

**MINUTES OF BADBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
AT 7.00 P.M. ON MONDAY 11TH MAY 2009**

7 parishioners attended the meeting, with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Mike Richards, in the chair.

Also in attendance were Parish Councillors Mrs Karen Alexander, Mr Peter Banks, Mrs Sheila Gillings, Mrs Sally Halson, Mr Steve Robson and Mr Mike Warburton; Parish Clerk, Mrs Sharon Foster and PCSO Sarah Gray.

1. APOLOGIES

These were received from County Councillor Robin Brown and District Councillor Tony Scott.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was proposed by D Wilson, seconded by M Warburton and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 12th May 2008 should be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR

In the absence of County Councillor Robin Brown, Mike Richards read out his report.

This report marks the final year of the current administrations period in control of the County Council, elections for a new term take place on the 4th June 2009. The last twelve months have been both frustrating yet in some ways very rewarding. The frustration continues to be caused by the exceedingly slow way that change is enacted within the Council. The rewards are that there is evidence of a different culture and attitude from the Council and a greater commitment to put the needs of the customers, us the residents, first.

There is now a new team of executives managing the Council resources with a clear remit to be improving services whilst reducing cost. Increasing access to services and making extra efforts to understand the needs and requirements of service users. Too often a “one size” fits all approach has been the accepted way, in future the needs of the individual, the local community, as well as the County as a whole, must be considered.

In Badby the village has suffered by a lack of investment in the Highways and the fact is the extreme weather earlier this year only exacerbated the problem. There is no easy answer albeit the new Highways Partnership that replaced the Atkins Contractors have made many improvements not least the fact they are consulting locally and working in the rural areas better than the previous contractor. The Parish Council is to my mind an important sounding board of local opinion and I have continued to make myself available whenever practical, I look forward to your Chairman advising me of the priorities you wish to pursue that I may continue to support you and get your voice heard.

The Empowering Councillors funding scheme has allowed me to work closely with all the Parishes and I expect that scheme to be available in the coming year. Other major issues I have been involved in this year are about scrutinising the County's policies as Lead Scrutiny member for the County this has provided me with a broad understanding of the way the Council works hence my frustration about things taking so long to be effective!

Finally, in my opinion, it is important that the cost to us all is minimised and that the Council Tax is maintained at as low a rate as possible, in Northamptonshire we have the lowest County Council Band D Tax rate in the Country and I will always work for that to be the case.

Robin Brown
County Councillor

4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

In the absence of District Councillor Tony Scott, Sharon Foster read out his report.

This year has been an incredibly busy year as I was appointed Chairman of the Council for twelve months from May 2008. This has involved me in over seventy civic events representing the District Council and raising funds for my three chosen charities, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance, Alzheimer's Society and Macmillan Nurses. Over the year I have hardly had a free weekend and together with the work involved for the Council at meetings during the week, my wife and I have cycled around Silverstone racing circuit, walked eight miles both in the pouring rain and a gale for charity, as well as attending Daventry Youth Orchestra evening where I heard the best jazz improvisation I have ever heard, and the average age is only fourteen years. It has been extremely busy but an interesting and enjoyable one.

The main event of the year for the District Council has been the loss of £8 million in the Icelandic Banks. As many of you may know the Council is funded in three separate ways; from Government grants, which get less each year; from Council Tax, which is capped at 4.5 percent; and from investing its capital reserves to provide interest for revenue funding. Over the last four years, the Council along with 23 other authorities including the Government's own Audit Commission, several hospitals, Police Authorities and other Local Authorities invested over £197 million in the Icelandic Banking System. Six days before the collapse of the banks the Council were still being advised that the banks were still a safe investment. To be honest if we had been told something was wrong a decision would have to be made whether to withdraw the funding and pay a penalty for doing so, probably causing an early collapse of the bank and the advise may have just been a rumour. Some of the error however was due to miss-management by the Council staff, as they did not strictly follow guidelines and this has been dealt with by disciplinary action and further changes in the process of investments for the future.

Half of the investment was in Icelandic banks based in England, whose assets were frozen at the break of the crisis and half in Iceland itself. The Council are therefore optimistic that at least half, if not all the investments will be returned in due course and have joined a consortium to lobby its return by the Icelandic Government. I am sorry for the short report but as you can see from above the majority of my time has been spent flying the flag for Daventry.

If they are any questions please let the Parish Clerk have the details and I will try and respond as soon as possible.

Tony Scott
District Councillor

5. REPORT BY POLICE

PCSO Sarah Gray had been called away from the meeting. In her absence, Mike Richards read out her report.

PCSO Sarah Gray reported
 Crime figures are:

Crime committed	Last year	This year
Burglary of dwelling	5	0
Burglary	13	2
Theft from vehicle	13	4
Theft of vehicle	2	3
Vehicular interference	1	0
Criminal damage	1	2
Total	39	11

As an area overall, the crime has decreased and this has reflected in Badby's figures.

Across the whole of our SCT, crime is on the up, so let's not become complacent and leave our doors open or valuables in our cars for all to see.

“Smart water” is a property-marking kit available at a reduced cost from your NHW. In areas where Smart Water has been used, there has been a significant drop in crime. Signage can go up and stickers for your doors and windows come with the kit.

Surgery dates – I have met some young people of the village and all are welcome for a chat or an opportunity to discuss worries or concerns. Next date - 8th June 6-7pm.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or anyone on the Daventry Rural South Team if you are worried or concerned about events going on in your area.

Our telephone number has changed from 0845 3700 700 to 03000 111 222. However, you can contact us on both numbers.

Community Panel Meetings are held every three months for the Staverton Beat, residents from all the villages are welcome to attend and voice their concerns. The

dates are available on the Police website, in the local press and posters.

Get in touch.

