						
24/724	<p><b>SIGNING OF THE MINUTES</b></p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 as a correct record.</p>						
24/725	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>None</p>						
24/726	<p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b></p> <p>Councillor Humphreys provided a report circulated to the Council. Included in the minutes for the website or on request to the Clerk. In addition, there are two West Northants Consultations live now regarding Air Quality and School Transport. The budget has been agreed and the council tax has been set at 4.99%. The Local Plan draft information is due out in April time.</p> <p>A member of public submitted a letter to the council regarding the condition of roads in Lilbourne and the Councils actions. The Chairman provided a report which is available with the minutes of this meeting. The Footpath Warden submitted a report on the footpaths around the village and concern of a small tree leaning over the path from the Horsepool to The Butts. When the new gate was put at the far side of the “pocket park” in Hillmorton Lane the thick heavy clay was spread across the footpath. It is slippery to walk – request for this to be cleared and the wooden bridge/stile add wire to stop the slipping. Bark chippings could be put down either side of the bridge/stile to prevent a hazard.</p>						
24/727	<p><b>MINIBUS</b></p> <p>To note and consider actions following committee meeting relating to the minibus and garage. The garage door has been serviced. The Traffic Commissioner has been contacted by the Minibus Administrator as a routine call. The Parish Council are to look to join the Community Transport Association. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> the Clerk is to contact regarding membership and fee.</p> <p>New ADAM system– It was <b>RESOLVED</b> the Minibus Admin and Clerk will meet to review request.</p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the Risk Assessment for cleaning/hot water. The School Run driver has reviewed and added comments which the PC are satisfied with. Councillor Chow is to look at racking and a worktop for the garage with the Clerk. The old cupboard is to be disposed of. The Clerk is to ask if the Village Hall could clear the chairs and other items from the garage.</p> <p>Operation Educate – circulated and noted as inspection process via North Northants Council home School Transport.</p>						
24/728	<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td><b>NEW APPLICATIONS</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td>a) To consider any applications not otherwise on the agenda. - None</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td>To search and comment on a planning application visit: <a href="https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk">View and comment on a planning application   West Northamptonshire Council (westnorthants.gov.uk)</a></td> </tr> </table>		<b>NEW APPLICATIONS</b>		a) To consider any applications not otherwise on the agenda. - None		To search and comment on a planning application visit: <a href="https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk">View and comment on a planning application   West Northamptonshire Council (westnorthants.gov.uk)</a>
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24/729	<p><b>NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b></p> <p>a) To discuss and consider next actions – consider arranging village meeting for engagement and volunteers. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to hold a village meeting for the Neighbourhood Development Plan on a Sunday afternoon in April 2024. Dates to be agreed with the village Hall. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to sign and submit the</p>						

