

## LAMPOR AND HANGING HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Wednesday 21 May 2025

Lampport Hall, Northamptonshire at 7.00 pm

#### 1. Attendance and apologies

Cllr Fiona Barclay  
Cllr Cathy Dugmore  
Cllr Jonathan Farr  
Cllr Colin Harris (Chairman)  
Cllr Dominic Sinnott  
Cllr Richard Flavell While  
WNC Cllr Cecile Irving Swift and 4 parishioners

Apologies were received from Cllrs. J. Farr, P. May and Mrs Gill Philpott

#### 2. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting 22 May 2024

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### 3. Financial Report and Accounts

Audited Financial Report and Accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 are available on the Parish Council website. The Parish Council closed the financial year with a balance of £6,022.01 against an opening balance of £3,568.50 brought forward from the previous financial year. Included in the balance is £203.80 allocated for defibrillator maintenance. The increase in the brought forward figure was due to a larger precept request, the village grass cutting grant up from £605 to £952 and the VAT reclaim which included the VAT paid on the speed cameras – VAT is reclaimed in the year following expenditure. Councillors continued to endeavour to spend the precept wisely and keep control of expenditure wherever possible whilst providing a good level of service to parishioners.

#### 4 Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to our 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Parish Meeting.

Following the local elections held on 1 May, the AGM last week endorsed the re-election of the existing council which included our newest member Dr Fiona Barclay. Within his time as Chair he always found it just and fitting to say a huge thank you to the Parish Councillors for their diligence and flexibility in dealing with all matters that pass across the table, not only at the time of meeting but ongoing throughout the year so thank you council and to my deputy chairman Councillor Jonathan Farr who has been called to step up to the mark on more than one occasion this year.

Another year has passed and clerk Mrs Frances Allbury again managed to negotiate the increasing workload with her customary professionalism and efficiency ensuring the council is up to date with all the correspondence that arrives through the digital WNC portal means processing at least a dozen emails each day. Thank you, Frances. After the seismic shift in political control of WNC, we wait with interest to discover how we may be affected.

This year we reluctantly accepted the resignation of Councillor Bob Cox who had been a member for over 12 years. Bob took office when Richard Fairfield was Chair. The Chairman thank you Bob for all his work and achievements, notably the upkeep and maintenance of the defibrillator and presentation at many meetings on various subjects affecting the Parish including the CPRE - some other examples of Bobs voluntary

undertakings. We were pleased to welcome Dr Fiona Barclay as a worthy replacement on the council, someone who will undeniably be a great asset to the team.

Road Safety particularly in Lamport has long been a subject for discussion and action. One speed camera is working efficiently in Lamport High Street, a second camera is pending, awaiting location confirmation. This has been brought to bear by the unstinting efforts of Mr Mark Stocker who is now ably assisted by Councillor Dominic Sinnott.

The Lamport Residents Safety Association. The LRSA, the brainchild of Mrs Sarah Lee has, with the help of our local MP, succeeded in the installation of 20mph advisory speed restriction signs that are displayed in Lamport High Street which I'm sure we have all seen unless of course we were driving too fast. Sarah has also been successful in her campaign to reduce the speed limit between Lamport and the A14.

WNC Councillor Kevin Parker did not stand for re-election at the May Election. Kevin had been a valuable source of advice, information and problem solving, attending almost all our meetings and we will no doubt miss his support. We have also benefitted from the help of WNC Councillor Jonathan Harris. Jonathan was instrumental in establishing that the lane between the defibrillator and School House was an adopted road. Fiona Barclay reported the appearance of large potholes in the lane, resulting in a tarmac repair.

Since the last AGM it has been a relatively quiet year regarding any major issues but there remain many procedures, accounts and digital or paper correspondence to be processed. We dealt with 5 planning applications and our own application for conservation status headed by Bob Cox. This application for conservation within the confines of a designated area was eventually turned down owing to reduced capacity caused by a review of The Gand Union Canal and other casework. Considerable effort had been made to establish the area, so the council was extremely disappointed, a sentiment that was expressed in writing.

