

**Present:-**

Representatives from the following Parish/Town Councils/Meetings:

Badby	Norton
Barby & Onley	Overstone
Brington	Pitsford
Byfield	Preston Capes
Church with Chapel Brampton	Ravensthorpe
Clipston	Scaldwell
Daventry	Spratton
Everdon	Staverton
Flore	Weedon
Guilsborough	Welton
Hollowell & Teeton	Whilton
Kilsby	

**Panel:**

Councillor Richard Auger – Leader, Daventry District Council  
Maria Taylor- Daventry District Council  
Ian Smith - KierWSP  
Ian Boyes – KierWSP  
Sergeant Sam Dobbs – Northamptonshire Police  
John Wilson OBE DL – Ministry of Defence

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Cllr Richard Auger welcomed everyone in attendance to the meeting and introduced the panel and speakers.

**2. Armed Forces Community Covenant**

John Wilson OBE DL gave a presentation to the meeting on the Armed Forces Covenant and explained how Parishes can act as advocates to support the armed forces.

The government is delivering a campaign to improve the understanding of the roles of our Armed Forces and to support their needs. The campaign aims to develop and sustain mutually beneficial relationships with communities, businesses and organisations in all sectors, in order to support the Armed Forces. Raising awareness in local councils at all levels is a very important part of this work.

The vehicle for delivery of the campaign is the Armed Forces Covenant; it provides an opportunity to recognise publicly the value that serving personnel, Regulars and Reserves, veterans and military families contribute to our country and to our regions; details are on the [Covenant website](#). Across the UK, over 4800 organisations have signed the Covenant; 530 are in the East Midlands; 77 are in Northamptonshire, including some Town and Parish Councils.

A template Covenant is attached; where necessary, the pledges in Section 2 may be edited to show how you can support Defence personnel in ways best suited to you. Then enter your Council name as shown, sign it, scan it and return it to:

John Wilson The Regional Employer Engagement Director at [em-empsp@rfca.mod.uk](mailto:em-empsp@rfca.mod.uk)

Your Covenant will be registered with the MOD and included on the Defence [online list](#) and you will receive an Armed Forces Covenant logo for use on your collateral.

Signing the Covenant qualifies for a Bronze award in the Defence [Employer Recognition Scheme](#); after signing the Covenant you can [submit an application](#).

### 3. Highways

IS and IB welcomed questions from the audience.

Everdon - Highways policy regarding potholes and the marking of them

IS – Please report via [Fix My Street](#). Following the receipt of a report, the potholes are inspected and marked in white paint for repair where appropriate. Highway inspectors drive the county daily to look at reports that come in from the public reporting highway defects.

For more general enquiries on a parish basis, clerks are welcome to contact IB and IS direct.

Everdon also requested that the excellent services received from NCC Highways to be recorded in the minutes.

Preston Capes – Has there been budget reductions for spend on pothole repairs?

IS – Budgets remain a constant challenge, however they have not been dramatically reduced this financial year.

Hollowell & Teeton – Street lighting and speed limit, particularly 30mph in a built up area are subject to provision of street lighting and ask if changes to street lighting (removal, reduced level of illumination, limited times of operation) have any implications for the provision and enforcement of speed limits?

IB – If there is a system of street lights in a village or town (3 street lights within 200yds) by default it is a 30mph limit. The start of limit will be indicated by the usual 30mph terminal signs and that means that within the system of street lighting, there is no further indication of a 30mph speed limit.

There are instances where there are 30mph speed limits but, where there are no street lights, there will be a traffic regulation order that makes the road in question a 30mph limit. There will be terminal signs at the start and end of the limit, but within the limit there will be small repeater signs.

If lighting has been removed or reduced within the limit and if the speed limit was 30mph by default of the lighting, this would require review and the making of a traffic regulation order to make it legally enforceable if there wasn't sufficient lighting in the area. IB has sought advice from the Police and their view is that most enforcement is carried out in the daylight hours so a driver would not have the excuse that he couldn't see the lighting. This is a grey area if caught overnight, but there are other avenues for prosecution available, such as careless driving. Any further queries, contact IB and he will ensure the lighting is compliant

and if it isn't, a traffic regulation order can be made and repeater signs installed if necessary to ensure it is legally enforceable.

Hollowell & Teeton – Gulley and drain cleaning

IS – Parishes are welcome to contact IS and IB direct, however the best option for parishioners is to report via [Fix My Street](#). There are 6 gulley clearance vehicles in the County that work on a cyclic basis. These vehicles are out every day cleaning gullies, but whenever an emergency is reported, they come off their cycle which then leads to delays. If the blockage causes a risk to property or road safety then it will be attended to as a priority, if not it will be cleansed on the next cycle. Parishes are welcome to employ a recognised contractor with the required traffic management etc, however please seek the advice of IB and IS before proceeding.

Spratton – LED Street Lighting

IS – For accurate advice, please contact Balfour Beatty (NCC street lighting partner).