	<p>letter requesting designation of Lilbourne as a neighbourhood plan area to West Northants Council Planning.</p> <p>b) To consider responding to the Rugby Local Plan. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to find out of Clifton-Upon-Dunsmore Parish Council have more information on the development proposal up to the A5. The Clerk is to ask Rugby Borough Council (copy to West Northants Council) why we have not been contacted about the Rugby Local plan updates and to include us in the communication as it is adjacent to Lilbourne.</p> <p>c) Housing Needs Survey Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) has been approached by CC Town Planning to carry out a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) of the Parish of Lilbourne. The survey is to establish whether there is any need for housing of all tenures for local people, and to gauge their feelings about new housing provision. Awaiting documents. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to note that we are awaiting documents, however a survey for housing needs is felt not required at this time having 2 housing developments following surveys. The Parish Council are starting an NDP so the timing is felt inappropriate at this stage to support a survey.</p>
24/730	<p><b>VILLAGE PROJECTS AND MAINTENANCE</b></p> <p><b><u>1. Play Area and Sports Field</u></b></p> <p>a) To confirm the chosen colour of the railings for the approved order of play area fencing. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> as yellow.</p> <p>b) Football pitch and goalposts (JR/CWC) – To consider quotes and update. Councillor Chow provided three quotes and a detailed report. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to pursue the lowest price goal post and nets, but Councillor Chow wishes to cost up the installation and line marking information first. A member of public can supply spare nets.</p> <p>c) Tree stump removal in play area – It was confirmed the mowing contractor was on site and removed the stump whilst dealing with other matters.</p> <p><b><u>3.Village Hall</u></b></p> <p>a) Bleed kits, cabinet update. It was noted the bleed kit order now has a 14-week lead time. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve Dr King to continue as volunteer of behalf of LPC managing the defib unit. Thanks were given to Dr. King for agreeing to continue to manage this important device.</p> <p>b) To consider quotes for bay markings for the minibus and parking spaces. (NM)It was <b>RESOLVED</b> for Councillor Morley to obtain further quotes.</p> <p>c) Wi-fi required. The Clerk has arranged a contract with Vodaphone for new broadband and guest wi-fi at the village hall within the agreed monthly budget to start during the first week of March with a new phonenumber.</p> <p>e) Damaged fencing (horses in field) next to playing field – To note we have received data on boundaries from West Northants Council - decide next steps. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to first ask WNC if they will seek quotes for replacement fencing due to their available contractors. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to pursue the suggestion of donating the land next to the playing field to LPC.</p> <p><b><u>4.Highways/ Footpaths and verges</u></b></p> <p>a) Highways matters updates inc. potholes <a href="https://fixmystreet.northamptonshire.gov.uk/">https://fixmystreet.northamptonshire.gov.uk/</a> To review and decide upon next actions following meeting with Highways and Unitary Councillor Humphreys for requested road resurfacing, update on work to roads following solar farm construction traffic and underlying issues including drainage. To note a member of public has written to the Parish Council regarding Highways and Parish Council matters for response covered in Public Participation. Councillor Starling provided a detailed report on the meeting and progress is being made with investigation into drainage issues continuing which needs to be dealt with first as it is contributing factor to the deterioration of the drains, gulleys, and road and work to road surface will be affected by the drainage issues. Meeting attend with Unitary Councillor Humphreys. We are awaiting the Highways report despite chasing, Councillor Humphreys has passed on the PC's disappointment that we are waiting to be contacted. Report included in the minutes for the website and on request to the Clerk.</p> <p>b) Sign post Church Lane/Station Road requires replacing. Chairman to report.</p> <p>c) Speed cameras and roads/speed reductions incentives/Speed watch (SS). Update from Councillor Starling regarding next stage of quotes and highways consent. Councillor Starling advised that Highways are quoting for the installation work for speed devices for final decision on total cost. Then we can look to apply for the Police and Crime Commissioners grant and licences. Speed watch 2024 – Lilbourne has been registered and along with Councillor Starling we need volunteers to help support.</p> <p>d) Litter picking and risk assessment and equipment (SS) Litter pick planned for Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 at meet at the 10.30 at the telephone box. Councillor Starling has a risk assessment to send to the Clerk and all welcome.</p> <p><b><u>6. Christmas</u></b> Update on 2024 Christmas procedures (CN) including timer, consider quotes for purchasing the string baubles and plastic storage boxes. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to move the matter to May.</p> <p><b><u>7. Street Lighting</u></b></p>

	Parish Council to consider new energy contracts. – Clerk reported she has contacted an alternative provider, but we are still waiting on quotes.																																																							
	<b>8. Police Liaison Rep – Neighbourhood Alerts - Speed watch</b>																																																							
	Updates for consideration and latest news (SS) Councillor Starling noted the PCSO had sent apologies for the meeting. No further updates.																																																							
	<b>9. Newsletter</b>																																																							
	Items for newsletter and updates (JA) Council vacancies, drainage/ roads, speed awareness and Neighbourhood Development Plan.																																																							
<b>24/731</b>	<b>BURIAL GROUND</b> a) Maintenance work – gates and shed. Gates have been installed and Councillor Starling is arranging for stakes for the shed. Green bin sticker required. b) Plans for the cremated remains area – moved to May meeting.																																																							
<b>24/732</b>	<b>FINANCE</b> a) It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the January 2024 bank reconciliation statement. Accounts submitted for review to Chairman. b) It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the Bank balance Barclays as of 20.02.24 £53,029.82. c) Income received during the period: Minibus ( Access UK 16.02.24 £1471.20; P Litchfield £205.00; Access UK 02.02.24 £294.24; WCC Fud £ 114.71 and Access UK £1176.96. – Approved. d) Banking mandate updates Councillor Morley - Barclays – Clerk to circulate paperwork for Councillor Morley. e) To consider parish mobile deals – previously considered but at the time required Clerk entering a personal contract. – Vodaphone has offer following broadband contract – moved to the next meeting.																																																							
<b>24/733</b>	It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the following payments for February 2024: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: left;">PC Expenditure</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">February</td> <td style="width: 10%;">BACS</td> <td style="width: 40%;">Clerk salary February 2024</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">1125.83</td> <td style="width: 15%;">LGA 1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>Nest Pensions Staff February 2024</td> <td style="text-align: right;">83.60</td> <td>LGA 1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>HMRC PAYE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">121.58</td> <td>LGA 1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>BWP Creative 2 year domain renewal inv-2495</td> <td style="text-align: right;">105.60</td> <td>LGA 1982, s. 142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>West Northants Council Inv 424001944194 Installation of road sign Burial ground</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1838.87</td> <td>Highways Act 1980, s 130</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>Personnel Advice Solutions Ltd February 2024</td> <td style="text-align: right;">120.00</td> <td>LGA (1972) s111</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,395.48</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: left;">Minibus Expenditure</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>BACS</td> <td>Staffing for February 2024</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1294.93</td> <td>LGA 1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,294.93</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	PC Expenditure					February	BACS	Clerk salary February 2024	1125.83	LGA 1972 s112	February	BACS	Nest Pensions Staff February 2024	83.60	LGA 1972 s112	February	BACS	HMRC PAYE	121.58	LGA 1972 s112	February	BACS	BWP Creative 2 year domain renewal inv-2495	105.60	LGA 1982, s. 142	February	BACS	West Northants Council Inv 424001944194 Installation of road sign Burial ground	1838.87	Highways Act 1980, s 130	February	BACS	Personnel Advice Solutions Ltd February 2024	120.00	LGA (1972) s111	Total			£3,395.48		Minibus Expenditure					February	BACS	Staffing for February 2024	1294.93	LGA 1972 s112	Total			£1,294.93	
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<b>24/734</b>	<b>INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT AND POLICIES –</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to look at these documents at the March 2024 meeting. To review and update the following policies for the website at the Internal Auditors recommendation. To approve the Internal Auditor Interim report and note any actions. Financial Reserves Policy; Document Retention Policy; Internal Controls Policy; Subject Access Request Procedure; Health & Safety Policy; Grant Awarding Policy.																																																							
<b>24/735</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE.</b> – Noted <b>Open consultations can be found via this link</b> <a href="https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/">https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/</a> <b>West Northants Consultation Hub</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visit <a href="#">Have your say on our plans to improve Air Quality</a>. This consultation closes midnight Sunday 17 March 2024.</li> <li>• Visit <a href="https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/community-safety-and-emergencies/community-funding-grants-framework">https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/community-safety-and-emergencies/community-funding-grants-framework</a> for the latest community grants.</li> </ul>																																																							

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note free portrait of the King is on order with WNC.</li> <li>• Further workshops available for the Town and Parish development of a Tree Strategy (members of public welcome) <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-northamptonshire-tree-strategy-public-engagement-workshops-tickets-825096113687">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-northamptonshire-tree-strategy-public-engagement-workshops-tickets-825096113687</a></li> <li>• Cabinet members agreed to recommend the final 2024/25 budget on Thursday, 22 February at 5pm. The agenda will be published this week on the Council's website: Link: <a href="https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=142&amp;Mid=1147">https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=142&amp;Mid=1147</a></li> <li>• The consultation closes on 18 March 2024. Martyn's Law will place a requirement on those responsible for certain venues to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/six-week-martyns-law-consultation-launched">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/six-week-martyns-law-consultation-launched</a>.</li> <li>• Noted free-to-attend planning briefings with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) online was Tuesday 27 February 2024 from 1000 to 1100 about the development of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan (WNLP) including the settlement hierarchy.</li> </ul>
24/736	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AOB (No matters can become decisions)</b> Keir tree planting offer</li> </ul>
24/737	<p><b>Date of next meeting:</b> Annual Meeting of the Parish at 1900 Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 followed by the Parish Council Ordinary Meeting.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 21:31 hrs.</p>

**24/726**

**Chairman's response to the questions regarding potholes and general condition of roads in Lilbourne via the Public Participation**