With a team headed up by Councillor Cathy Dugmore, the litter pick mornings were in operation on two occasions this year and our thanks also go to Mr Tony Boullemier and his team for clearing the debris under the limes in Manor Road.

The Social Mojo Group had noticed a declining interest in events and proposed events. There is an agenda item following this report that has been submitted by Mrs Sue Cole. I believe we all enjoyed the past events which played an important role in bringing our two village together so we should take note of Sue's comments and look anew at any forthcoming get-togethers.

Finally, a much deserved thank you to Mr Mark Herrod and the team at Lamport Hall for again allowing the use of the Old Laundry as the continuing venue for our Parish meetings. We had invited our MP the Rt Hon Stuart Andrew to speak following the meeting but unfortunately, he was already booked elsewhere so in his place you are cordially invited to join us in some light refreshments after the meeting. Thank you all for listening

#### 5. Social Mojo Committee

In the last 12 months the committee have noticed a significant decline in interest in any events, except the pub quiz at the Lamport Swan. Two successful and well attended quizzes were held plus Christmas carols on the Green. Unfortunately, the annual Safari supper and some other events did not go ahead. On a more positive note, an enthusiastic response was received for running a village walking group with a walk ending in the pub in May

Regrettably the group may not be able to continue with such poor interest and engagement from parishioners.

#### 6. Neighbourhood Watch

Unfortunately, this post still remains vacant but the Parish Council were still hopeful that a volunteer to undertake this important role would come forward

#### 7. Report from West Northamptonshire Council

##### 7.1 Cllr Kevin Parker

Outgoing Councillor Kevin Parker reported that his appointments to Council included Assistant Cabinet Member Finance, Vice Chair Strategic Planning and Member Democracy and Standards. He also represented WNC on four charities. His main involvement revolved around finance including budget setting and monitoring in addition to projects. The recent budget showed a 5m deficit (forecast at period 9) although it was expected to reduce the size of the deficit by year end. The budget for 2025/26 was agreed at 432M with Children's Trust/Adult Care and temporary accommodation being the main areas of concern as these are statutory and demand led services. At Parish level his work mainly revolved around Highways and planning matters which were high on the list. Kevin confirmed that he did not stand for re-election at the 1 May 2025 election.

##### 7.2 Cllr Cecile Irving Swift

Cllr Irving Swift said that following the recent boundary changes the Parish Council now came under the umbrella of Rural North East rather than Brixworth, and she would endeavour to keep the Parish Council informed of all relevant developments on a regular basis. West Northamptonshire Council was now Reform led. Adult Social Care and Children's Services continued to be very high on the list of WNC responsibilities. However, for residents the main issues were around pot holes and other very local topics. Safeguarding of children was of particular importance and she encouraged anyone who witnessed anything untoward relating to children to call the police. Cllr Swift also encouraged the Parish Council to consider writing and implementing a Neighbourhood Plan to protect the villages from unwanted further development. The Chairman commented that this had been a topic of discussion a few years ago and at that time it had been decided not to proceed. However, the Clerk will add this to the next Parish Council for further investigation.

#### 8 Open Question Time

8.1 A parishioner mentioned the very poor condition of the area of ground close to the A508 since Cadent had dug it up. Although they promised at the time to restore it to its former condition, this had not been carried out and the grass seed they put down did not germinate. The Chairman said that this was already under investigation by the Parish Council and that Cllr Barclay would shortly be purchasing grass seed and daffodil bulbs for the area.

8.2 Comment was also made regarding the very dangerous footpath along the A508 between Hanging Houghton and Lamport where the tarmac is broken up and completely disintegrated in some places. It was agreed that the Clerk would post this on the On My Street website and give the subsequent reference number to Cllr Swift who would follow it up.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm with attendees being invited to enjoy light refreshments in the rose garden.

Signed:

Date:

