

Little Brook Ward Meeting

Held on Monday, 17th July 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in Croughton Village Hall

Present

Croughton Parish Council

Councillor Penny Forbes
Councillor Jean Coles
Councillor Trevor Davies
Councillor Chris Fox
Councillor Pamela Gelder
Councillor Virginia Griffiths
Councillor Rodger James
Councillor Brian Tomlin
Mrs Ann Le Druillenec (Clerk)

Aynho Parish Council

Councillor David Dean

Evenley Parish Council

Councillor Cathy Ellis
Councillor Spencer Burnham
Councillor Jeff Peyton-Bruhl
Mrs Cathy Knott (Clerk)

Cllr Rebecca Breese, NCC

Cllr John Townsend, SNC

Colonel Eric Oliver, Lieutenant Colonel James Roche, Squadron Leader Paul Atherton

Assistant Community Relations Adviser Julie Scott, RAF Croughton

Mr Danny Moody, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Cllr Forbes, Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Aynho Parish Council: All Members, excepting Cllr Dean, Mrs Sadie Patamia (Clerk)

Evenley Parish: Mr Brian Sinclair, Highways Representative, HS2

RAF Croughton: Mrs Jenny Collyer, Community Relations Advisor

2. To approve the Minutes of the Ward meeting hosted by Aynho Parish Council on 23rd January 2016:

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Fox and seconded by Cllr Gelder to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd January 2016.

3. Matters Arising:

Minute No. 7: Community Governance Review: Evenley Parish Council wished to discuss Brackley Town Council's request to review its southern boundary with Evenley. This was deferred to item 7.

4. Col. Eric Oliver, USAFE & Sqn. Ldr. Paul Atherton, RAF Croughton:

4.1 Developments at the Base - Update

A time line chart for the period to 2022 was circulated to those present.

Completion of the project would mean that 1,500 more employees and their families would be associated with the Base. The USAFE wishes to be a good neighbour.

July 2019: Replacement of 'golf balls' with smaller ones.

January 2018: Joint Intelligence AC: Contract awarded. Ancillary buildings.

July 2020: Purpose built School catering for 300 students up to A-Level studies.

Materials and labour worth £239million was British. Local contractors would make 800 truck movements per day. Access would be from the A43. A vehicle inspection station would be on site. A new access gate will be constructed before construction begins. The contract has not yet been awarded.

Accommodation: 10% for military staff. 126 dwellings were available on site - on Ministry of Defence land. Houses in the area were needed.

July 2020: Medical Facility: Double the size of the existing clinic which is limited in scope for treatment. The new facility will have some additional facilities, but will have no X-ray facility, and so reliance on local hospitals or RAF Lakenheath will continue.

4.2 Road access arrangements

April 2022: Main Gate: Land purchase required. The new gate will be in the optimum location, away from the village and will require land purchase and road improvements. The existing main gate will be closed.

From the Floor:

i) Do personnel pay Council Tax?: This is subject to a Forces/Government Agreement and relates to both on and off site occupancies.

ii) Will Security be enhanced? Inside the Base: Yes (fence). Not aware of any improvements that will impact on people outside the Base.

The fence line currently does not align with MOD property.

iii) Lighting: This is subject to planning approval from the Planning Authority (SNC).

The Chairman thanked Col Oliver for his update on developments and thanked him and his colleagues for their attendance.

5. Mr Danny Moody, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils: 5.1 Unitary Councils, the Reorganisation of Local Government and the potential impact on Parish Councils:

Mr Moody referred to the Minutes of the previous Meeting and to Cllr Sawbridge's comments on unitaries.

The process had been put in abeyance until after the Local Elections of 4th May 2017 only for the focus to be overtaken by the General Election on 8th June 2017.

Oxfordshire and Buckingham County Councils had submitted bids to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) but no information was available on the stage of the applications or of the likely outcomes.

Current Situation in Northamptonshire: 3 tiers of local government.

Unitary government: 2 tiers - Principle Authority and Parish/Town Councils. E.g. Cornwall Council.

No consensus exists re. one giant Unitary Authority for the entire county area.

NCC: In favour of a single unitary authority for the whole county.

The County Councils Network report shows that a single unitary would achieve the largest cost savings and it would be financially beneficial.

The District councils Network report demonstrates that more than one Unitary Council would be required to achieve significant cost savings. With 2 or 3 Unitaries there would be savings, if not as much, but service quality and delivery of local government services would be better designed and more economical.

There has been no public debate on this issue.

In 2006 the chief Executive, NCC decided that 1 Unitary was the way forward. Parish and Town Councils reacted against this idea.

A report was commissioned that showed that the current situation could not be defended if quality of service and saving money would be increased.

What would the impact be on Parish Councils? This was difficult to assess. Local government reorganisation is about delivery of services by the most appropriate level of government and it was essential for parish councils to be involved in the design of the model. Services could be taken on by individual Parish and Town Councils or by a cluster group.

Critical factors were strategic, operational (Area Committees as in Wiltshire), reliance on volunteers, democratic concept (accessibility).

From the floor:

SNC: There had been changes in the work of the District Council.