1. The work on the Solar Farm at Crick resulted in a huge amount of HGV traffic passing through the village. This was disruptive to villagers (especially those living on Yelvertoft Road and Rugby Road) and to the detriment of the road surface. Questions regarding this are: -

What representations did the PC make to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) when this route for construction work was decided? The route was first contained within the planning application in April of 2020. Lilbourne Parish council resolved to Object to the application on grounds of traffic coming through the village (April 2020 minutes agenda Item 10/107)

What undertaking did the PC receive from WNC in the event of inevitable repairs being required to the roads as a consequence of the heavy traffic? In June 2022, when the PC received notice of an amendment to the planning application LPC resolved to respond with a comment asking for no additional traffic and asked for assurances about resurfacing. - however, no reassurances have ever been forthcoming, although this is something that was recently followed up which there will be a report about at tonight's meeting.

2. What work and/or contact has the PC undertaken on behalf of the village with WNC Highways department concerning the state of the roads in Lilbourne? Minutes of PC meetings do not mention or reflect any such meetings or report any discussions held or any outcomes of any such contact/meetings for at least 6 months. The only minuted action is to advise villagers to contact "fix my street". This is also the only roads connected information shared in the village newsletter. In April 2023, Agenda Item 23/600 Cllr Robertson reports he will request a walk around with Keir, In May 2023 Agenda Item 23/633 Cllr Robertson reports back and is hopeful some repairs will happen in the summer. In June, Issues of potholes in the village is raised to Unitary Councillor Chantler, agenda Item 23/646.

There is also an update in Agenda item 23/675 that PC have been made aware that Hillmorton Lane will have some resurfacing. In July, The Clerk and Councillor Starling walked the village and discussed speed awareness devices, road markings and signage along with the condition of the road – majority of work would fall under Highways budget for the next financial year 2024-2025. The Council does not meet in August, In September it was noted that some Potholes had been filled but still some were awaiting filling. In October, and November, the PC reiterated the need for residents to report potholes. There was no meeting in December. In January, The PC asked Councillor Humphries to assist with highlighting the state of the road in Lilbourne, Unitary Cllr Humphries swiftly arranged a meeting with Keir and PC, to which there will be a report given tonight.

3. If PC councillors have had any contact with Highways this should be shared with villagers via the PC meeting minutes and village newsletter. The village newsletter is for all organisations in the village to share news and is created and distributed on a voluntary basis.

The minutes of the meeting will hold further detail of decisions made but will not always be able to reflect the full discussion. The minutes need to be concise and summarise the decision made.

Members of the public are most welcome to attend meetings, where they will be able to get the full context of decisions made.

4. The PC are keen for villagers to report potholes, etc via the "fix my street". I have reported many holes this way. I cannot help but notice that very few other reports have been done. Councillor Robertson has reported that the PC cannot report potholes via "fix my street". It might be useful for the councillor with responsibility for highways to report the hole in their own name and then add PC after it, acknowledging they are part of the PC. If their name was then made public (there is a box to tick for this) then anyone else reporting a pothole could see what the PC had reported. The information on the PC website on councillor responsibilities is incomplete so it is not clear which councillor(s) have responsibility for highways. Thank you for the suggestion the PC will take this on board. The Website is currently being updated to ensure that there is fuller information available about each councillor and their responsibilities. The councillor with Highways responsibility has had to unfortunately step down due to work commitments. There is now a vacancy for a councillor and the responsibility for Highways/street lighting/ footpaths will need to be distributed.

5. Councillor Robertson has stated that the local unitary authority councillors have been lobbied about the roads. Sadly this is not reflected in the PC minutes or in the reports from the unitary authority councillor. Lilbourne has 3 unitary authority councillors representing this ward. Councillor Chantler, Councillor Longley and Councillor Humphries. Only Councillor Humphries regularly attends Lilbourne PC meetings and provides a report every month.

all Unitary Councillors can be contacted directly, and their details can be found on West Northants website.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/braunston-and-crick-councillors>

The PC makes the unitary councillors aware of the issues when they are present at the meeting by keeping highways as an agenda item.

The PC is not responsible for the roads and can only highlight to our Unitary Councillors issues arising and hope that they are able to assist.

6. What have the PC been pressing for? Lilbourne PC has been highlighting the poor state of the roads where they can visit unitary councillors at PC meetings.

7. What work have the unitary councillors undertaken? Cllrs Humphries has facilitated PC meeting with the highway contractor to point out the issues twice in the last year.

8. What results have the unitary councillors achieved? As Lilbourne PC have also not seen much progress, these questions would be better directed directly to all three unitary councillors. Cllrs Longley, as well as being a Unitary councillor is also the WNC cabinet member for finance.

#### **24/730 4 Councillor Starling's Report – February**

Meeting with Unitary Councillor Rosie Humphreys, and two representatives from Highways.

I asked Highways what had happened to the spray and fix for Yelvertoft Road near to Station Road together with the deep cambers on Rugby Road. This was promised by Highways to Cllr Robertson to be completed by summer last year. Highways advised that they have had a change of staff so information would be checked. I also asked what happened to the before and after survey following the routing of solar farm traffic and again as they are new highways contacts they will check the information.

We walked down Chapel Lane, it was noted that there was a lot of surface water on the road, I said that a large patch had been re done last year, but because it was not flat, the surface water was bad and at times people must walk on the grass to get through. Highways agreed it was bad, and that Chapel Lane was more than likely a dirt track which 'someone' put stone down, then someone put tarmac down and that there was no proper substance underneath, together with no drainage which is causing the problems. On a priority scale it would be "low" to sort as main roads house flooding etc would always take priority. We walked around the corner, and I pointed out the amount of standing water which was badly affecting the roads around "The Green" Chapel Lane and the top of Hillmorton Lane.

Highways agreed it was very bad and as we walked onto Yelvertoft Road there was a noticeable drainage and surface water issue to which Highways will get their drainage team out ASAP to put cameras down and find out what the problem is and how it can be resolved. I have asked that I can attend when Keir drainage specialist come out to look at this.

We then moved on down to The Green, where again drainage could clearly be seen to be a problem and Highways were adamant that this needs to be investigated urgently.

We walked down Rugby Road towards the burial ground, I pointed out the Cambers, groups of potholes already marked out to be fixed and I asked why certain holes are fixed when clearly the road needs resurfacing. Highways pointed out that the middle of the road is flat and that was more than likely the original road, which has proper hard-core layers built up underneath and that over the years, it has gradually been widened, but without proper drainage and hard-core the road is failing. He agreed ideally that it does need re surfacing.

We walked back through the Horsepool to Station Road. I pointed out the drain which is permanently overflowing and again agreed that this needed further investigation, Highways said that when the team come out to examine the Yelvertoft Road surface water problem, they will get the cameras down this drain as well. There could be a break/blockage further along. Highways said that the camera can locate blockages and if there is a tree root it can cut the root, so clever stuff. This will be done urgently, and I asked what urgently meant and they said the (Drain specialist) is on holiday next week, but maybe could get their deputy to come out but would let me know. This was acknowledged and I requested timescales with an update and asked within 3 weeks.

I spoke about the problems with the muddy mess outside properties along Station Road and explained about the 1992 rough surface lay-by which was installed. They referred me to Highways Customer Liaison. It looks to Highways like it was originally grass verge and that over the years people parked on it and the rough surface lay by which was laid would not stand the test of time which is now self-evident. Highways were if they would have the budget and that it could even be something that the PC may need to pay for?? But we need to ask. I will do this but would suggest we get the drain problem sorted first.

Highways pointed out that they fix 5000 potholes a day and when a pothole is logged on Fix my street, an officer comes out to inspect within 5 working days, looking only at the hole that was reported and nothing else. I asked why when there are clearly loads of other little potholes around it they just fill one then leave the others. Surely, it would be better to fill a bigger patch to save coming out again in a few months, but they said although they are trying to educate the team to mark out bigger patches, mostly, they will just look at the hole and check if it is 50mm deep, decide if it needs action and what it's urgency scale is and whomever reported it gets a response. Highways are sending me a plan of all of the potholes and the associated SLA (service level agreement) so we can see what has been reported. They reminded me again that the time scale is a maximum of 26 weeks but it could be earlier. They agreed that in an

ideal world, they would do a much better job but budget, time and the sheer number of potholes in the region at the moment are making this impossible.