Sarah.gray@northants.police.uk

SCTDavenryRuralSouth@northants.police.uk

PCSO Sarah Gray

6. REPORT BY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reviewed the past 12 months:

- a) Over the past 12 months, it was noted that the churchyard wall has had repairs made to it. The Parish Council had put aside £7,000 for these repairs but the cost of repairs was only £2,000 and the Parish Council had been received £1,500 of Empowerment Funding from NCC towards the work. A new pathway has been laid in the cemetery with the help of the Community Service team. The shed in the cemetery has been cleaned up and re-roofed and there is a new memorial bench. The garages in Pound Lane have been demolished and the decision now has to be made as to whether to do anything with the area.
- b) The budget for the financial year 2008-2009 was set at £22,630 of expenditure but actual expenditure came in at £18,324. At the end of the financial year, the Parish Council had £13,300 in its bank accounts.
- c) Present issues being considered by the Parish Council are repairs and maintenance of the village hall, the state of the car tracks in the playing field, the pathway in the cemetery and the motocross at Arbury Hill. These will be reported on during the monthly Parish Council meetings.

7. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Read by SW who presented the Chairman's apologies that he was unable to attend. Badby NHW continues to thrive and our numbers steadily grow. However, we still would like to increase our membership further. The more members, the more pairs of eyes, the greater chance that anything at all suspicious will be seen and noted.

The Police rely on information in crime detection and prevention. Of course anyone can report suspicious activity but NHW makes this slightly easier and we can also collect information on the little things that are not thought big enough in themselves to justify a call to the Police. One person's small detail may mean nothing by itself but can be of great use when added to the information from others.

The Badby group holds two meetings each year but members do not need to attend unless they wish and there is no subscription fee.

Information from the Police is sent to members almost daily by email and those without computers are linked to a telephone cascade whereby urgent messages can be quickly passed on, including to others who are not themselves members of the group. Any suspicious events can be reported by members to the Police on the special NHW contact number and there is a feed-back on the outcome. But there is no suggestion at any time that members should confront crime themselves.

During the past year we have arranged and supplied several members with 'SmartWater' kits to mark household possessions. These identify marked items to

their owner. The marking is almost invisible except under UV light and is very difficult to remove.

The system has been shown to be a deterrent to crime and, because of this, SmartWater has been issued free by the Police to residents in areas of high risk. We in Badby do not fall into this category, but the firm offers a good discount for kits bought through a NHW scheme and this is an additional benefit of membership. The ideal would be for everyone in the Village to be a member and we would be grateful for any publicity the Parish Council can give to help to achieve this aim.

C. M. Cripps Chairman 702735

S. Wilson Secretary 300659

9. OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHONERS

- a) B Markham raised the matter of the bus service provided to the village and his concerns that the service is inadequate. He noted that he is part of the parking consultation team in Daventry and they have been considering the need for better public transport from the outlying villages. Tim Cantwell, Corporate Strategy Manager at DDC, is heading the consultation committee. M Richards advised that the Parish Council had been in contact with Geoff Amos Coaches and had reported to the Parish Council that no changes in the timetable or route could be accommodated. The Clerk had already been in contact with Major Markham and had followed that up with Mr J Ellerby, Principal Bus & Rail Officer at NCC. The Parish Council is currently awaiting response from Mr Ellerby. It was agreed that the Parish Council will continue to pursue this matter through the relevant channels.
- b) D Wilson raised the matter of moves for a reduction in speed limit from 60mph to 50mph throughout Northamptonshire and his hopes that the Parish Council would give this matter its support. M Richards reported that he had spoken to the press and raised concerns that policing and enforcement also needs to be taken into consideration. S Wilson remarked that the matter affects everyone in the villages and the matter needs support. She believes that the limits need to be in place and then speed cameras can follow.
- c) D Wilson remarked that the Chairman had mentioned earlier a request for money from the Village Hall Management Committee. He felt disappointed that no-one from the VHMC was present at the meeting to make a report to the Parish. K Alexander and P Banks noted that the AGM will be held on Monday 1st June and members of the public are welcome to attend that meeting and speak.
- d) S Wilson commented that she was pleased to see so many people in the village over the Bluebell weekend.

There being no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.35pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

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MINUTES OF BADBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL

AT 7.00 P.M. ON MONDAY 12TH MAY 2008

5 parishioners attended the meeting, with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Mike Richards, in the chair.

Also in attendance were Parish Councillors Mrs Karen Alexander, Mr Gary Bell, Mrs Sheila Gillings, Mr Steve Robson and Mr Mike Warburton; Parish Clerk, Mrs Sharon Foster; PCSO Norman Bareham; County Councillor Robin Brown and District Councillor Tony Scott.

1. APOLOGIES

These were received from Parish Councillor Peter Banks.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was proposed by K Alexander, seconded by M Warburton and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 14th May 2007 should be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.

Due to the need for various members to attend other Annual Parish Meetings and absences from the meeting at the time, the running order of the agenda was changed accordingly.

4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

I was very pleased to be re-elected to Daventry District Council as representative for the Badby Ward for the third term last May.

Following my election victory I was also pleased to be elected, by my peers, to be Vice-Chairman of the Council leading to the Chairmanship for 2008-2009. This will involve a very busy schedule of meetings and ceremonies representing the Council as a whole but more importantly representing, in a very positive way, the image of Daventry. In view of the forthcoming commitments I have resigned my position, as Chairman of Staverton School Governors but remain a LEA Governor and Member of DDC Planning Committee.

Daventry has been my adopted home for the last thirty-two years, twenty-eight of them living in Staverton. I have seen many changes and the expansion of Daventry from a market town to what it is today. This growth is expected to continue until the population of Daventry has doubled by the year 2021. With this expansion we expect to see businesses and retail outlets to flourish bringing further prosperity to our region. The alternative would be to allow Daventry to stagnate, to become a commuter town for larger cities and to die during the daytime leaving children and parents no leisure facilities or reasonable retail outlets.

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The Town Centre Vision and the proposed Marina are still part of an ongoing consultation document, which sets out ideas and a vision for the future. The Council primarily wishes to protect its villages and guide expansion of the district in the town. By increasing the population we attract retail outlets, leisure facilities, better transport and more importantly better educational facilities. The Council have been heavily criticised for suggesting a new marina along Eastern Way but retail outlets have welcomed this exciting proposal and the Education Authorities are seriously considering a University for IT on a site overlooking the facility. The Council have pledged financial support for this but we expect funding to be met by Government, the Education Authorities and businesses.

Unfortunately this year saw a massive reduction in the Government Grant requiring the Council to make efficiency savings of £1.3million in 2008/9. This has resulted in a Council Tax increase of 4.3% or 9p per week on an average band D property. No matter how undesirable this increase is Daventry is still in the lowest 25% of Council Tax levels throughout the Country.

The Council transferred its housing stock to a newly formed Housing Association and this is now attracting massive investment for improvements to the stock for the benefit of its tenants.

Locally in Badby, Newnham and Staverton the greatest disappointment has been the closure of the Post Offices. Despite my collection of signatures for a petition, written representations from many residents of the area and Local M.P. Tim Boswell and prospective candidate for the next election Chris Heaton-Harris, the closures went ahead on the 20th March. At the eleventh hour I arranged a meeting with the Post Office Management, in Staverton village hall with representatives from the Parish Councils and the Over 50's representative, Richard Bird. Everyone made very solid arguments and despite the fact that a lot of the information and statistics were wrong it was clear that the only measure taken into consideration by the Post Office was that there was another Post office within three miles, Daventry. We explained the difficulties already and the proposed expansion of the town but they were still determined to close the village Post Offices and reduce the Town Centre counters from seven to five. The Post Mistress, Jenny Fell at Hellidon, who wanted to retire, courageously offered the closure of Hellidon instead of Staverton. But this was rejected. The situation was a tragic farce!

Representation was submitted to the House of Commons Select Committee but it was outside their remit to stop the closures. They did heavily criticise the consultation process as being "opaque and a complete sham" and recommended changes for the next round but this was not sufficient to help us. The closures took place at the end of March much to the sorrow of the residents and the shame of this Government. If anyone, through the Chair, would like to raise any point I will try and answer but if I can't or the explanation would be too complicated or lengthy then I will write to you at a later date with, I hope a more comprehensive reply.

Tony Scott

Councillor Daventry District Council

Q. What is the timescale for the marina in Daventry?

A. The DDC are still looking at the finance and design needs. Consultation ends

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in September 2008 and then a review of the situation will take place. The DDC are getting very encouraging reactions from businesses already within the town.

Q. What is happening regarding the garages on Pound Lane?

A. When they were part of the Council housing section, they were due to be demolished TS would now look into the matter and report back to the Parish Council. MR reported that the DDC had previously advised that ownership and, therefore, responsibility was under review. The PC has tried to verify but to no avail so far.

5. REPORT BY POLICE

PCSO Norman Bareham reported that Safer Community Teams have been formed. There have been increased in reported crime due to the fact that some crime went unreported before the advent of the SCT. There is a change of both Sargeant and Inspector and an overall scaling down. PCSO NB has been working in a completely different area for the last few weeks.

Crime figures are:

Crime committed	Last year	This year	Comment
Violent crime	2	0	Including domestic
Robbery	1	0	
Burglary of dwelling	4	5	3 distraction in Neneside Close.
Burglary	3	13	Sheds mainly in one night
Theft from vehicle	1	13	Team operating before Christmas
Theft of vehicle	1	2	
Vehicular interference	0	1	
Vehicular damage	0	1	
Theft	4	1	Park Close
Total	16	39	35 recorded in Badby

Q. Because of the movement of officers, is police attendance in Badby now less regular?

A. Resources are moved to the busy areas but PCSO NB stated that he believes resources have to be left where they are – to be sure that someone is “looking after the shop”. PCSO NB commented that although he is working outside of the area at the moment, he has also been visiting his normal beat during his own time, making sure that his face is seen.

6. REPORT BY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reviewed the past 12 months:

a. The unaudited figures for 2007-2008 were reported at the last Parish Council meeting. They show expenditure of £18,218 and income of £2,238, compared with budgeted expenditure of £17,680 this means a surplus of expenditure of £538. This figure does include budgeted payment of £2,000 to the Village Hall Management Committee. The Parish Council has received a bill for @£900 for election costs but this will be paid over the next three years.

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- b. Projects have taken place over the last 12 months dealing with the trees, greens and the cemetery. In summer last year, the Community Service helped to clear the stream at Brookside Lane and also the hedging around the Village Hall.
- c. The goal posts are now completely installed at the Playing Field and the Parish Council made an £800 donation to Badby Cricket Club to help with the costs of the new cricket pavilion.
- d. Looking ahead, there are planned maintenance projects involving the trees, greens, cemetery and churchyard wall.
- e. It was with great sadness that we learned of the sudden death of Parish Councillor James Justice at the end of 2007. M Richards reported that the Parish Council has lost one of its main supporters.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The last twelve months have been very interesting on two counts firstly my personal involvement as Lead Security Member and Chairman of the Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee, secondly the introduction of the Empowerment Funds that each County Councillor has to use in their wards to improve community cohesion and create a local involvement for all councillors.

The Scrutiny function within the County Council is the way that the non-executive elected members can become involved in fully understanding various aspects of the services provided; their effectiveness and the way they are changing through funding difficulties. My own role allows me to be involved on a very regular basis (three days per week) and I have led the full review of the Scrutiny function that will change the way the scrutiny process works providing greater flexibility as well as a more efficient use of resource.

The County Council along with other Councils in Northamptonshire has continued to be penalised by Central Government in that the comprehensive spending review settlement was yet again less than the real cost of inflation in local government plus did not include for the significant growth in population of the County since 2001. As the Central Government funding accounts for up to 70% of the budget spent this puts severe pressure on the Council Tax Rate set by the County.

The re-organisation of the Services and the Employees currently underway has started to produce the savings required to keep the rate of increase of the local tax to the level of inflation as measured by RPI whilst continuing to provide for the extra support given to the Police (as last year). The Highways Contract has now been awarded to a new consortium and Atkins hand over from 31st March 2008. I look forward to that change producing improvements in service.

Finally I look forward to 2008 being a successful year with improving services and no increases in Council Tax above inflation. During the next twelve months I look forward to working with the Parish Council and ensuring a suitable project is available for me to invest some of this year's empowerment money.

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Robin Brown

County Councillor – Braunston Ward

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7. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Over the last year there has been an increase in crimes in the Villages in our area. Our PCSO Norman Bareham has continued to keep us informed of all the incidents that he and his colleagues have been involved in and this, compared with previous lack of information, has made the changes more noticeable and more worrying. However, there is a real increase in the crime statistics although Badby has fared better than some of our neighbours.

The crime figures for Badby rose from 16 last year to 35. The statistics tend to exaggerate the number of individual crimes as the same incident can be recorded more than once under different headings. The theft of a car by stealing the keys from the house is recorded both as theft from a dwelling and as theft of a vehicle. Similarly Theft from a car by breaking a window is counted under vehicle damage and theft from a vehicle. Even allowing for this and that most of the incidents took place in connected raids on two or three days the increases are of concern. In the past there were easier pickings for thieves in the Town but changes in policing there has made them look further afield.

What can we do about this? In the first place we need to be alert. In the Village we know each other and the usual vehicles that are about. A person or vehicle that does not seem right should be reported to the Police with as much detail as possible—a licence number, of course, being a great help. If the person has good reason to be there, no harm is done but your little bit of information can add to others to complete a picture. It was just such a small piece of information which led to the uncovering of major crime in the villages just south of us.

What else? The advice to make ourselves less vulnerable to crime is boringly the same. It has to be because we fail to take it!

Make sure your house is secure not only when you are out but also when working in the garden or garage.

Do not leave car keys on view.

Lock your car even if you are only going to leave it for a short time.

Do not leave anything in your car [it may be worthless to you but think of the hassle of window repairs or worse]

Do not buy anything from cold callers.

Do not let anyone into your home until you have proved their identity

Make outbuildings secure. This can be impossible and it may be best to store expensive tools or mowers elsewhere.

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Beware the telephone or letter scam. If it sounds too good to be true it probably is not true no matter how persuasive the caller.
Consider joining Neighbourhood watch!

We are looking into a property marking scheme called Smartwater which has proved successful elsewhere. For the moment- watch this space.

Dr C Cripps

9. OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHONERS

- a. D Wilson reported that the Badby website is now updated on a more regular basis. The minutes and agendas for the Parish Council are shown. There are three Community organisations which have yet to provide information for the website. These are the WI, Brownies and Village Hall. D Wilson also mentioned that there is a spot for showing future village events.
- b. D Wilson is looking for old photographs of Badby to load onto the Badby website. It was agreed that a notice also be put into the Parish Council newsletter.
- c. D Wilson requested that the unaudited Annual Accounts of the Parish Council be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that this be done in 2009.
- d. Due to the fact that the Annual Parish Meetings for Badby, Newnham and Hellidon had all fallen on the same night, causing some inconvenience for PCSO Bareham, County Councillor Brown and District Councillor Scott, it was agreed that the date for next year's meeting be set now. Therefore, the date of the next Annual Parish Meeting will be Monday 11th May 2009, to coincide again with the normal Parish Council Meeting.

There being no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.40pm.

CHAIRMAN
DATE

MINUTES OF BADBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
AT 7.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY 17th MAY 2007**

7 parishioners attended the meeting, with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Mike Richards, in the chair.

Also in attendance were Parish Councillors Mrs Karen Alexander, Mr Peter Banks, Mr James Justice; Parish Clerk, Mrs Sharon Foster and PCSO Norman Bareham.

1. APOLOGIES

These were received from County Councillor Robin Brown and District Councillor Tony Scott.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs Sue Wilson queried her question to District Councillor Tony Scott. Her recollection was that when mentioning “the Water Board” she had been talking about “the British Waterways Board”.

It was proposed by Dennis Wilson, seconded by Peter Banks and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 2nd May 2006 should be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting, accepting the change made regarding Mrs Wilson’s comment.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Chairman read out a statement prepared by Mr Robin Brown – County Councillor, Braunston Division:

“Once again I have great pleasure in presenting my Annual report of the activities that I have undertaken as your County Councillor plus an overview of the County Council’s achievements in the last twelve months.

Personally this last year has been like that of taking a roller coaster ride, many high’s but also many lows. From May 2006 my time was dominated by the need to extend my knowledge of the Customer Service strategy for which as Cabinet Member I had taken over responsibility. The new budget that the Council had approved required major reductions in spending and refocusing of services to become more efficient.

The main area for that change was the acceptance that an Integrated Change Programme was taken on board by the Council, for that to be successful the appointment of specialists to assist that process was necessary. That process and the resulting plan to cut out duplication, increase productivity and look for more innovative ways to deliver services became the main focus of my time at the Council. Sadly in August I became the subject of a virulent campaign from the Northampton press about my past business career which eventually caused me to stand down as a Cabinet member. Further I was reported to the Standards Board of England for failing to disclose all my interests. Suffice to say that the failure to declare a directorship of a company in liquidation was contrary to the rules. The Standards Board in November ruled that there was no case for action to be taken and the matter was closed.

In January the Leader of the Council Cllr Jim Harker appointed me to take over as Chairman of the Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee a role that requires me to spend time not only looking at how the County provides services in this area but

also our partners in the PCT (Health) and Voluntary Sector. The new ways of helping the vulnerable and elderly are of concern and I will be vigilant in checking that the services provided do meet the needs of the service user.

I have endeavoured to attend many Parish Council meetings albeit there are ten villages plus the Northern part of Daventry within the ward, which does mean I miss attending a number of times. I find that the issues of Highways and Policing are still the major concern and the need for the County to recognise the needs of the rural areas is to my mind not a high enough priority.

My views on local tax levels are well known and I am proud that the Council has for the last two years of this Administration ensured their tax increase is less than inflation. I do not agree that Parish Precepts (Which are uncapped by the Government) should be used to fund the Police; the Police Authority is required to provide adequate policing from their own precept. I do however recognise that the funding level in Northamptonshire is below the average and that is why I agree with the specific payment by the County Council of £500,000 for extra PCSO's. That money is raised across the whole County and is a much fairer way to help the Police. The County Council during the year completed a reform of the Youth Services and today the Service is delivering more and providing a broader base for our Youth than ever before. The need to provide the service via external providers has given a much needed boost to the third sector and will continue to do so. A major development of the Northampton Schools via PFI was successfully concluded and will lead the way to improving standards across the whole of the County. The priorities for the Council are firmly embedded in giving better service at the best value. Often this will mean reorganisation but by creating a "One" Council mentality it should be possible to improve service whilst reducing direct cost.

May I say that I am as enthusiastic as ever, the opportunity of working with the Parishes is to me one of the best ways to understand local concerns and when the additional money for County Councillors via the "Empowering of Councillors" becomes available I shall have great pleasure in working with you to identify projects that could benefit by "pump priming" funds.

The contract that the County has with Atkins for the Highway maintenance is currently being re-tendered and a new contract will be in place for 2008. A contract organised in such way as to be linked more to outcomes and customer satisfaction than pure cost per kilometre of tarmac. Sadly the lack of maintenance that our road network has been subjected to means that without substantial investment by Central Government it will be many years before all of the problems are resolved.

Finally I look forward to hearing from you during the year as well as meeting with you at your Parish Councils. I look forward to the County Council Services continuing to show improvements whilst costing no more than inflation.

Robin Brown

County Councillor – Braunston Ward

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4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

The Chairman read out a statement prepared by Councillor Scott, District Councillor

” Good evening, this is my eighth annual report as your District Councillor regarding the events that have taken place during the last twelve months at Daventry District Council.

My first comment has to be that I have been successful in being re-elected District Councillor for the Badby Ward for the third time and I would like to thank those who supported me and voted for me at the elections two weeks ago. For the 126 people who voted for my opponent I would like to express my disappointment at not having gained your confidence over the last eight years and if there any specific issues you wish to raise please speak to me at any time.

This year has been mostly dominated by three important matters, which will affect us all.

Several years ago Central Government tried to introduce Unitary Authorities across the Country. It was felt that many people did not understand the existing three-tier system and which authority was responsible for a particular service. They wanted to see County and District Councils merge to create one large authority. Many authorities opposed the proposal as being unwieldy, undemocratic and very costly. The sceptics were right. Those that did change to Unitary Authorities have failed to deliver and have cost the Taxpayer a great deal of money. The Government tried to introduce Regional Assemblies but after their resounding defeat in a referendum in the North East they decided to abandon this idea for the time being.

Last November the Government again decided they wanted to change the face of local Government and again raise the spectre of Unitary Authorities. Northamptonshire was chosen as a trial Authority or Guinea Pig. Each Local Authority in the County were told to submit there chosen preference by January 21st 2007 (three months) in the way Local Government should be re-structured in their area. Status quo, as we were told, was not an option! With the exception of Northampton Borough Council all the Authorities in the County, including the County Council, agreed that an enhanced three-tier system would be the preferred option and rejected any suggestion that we should become part of any Unitary Authority. This means that, in the view of Authorities in Northamptonshire, local government should continue to represent its residents at County, District and Parish level but it was agreed that we should improve cooperation between authorities avoiding, where possible, duplication. It was strongly felt that this system will continue to give democratic representation and value for money. We expect Central Government to make an announcement in July this year.

The second important event was a referendum being held with Council tenants to decide whether they should stay with the Council or transfer to another Social Landlord, i.e. Housing Association. Over the last three years Central Government has reduced Local Authority housing subsidy which last year effected Daventry particularly badly as we were one of the few authorities already in negative subsidy. It also introduced a rent formula, which meant that Council house rents would, by 2010, merge with Housing Association rents. This has meant a year on year average rent increase of 7.7% and in the next two years this is likely to increase to a figure in the region of 10%. This increase partially offsets the reduction in subsidy but does not provide sufficient funding for any improvements and would result in a reduction in non-essential repairs. Tenants voted by more than three to one to transfer to a Housing Association by the end of this year. This provides the necessary capital for improvements and guarantees rent increases at a more realistic level of 1% above inflation. This we believe will be for the benefit of the tenants but is a backward step, in my view, for local government and may cause difficulties in finding affordable

rented accommodation in the future.

Finally the Town Centre Vision. Daventry has been an expanding town since the early 70's. Housing estates have sprung up all around the town but with very little expansion or improvement in the infrastructure and retail facilities in the town. The Council took the decision to join the West Northamptonshire Development Cooperation, which would attract money from Central Government and guarantee the provision of the infrastructure needed, improve and expand the town centre and safeguard the integrity of our villages. It was felt that Central Government would impose its will to have more housing and industrial development in Northamptonshire and Daventry was a blank canvass in which to dump housing without consultation. We were determined to have some say in where this should happen and at what pace instead of it being imposed upon us. It was felt important to protect the integrity of our villages by avoiding piecemeal development spoiling the character of villages and our countryside. We are seeing the building of a new hospital in Daventry, there will be a further 6,200 homes provided in Daventry itself by 2021 and this number is capped. The Town Centre Vision will provide the opportunity to prevent Daventry stagnating and becoming a satellite location for commuters. We will attract investment for now and the future and make Daventry a vibrant place to live. There is still time to have your say and comment on the proposals being made.

I continue to be a Member of the District Planning Committee and Chairman of Staverton CEV Primary School on which I will be presenting a report later.

With the Chairman's permission I will try and answer any questions from the floor and if I do not know the answer I will endeavour to get a reply to that person as soon as possible. It remains for me to say that I will be standing for re-election on the 3rd May and I hope I can count on the support from local people for your local and loyal candidate. ME!

Tony Scott

Councillor Daventry District Council"

Following this report, the Chairman thanked District Councillor Scott for all his help in achieving the 40mph speed limit and speed warning signs on the A361.

5. REPORT BY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reviewed the past 12 months:

- a. The new cemetery extension has been completed and landscaped. The old cemetery is now full and all future burials will take place in the new part. A new kissing gate is expected shortly at the top of the new footpath, kindly donated by John Warr in memory of his brother, Andy.
- b. Village hall improvements have been completed. The Parish Council has provided assistance towards the funding to the tune of £6,000.
- c. Following much campaigning, 40mph traffic speed limits and traffic warning signs are now in place.
- d. The football posts at the playing field have been replaced with the help of a grant from the Football Foundation.
- e. The village greens are in good condition with on-going maintenance programmes in place. More tree work is to be done over the next year. There have been a number of problems regarding the playing field but these will hopefully be overcome in the near future.
- f. The audited accounts for 2006/2007 show a surplus of £1,400, mainly due to higher income than budgeted. The precept for 2007/2008 has been held at £14,000.

The Chairman presented major issues for the future:

- g. Following a structural engineer's report, parts of the churchyard wall are showing deterioration and need rebuilding. The Parish Council is in the process of getting quotes for the work but is expecting the work to be in excess of £10,000. As the report does not warrant immediate action, the Parish Council plans to build up a reserve but will review the position when preparing the 2008/2009 budget. It will continue to monitor the situation regarding the condition of the wall.
- h. Following recent problems within the village, the Parish Council aims to keep the village free from vandalism.
- i. The Chairman expressed the view that the biggest threat the Parish Council faces in the future will come from the possibility of major housing development on the outskirts of the village boundary, through private development schemes. As the area remains the target for Central Government redevelopment, we cannot be complacent that the only development plans will be restricted just to the North-East of Daventry. Most Badby residents would like to preserve the village within its current size and unique natural beauty..

6. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

BADBY & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

We have about 110 members who support the committee of thirteen.

Annual events are the quiche and wine evening in February, the spring plant sale in May, a garden lunch in June, a coach outing in July, the Annual Show in September and a themed AGM in October. Last year it was pumpkins, this year badgers.

A new venture this year is to hold an open gardens afternoon in Badby on June 10 to raise money for the Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Ambulance charity. We would be very pleased to have one or two more volunteers to open their gardens – it does not have to be an especially large garden!

Geoff Pullin

Chairman

BADBY FAYRE 2006

The two-yearly fayre took place last September to raise money for St Mary's Church building. At least two hundred people were involved in setting it up and running it. It seems to have been a happy community event again and raised £4,400.

Any new ideas and volunteers for 2008 will be most welcome!

Geoff Pullin

Chairman

BELLRINGING

The bells are rung about 100 times a year.

On average 6-7 people ring for all church services except the 8am ones. This includes about 2 weddings and one funeral a year.

On practice nights we usually have around 13 people including several regularly from nearby villages. Three youngsters from the village started to learn to ring last September.

The village school children rang handbells at Christmas and recently we had the Brownie troop to visit the tower.

The bells are in good condition. Two new ropes last year cost £310.

We are always pleased to see anyone on Wednesday evenings from 6.45pm to see what goes on. We miss the far more curious visitors who used to stay at the youth hostel!

Geoff Pullin
Tower Captain

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Read Dr C Cripps

“Neighbourhood Watch is still active in the village and our membership continues to rise. However, we would still like to see more people joining as the wider the membership becomes the more rapidly can information and warnings of scams or crimes be circulated. Members have no commitment to attend meetings, although they are welcome to do so, and we have no subscriptions. Information and warnings are relayed by the Police directly to members by email and we link members without computers to those that have to pass on information by telephone.

We are fortunate to live in a part of the county which is relatively quiet from the point of view of crime but this is no consolation to anyone who is a victim. It is up to us all to do our bit to make the village as unpopular as possible to the criminal fraternity and especially to give support and help to our more vulnerable neighbours. This is what NHW is all about.

Last year at the time of this meeting there had just been a very nasty burglary in the village. Since then there have been two unsuccessful attempts to break into buildings and various incidents of damage to vehicles and property. There were also the curious incidents of the wheelie bins and nameplates which appeared in the night. At our recent meeting it became apparent that some minor incidents were not being reported to the Police. Norman Bareham, our PCSO, is very keen that this should be rectified. He makes the point that while he cannot, of course, correct every nuisance that occurs he can try and has powers to help him. What is certain is that he can do nothing if he is not informed. He has been in post for a year now but unfortunately had a prolonged period off work following an injury on duty last year. He will be a great asset as our ‘Village Bobby’ albeit with fifteen other villages as his patch. I hope he will be able to introduce himself to the meeting this evening.

Finally it has been noted that our signs in some cases are past their sell-by dates and are badly faded. We intend to replace these and will ask to resite some to give a better display. We hope the council will support us in this.”

THE POLICE

PCSO Bareham introduced himself and explained the new initiative of Safer Community Team policing. He listed the statistics for crime in the village over the last 12 months and was alarmed at the amount which had taken place. PCSO stated that Neighbourhood Watch is an important link with the Police Force and thanked them for their help. He added that communication is a huge part of policing and encouraged everyone to help.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Bareham for his report.

7. OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHONERS

- a. There has been a spate of incidents where dogs have been running off lead chasing sheep. This is of concern and dog walkers were asked to ensure that their dogs do not become a nuisance.

- b. Following on from that discussion, PCSO Bareham gave the name of the new Dog Warden in Daventry (Clare Preddy).
- c. A Councillor asked whether any action had been taken following the fatal accident involving a motorcyclist and a coach in 2006. It was believed that the coach company had been prosecuted.

There being no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

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MINUTES OF BADBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
AT 7.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY 2nd MAY 2006**

7 parishioners attended the meeting, with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Mike Richards, in the chair.

Also in attendance were Parish Councillors: Mr Ian Bromwich, Mr Peter Banks, Mr Mike Warburton and Clerk, Mrs Sharon Foster.

District Councillor Tony Scott was also present.

1. APOLOGIES

These were received from Parish Councillors Mrs Sheila Gilling, Mrs Katie Marshall, Mr Gary Bell, Mrs Eleanor Ramsbotham, Mr Paul Marshall and from County Councillor Robin Brown.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was proposed by Mr D Wilson, seconded by Mr P Banks and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 10th May 2005 should be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Chairman read out a statement prepared by Mr Robin Brown – County Councillor, Braunston Division:

“County Council Budget Crisis

Following a change to the administration in May 2005 I was appointed as a member of the new Cabinet for part of the Finance Portfolio with particular responsibility for Capital and Assets. A change of administration means that many of the priorities and objectives of the County Council are revised, in particular there has now been an emphasis placed upon achieving a “Smaller & more enabling Council” with the need to provide services at a cost generally in line with inflation.