Parish and Town Councillors were amateurs.

With the devolution of more power and resources to Parish and Town Councils more interest might be generated in their role.

The Chairman thanked Mr Moody for his informative presentation.

6. County Councillor Rebecca Breese:

Cllr Breese explained that she became a Councillor in order to promote the delivery of good local services in common with everyone present. Cllr Breese was also District Councillor for Steane Ward. As Chairman of the Planning Committee, SNC Cllr Breese had been involved in the negotiations over the Joint Core Strategy, particularly with housing numbers for South Northants District. As County Councillor the interests of South Northants District would be paramount.

NCC had parked plans for unitary government. Cllr Breese would do her best to listen to the debate to find a way to benefit South Northants District.

NCC role: Member of the Environment Committee - dealing with potholes and transport (the Stagecoach service to Chacombe would continue for 6 months)

Member of the Planning Committee

Appointed to the Adoption Panel (CAB specialist advisor)

The Chairman thanked Cllr Breese for introducing herself.

7. District Councillor John Townsend:

7.1 SNC Local Plan Part 2 - progress to date:

The Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee meets on 26th July 2017 to consider a recommendation to Approve the publication of the draft South Northants Local Plan (Part 2) preferred options consultation document for a maximum of 10 weeks formal public consultation.

Housing in villages: There are no plans for small villages at the moment to accept large housing allocations subject to

a) Size of proposed development: 20 houses- Housing Needs Survey required to prove essential need

b) Exception sites for affordable housing

c) Village Plan.

South Northants District currently has sufficient housing.

2029 Joint Core Strategy: SNC set the number of houses in the district but this may be open to revision. Brackley and Towcester have no capacity to absorb more housing, despite government calculations on the numbers it would like.

7.2 SNC Design Guidance Consultation:

The document will guide development in the way favoured by SNC and one that is compatible with villages.

Note: Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee Meeting 26th July 2017:

Recommendation to adopt the SNC Design Guide s planning guidance (not as SPD) that will be a material consideration in the Development Management process.

‘Bad enough to Refuse?–Good enough to Approve?’

New Address: Cllr Townsend advised of his change of address.

From the floor:

Vacant dwelling: Brackley Road, Croughton: Cllr Townsend was confident that this would be occupied.

Community Governance Review 2017: (Minute No. 3 refers) Cllr Townsend and Mr Moody agreed to follow up the 'land grab' concern.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Townsend for his updates.

8. Cllr Stephen Brook, Chairman, Aynho Parish Council:

8.1 Report on the Ward Meeting held with Mr Stephen Mold, Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner on 9th June 2017.

Cllr Dean reported on behalf of Cllr Brook.

Mr Mold had promoted his Crime and Policing Plan.

The ratio of Police Officers to population was 1:1,500.

South Northants District has a very low crime rate countrywide.

MOD Police pass round the area at night and have the power to deal with incidents.

There is no connectivity between Thames Valley Police and Northants Police. Cross border communication is done verbally. Efforts are being made to address the differences in the computer systems operated by both Forces.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Dean for his report.

9. Cllr Spencer Burnham, Evenley Parish Council

9.1 HS2:

The Government had announced the award of £6.5 billion in contracts.

18 month design

Construction is to start in the first quarter of 2019.

Trains will operate from 2026.

The route for Phase 2 has been announced.

Community Environment Fund: Evenley Parish Council is putting a bid together for measures e.g. chicane to mitigate the potential use of the village as a rat run. Although the village is not on the direct construction route, the increase in construction traffic is estimated to be 600% more than normal. The fund would also be used to protect the village green from erosion by through traffic and to enhance village roads.

Priority will be given to applicants (not individuals) within 1Km of the route.

The application is a two stage process.

Cllr Burnham has full details of the application process which he would be pleased to share with Aynho and Croughton Parish Councils.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Burnham for the information.

10. Community Speed Watch:

10.1 Feedback from Aynho, Croughton and Evenley.

Croughton Parish Council: Cllr Gelder reported that Croughton had conducted the campaign in the 20 mph speed limit zone and the Team had generated 620 warning letters about speeding. The average speed was 27 mph. The offenders were mainly from the local area.

Evenley Parish Council: A Co-Ordinator was needed. Speed Watch was running successfully.

Aynho Parish Council: Did not participate in Community Speed Watch. Relied on the portable VAS device which is moved to 4 different locations within the 30 mph zone.

11. News from the Ward:

11.1 Aynho: Taken part in Channel 4's Village of the Year.

11.2 Croughton: No news to report.

11.3 Evenley: No news to report.

12. Meetings:

12.1 To discuss the frequency of Meetings: (Evenley PC)

Agreed: To continue with 2 Ward meetings per year.

12.2 To set the date and venue of the next Meeting:

Agreed: To hold the next Ward Meeting at Evenley Village Hall on Monday 22nd January 2018.

13. Chairman's Closing Remarks:

Cllr Forbes thanked the Speakers and everyone for their attendance and invited everyone to stay for refreshments.

The Little Brook Ward Meeting was closed at 9.15 p.m.

Tea, coffee and cake were served.