There are many ways to patch potholes, different machines do different jobs, sometimes it is quicker to get the pothole fixed which he can see will still leave more problems down the line than closing the road and resurfacing. Obviously, there are budget restraints as well. I can see their point. But pointed out that as a villager it is frustrating to see these little plasters all over the place and constant reporting of potholes which are then deemed not big enough to be a problem are filling up with water which washes out the holes and then 2 months later is a problem.

It was agreed that primarily we need to sort out the drainage. Then look at what can be done to patch bigger areas. I will contact Customer Liaison about Station Road.

## **Unitary Councillor Humphreys Report**

### **Ward councillor's report (Lilbourne) February 2024**

#### **Plans to improve Air Quality – have your say**

A consultation is open on WNC's proposals to reduce pollution and improve air quality, set out in a draft air quality action plan. All councils have a duty to monitor local air quality and ensure that it meets certain standards and West Northants has seven air quality management areas. The consultation closes on 17<sup>th</sup> March. [Have your say on our plans to improve Air Quality - West Northamptonshire Council - Citizen Space](#)

Transport is the sector with the largest carbon emissions, accounting for 45% of total emissions in West Northants. WNC was criticised by campaigners during the meeting of the Full Council at the Guildhall last week for delaying publishing an air quality action plan until sent a final warning by Defra in December, despite Northampton being one of the most polluted towns in the UK.

#### **Budget Report**

At the recent Full Council meeting the final budget, Housing Revenue Account and the setting of Council Tax were approved for 2024/2025. A 4.99% rise on council tax bills is being imposed which will generate an extra £13.m with 2% of the increase going towards funding adult social care. Due to escalating demand and inflationary pressures the adult social care budget has been increased by 9.5% and the budget for children's services increased by a huge 22%.

£164m will be invested in the Council's capital programme to improve local infrastructure and assets such as land, buildings and equipment. All of the amendments to the budget by the opposition parties were voted down. For more details: [Choose agenda document pack - Council 22 February 2024 - West Northamptonshire Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

#### **West Northamptonshire Local Plan**

The new Local Plan is being developed over a three year period from January 2024 to September 2026. The Plan will review and replace the policies in the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) and the adopted Part 2 for Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire areas. There will be a public consultation on the draft Plan opening in April 2024.

Climate change resilience will be a cross cutting theme run through the Plan's strategy and policies and "*there will be a particular emphasis on place making for our communities to ensure that development and associated infrastructure is delivered through a plan led approach which ensures development of the right quality, in the right place and at the right time*". This statement and much more information comes from the Local Development Scheme which sets out the timetable for local plan preparation, approved last month by the Planning Policy Committee. [\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Planning Policy Committee, 30/01/2024 18:00 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

#### **Post 16 School travel consultation**

Comments are invited on new proposals for a revised policy on transport services for post 16 students. WNC has reviewed its current Transport Policy Statement for over 16s and is introducing changes which apply to young of sixth form age or young people up to age 25 with Education, Health and Care plans. The changes are needed to meet high demand and operating costs and to offer greater flexibility to parents or carers while supporting young people's independence and encouraging sustainable travel.

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities are entitled to a reduction to their contribution to their transport costs (there is no legal duty to provide free transport to over 16s) as are students from low income families. Where sole transport is the only option a *Personal Travel Budget will be the Council's default offering.*" A personal budget could pay for the running costs of a parent/carer's own vehicle or be used to pay some one else to take a young person to school, for example. The intention is to give parents and carers greater freedom of choice and to reduce the Council's costs in funding individual taxis for students. [Post-16 Transport Policy Statement Consultation 2024 - West Northamptonshire Council - Citizen Space](#)

#### **Rural Community Needs Fund**

Grants of up to £10,00 are being made available following Northamptonshire Community Foundation's campaign to "Shine a spotlight on rural community needs." The aim of the fund is to address urgent needs to support rural communities to

address issues such as fuel poverty, refurbishment of community building and equipment, support for older people and activities and education services for young people. Applications must be submitted by 5<sup>th</sup> April. [Northamptonshire Community Foundation - Rural Community Needs Fund \(ncf.uk.com\)](https://www.ncf.uk.com/)

**By-election result**

West Northants had its first by-election last month at the ward of Hunsbury and Shelfleys in Northampton. This was triggered by the resignation of Conservative councillor Suresh Patel who resigned in December for health reasons. The seat was won by the Liberal Democrat candidate.

Cllr Rosie Humphreys 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024