In late November last year, serious financial problems were uncovered when we were informed that there was a considerable budget failure within Learning Disabilities, part of the much larger Community Services area. This budget failure was of an overspend of some £4 million, which is expected to be at least £8 million next year. A total of £12 million overspent in just one area. Clearly when the budget was put together the year before, demand in the area had not been accurately predicted. As a result the money put aside wasn't ever going to be enough.

Further overspends which came to light were within the Education Service or as it is known the Children and Young People's Service. This was a similar cause although a smaller problem, plus £1 million overspent. The failure of the previous administration to budget properly was becoming for us an expensive business.

To make matters worse the Government then announced it would only be giving us a grant of some 2.1% above last year, which would in the end translate into millions less than we actually needed. To give some indication of the size of the problem, we

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need to understand that local government inflation which is mostly about salaries is 4.9% plus there is increased demand for some services which had previously not been anticipated. 2.1% was never going to enable us to continue to provide services at the level of the previous year unless we raised the Council Tax by up to 15% to 18% this was considered unacceptable and in consequence has required a fundamental review of all services with the intention of stopping some of those that have been directly supplied and moving towards a basis of commissioning others better qualified to provide some services.

Therefore with a Council priority not to raise the Tax by more than the rate of inflation this year's budgets need to cut staff, cut non statutory services, make sizable efficiency savings and explore ways of maximising our assets to provide for further efficiencies in the future.

Recently we have taken a lot of criticism from people directly affected by cuts or reductions in services, I can understand the strength of feeling. However faced with such an immense financial challenge there has been very little room for movement. Despite cuts and changes we will be spending an extra £2 million for services for Looked after Children which includes extra support for foster carers and adopting parents.

We will spend this year £67 million on Children and Young People, (not including schools) £129 million on Community Services, £60 million on the environment, roads and communities and £23 million in total on Public Protection. This budget will continue to provide for all the people of Northamptonshire despite the "double whammy" of lack of funding centrally and in the past, poor financial control locally."

4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Councillor Scott read out the following Annual Report:

"Good evening ladies and gentlemen, this is my sixth report to you as District Councillor for the Badby Ward of Daventry District Council.

I continue to serve as Ward representative, Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee and LEA representative and Chairman of Staverton CE Primary School.

I suppose the most important event of 2005/2006 has been the Council being capped by Central Government for the Council Tax levied last year. The Council set an annual increase in its Council tax and was considered to be in the lowest quartile nationally and £854,000 below the Government's own estimate of cost for an authority of our size. The Government in fact gave a grant allocation £412,000 below its own model allocation. However, the percentage increase was considered politically unacceptable and the Government imposed a re-billing of the Council Tax at a cost of £72,000 in order to save an average household increase of 14p per week.

In the words of Lib Dem spokesperson for Local Government Affairs, Sarah Teather, "For me, Council Tax capping is without doubt the most extraordinary, absurd and vindictive piece of legislation that I have seen since entering Parliament".

The good news is that following the Council's public display of disdain, this year's

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Government grant allocation of £4.7 million is an increase of almost half a million pounds over last year, a 10% increase (the third highest in the Country). This, together with stringent measures taken by the Council, means we have been able to keep the Council Tax increase this year to the rate of inflation at 3% or 6p per week for Band D properties.

I am pleased to announce that we still have progress in the scheme to try and make the A361 safer both for commuters and village residents of Badby. Following eighteen reported accidents, nine serious injuries and four deaths over the last three years the County Council Highway Dept. have agreed to extend the A361 “Red Route” along the stretch of road at Badby. It has been agreed to impose a forty mph enforceable speed limit, at the moment it is only advisory, improve road surfaces and signage and install a vehicular activated sign advising motorists of the speed limit. The Police have agreed to increase patrols along this stretch of road and to set up mobile speed cameras in the future to catch offending motorists. I spoke to James Butlin of the County Council only last Thursday and he confirmed the planned work is in hand and should be completed during the next few weeks.

The transfer of the Council’s housing stock is still being pursued through consultation with our tenants and it is anticipated a ballot will take place in November this year.

Since the late 1970’s Daventry has always been considered an expanding town and during the last two years the Council took the decision to accelerate growth, by expanding its infrastructure, protecting the integrity of our villages and to have a proactive role in supporting the Government’s initial plans to build an additional 167,000 homes in Northamptonshire. By participating we have a say in what happens and when, rather than expansion being imposed upon us. We are currently attracting record levels of inward investment and we want this trend to continue. The Council have pledged to expand the population of Daventry by 40,000 by 2021 and as part of that expansion we have maintained control through the Planning Committee and the West Midlands Development Corporation (WMDC) to ensure the anticipated growth does not have an adverse effect on the town or surrounding villages.

The Council have agreed to participate in the “Travel for Less Scheme” offering travel from within the County to certain destinations for the over 60’s for £1 and this, together with the Council’s own scheme of free travel within the district for those over 60 years of age, registered disabled, their carers, mobility impaired and students, will provide benefits to the public and the environment. The Council continues to offer travel tokens to Parish Councils to issue at their discretion.

The Council have agreed to participate in an Energy Conservation scheme and will offer a discount on Council tax to any resident who participates in an approved cavity wall insulation scheme. Basically any resident who carries out cavity wall insulation by a participating company will receive a £50 discount on their Council tax for one year.

This concludes my Annual Report and with the Chairman’s permission, I will try and answer any questions you may have.