MT added that next week at Strategy Group a report will be discussed on the Climate Emergency. DDC are doing a number of things around climate change and if there is more efficient street lighting, this can have a positive impact. MT agreed to ask Joely Slinn to contact Spratton PC to discuss further.

Kilsby advised they used to spend £800-£900 per year on streets lighting, but since changing to LED, this has reduced to £80 per year.

NCALC will also be very helpful by putting parishes in touch with each other to share experiences.

Kilsby – Grit bin policy and cold weather treatment programme

IS – All yellow grit bins on the highway network are the responsibility of NCC to fill. A list of roads that are gritted can be found on the [NCC website](#)

#### **4. Police**

Sergeant Sam Dobbs provided a policing update to the meeting and crime statistics are attached to these minutes.

Daventry – Development and progress of new policing structure

SD – New structure sees Northamptonshire West and Northamptonshire North. Daventry, South Northants and Northampton Borough have merged under the command of one Superintendent. The neighbourhood policing remains unchanged and Sergeant's and Inspector's remain as before.

The response teams now cover the whole patch, and they respond to where the priority need is.

There is a massive recruitment drive with Northamptonshire Police at present. The Commissioner has set a hard recruitment target to increase officers following the raising of the precept, and alongside this the Government have also offered more funding.

Moulton –What observation does SD have about knife crime in schools?

SD – Operation Sceptor ran earlier in the year and presentations were given to schools and SD acknowledged the massive opportunity to educate in schools. The Knife Angel will be coming to Northampton in June.

Cllr RA thanked Sergeant Dobbs for his work our District over the years and wished him well with his new role as Chair of the Northants Police Federation.

## **5. Local Government Reorganisation**

Councillor Richard Auger provided an update on the LGR programme.

'Go live' date is 1 April 2021, however the Structural Changes Order (SCO) has not been made as yet. The SCO is expected in the coming weeks.

Children's Trust will be in place by 1 July 2020 – this is an attempt to improve and restructure children's services in the county.

Engine Room at One Angel Square – tells the whole story of boroughs and districts, moving towards unitary. There is a stakeholders update which will be circulated to Parishes. Open days will allow for Parish Councils to visit.

Daventry – Plans for DDC building

Cllr RA – There are no plans for the future use of the DDC building at present. The DDC Council Chamber will be used for the West Northants Joint Committee. The next meeting is 3 February 2020.

Flore – Frequency of this meeting

Cllr RA – Happy to hold meetings when necessary. The involvement of the community is vital.

## **6. General Questions and Answers**

Maidwell with Draughton – Proposal for north/south rail along Brampton Valley Way

A response from Simon Bowers, Executive Director for Business:

Whilst naturally the Council is aware of the sensitivities of suggesting the Northampton to Market Harborough line should reopen, and appreciates the concerns this will raise, it is seeking to promote sustainable development, as part of movement to a net zero carbon position no later than 2050. In that context giving a realistic rail option for trips which are currently only practically possible by road needs to be considered. Northampton to Market Harborough could play a valuable role in that. Increasing rail access to Northampton should also help drive denser, higher quality development in central Northampton.

Turning to the specific questions:

(1) The Council has endorsed exploring this possibility; whether this goes beyond exploration will depend on how each stage of work turns out.

(2) Network Rail has carried out an initial technical assessment which indicates there are no technical show-stoppers. The main issue is the need to divert from the old alignment south of Market Harborough and join the Midland Main Line south of the town. This is practical and has the benefit of allowing a south-facing chord to be provided and thus allowing direct

rail connections between Northampton and Kettering, and potentially places beyond, as well as the connection northward to Leicester and so on. It would be necessary to provide a new underbridge of the A14, but this is standard engineering. An initial view on costs and the benefit: cost ratio is awaited.

There are capacity constraints on the railway network both north and south of this link, but Network Rail is already due to look at future enhancements south of Leicester and south of Northampton, so these are unlikely to be an obstacle in the timescales projects such as this require.

(3) If the initial Network Rail results indicate a potentially worthwhile case, the partners would need to consider whether to pursue a Strategic Outline Business Case, and if they did and that was positive, the following stages of the rail investment process.

(4) DDC is currently providing input into the Network Rail study, and considering the option of re-opening with the other West Northamptonshire councils in the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan work. If it looks as if the line could practically be re-opened, it is likely that it would appear as an option in the Options consultation for the Strategic Plan.

(5) On DDC's request, the Network Rail study includes costs for full replacement of the Brampton Valley Way. The Council would want to ensure a facility of comparable quality was provided if the re-opening went ahead.

In short, it is early days, there is potential but much uncertainty. These things need to be tested and the outcome is not determined. If the scheme did go ahead there would be extensive fresh planting and a new Brampton Valley Way."

## **7. Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 18 June 2020, 6.30pm, Council Chamber, Daventry District Council.

### **Apologies:-**

Apologies were received from the following Parish Councils: Boughton, Brixworth, Long Buckby, Naseby, Stanford-on-Avon, Thornby

Also in attendance:

Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift, DDC

Councillor Deanna Eddon, DDC