Tony Scott

DRAFT

Councillor Daventry District Council”

Questions to Cllr. Scott

- Q.** In light of the planned expansion of Daventry, is there a planning policy on lighting for Daventry?
- A.** Councillor Scott was unsure whether there is a policy at the moment. Councillor Scott agreed to look into the issue and contact Mr Wilson direct with an answer. Councillor Scott did say that the Council is sensitive to the issue of light pollution and takes each planning application on its own merit.
- Q.** What are your comments on recent press reports on the adverse effects on house prices in Daventry?
- A.** The only way to control house prices is to keep on building. At the moment, we are living in a society of supply and demand. The Council is well aware of the arguments on both sides and the fact that rising house prices are making it more and more difficult for the young and first time buyers to get their feet on the house-buying ladder.
- Q.** If the canal is built in Daventry, who will it be vested in: the Water Board, the District Council or the Town Council? Who pays for it?
- A.** At the moment, the canal is one of a number of ideas being put forward for Daventry and only part of the consultation process has been completed. Therefore, it is not certain yet who will pay for and take responsibility for the canal.
- Q.** Is the signage on the main road going to be looked into?
- A.** Yes, as part of the Traffic Review.
- Q.** Will signage be taken into account regarding directions to the garden centre? At the moment there are signs on the A361 which divert cars and deliveries from going through the village.
- A.** Councillor Scott is aware of the need to keep traffic to the garden centre out of the village itself. The Council will work in cooperation with the garden centre when reorganising the signs. Councillor Scott will pass on comments to the department concerned.

Thanks and appreciation were expressed for all the work Councillor Scott has done in relation to the A361 issue.

5. REPORT BY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

PARISH COUNCILLORS

The Council is at full strength with 9 Councillors.

PARISH CLERK

Peter Halliday left the post in February 2006 and has been replaced by Sharon Foster.

CEMETERY EXTENSION

The extension has now been incorporated. Ground clearing works have been completed and one burial has taken place. The legal and administrative process

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involved in altering the footpath direction should be completed shortly. The plan for this year is to lay a path connecting the two parts of the Cemetery and extend it along the perimeter of the new area. This matter is out to tender at the moment and will be dealt with by the Parish Council.

GRASS CUTTING

New contracts for the next 3 years have been awarded and, to date, all is working satisfactorily. The Council has paid extra for the grass to be removed for the first two cuts only.

TREES

As a result of a recent inspection of all the village trees, certain remedial work has been identified. All Category 1 (urgent) work will be shortly undertaken, whilst Category 2 (general clearance) will be reviewed later in the year.

PLAYING FIELD

The goal posts have been replaced because they were in a dangerous state of repair. The Parish Council was able to acquire a 50% grant from the Football Association.

VILLAGE HALL

Funding is in place and works are due to begin in July.

A361

As reported recently in the Village Newsletter, it has been agreed to introduce a 40mph speed control along the Badby village sector. These should be put in place during the forthcoming year.

FINANCE

Expenditure was £14,903 in 2005/06 compared with planned budget of £16,600 in 2006/07 .

Increases are due mainly to an additional £600 to administration, an additional £600 for the cemetery extension and an additional £600 for works to be done to the trees following the recent inspection.

Next year, it is believed that capital expenditure will be reduced.

6. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Read by Mrs S Wilson on behalf of Dr C Cripps

“Dr Cripps, the Chairman of Badby Neighbourhood Watch, has asked me to read through his contribution to the Parish Newsletter but as I think many of you have already received this by now, perhaps it would be better to pick out just one or two points in particular.

First is the number of burglaries recently where the thieves have targeted the car keys then driven off with the householder’s car parked outside. The message is, of course, to keep your car keys out of sight at all times and not to leave them anywhere where they can be seen from outside. And don’t forget that thieves can push something through your letterbox and hood the keys off the hall table.

And now the distraction burglar. These can be very plausible – the gas or electricity

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board, the water board or even posing as Social Services. So if you don't know them and aren't expecting them, then don't let them in. If they are genuine, they will be more than happy for you to check up on their identity.

I mention this because there was an extremely unpleasant incident in the village at the end of last week. 3 men claimed to be from the Gas Board. They were not allowed in so they broke in and held an elderly lady while they ransacked her home looking for money.

Please can we all keep a watchful eye out especially for those of our neighbours who we know to be particularly vulnerable.

And finally, anyone can join NHW and we welcome new members. One of the advantages is that you can receive the messages, warnings and advice from the Police via the system known as Ringmaster. We have just two meetings a year here in the Village Hall but attendance is of course voluntary and not a requirement of membership.

Anyone interested in joining, please contact me or Dr Cripps.”

THE POLICE

General disappointment was voiced at the non-involvement of the police at this meeting. For a number of years the police have failed to attend. Discussion was had as to whether to send a letter of complaint to the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire.

7. OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHONIERS

- Q.** There seems to be a lot of redundant signage within the village. Should the Parish Council do a tour of the village?
- A.** A ¼ yearly inspection is carried out by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council. On their next inspection, they will pay particular attention to which signs are no longer deemed applicable.
- Q.** Who is responsible for the gritting boxes located around the village?
- A.** The gritting boxes are the responsibility of the County Council. The matter of whether they can be re-sited or painted will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the Parish Council meeting in June.

There being no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

MINUTES OF BADBYANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
AT 7.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY 10TH MAY 2005**

Nine parishioners attended the meeting, with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Peter Banks, in the chair.

Also in attendance were Parish councillors: Mrs Sheila Gilling, Mrs Katie Marshall, Mrs Eleanor Ramsbotham, Mr Gary Bell, Mr Ian Bromwich - and Clerk Mr Peter Halliday.

District Councillor Tony Scott was also present.

1. APOLOGIES.

These were received from Parish councillors Mr Paul Marshall and Mr Mike Richards and from County Councillor Mr Robin Brown. Also from Dr C Cripps.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

It was proposed by Mr D Wilson, seconded by Mrs S Wilson and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th May 2004 should be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

The Clerk read out a statement prepared by Mr Robin Brown - County Councillor, Braunston Division:

"The last twelve months I have found to be very frustrating with regard to the Northamptonshire County Council. The budget set last year was far higher than inflation, albeit in this, an election year, the new budget is much lower, although in both years the administration have not been as prudent as possible and continue to fund many projects for minority interests that do not in my opinion represent good value. Overall the services delivered by the County Council continue to be rated poorly and as we all know the under spending over many years on our roads continues to create major concerns.

The capital increase for roads announced last year has started to be spent and in some areas the new road surfaces are, in the dry, a great improvement. The situation in wet or frosty conditions can be extremely slippery when not treated with salt or sand. One hopes this problem is being addressed and as the road surface ages it is less of a problem.

My personal involvement with the County Council in addition to attending all full council meetings has been by as a member of the Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee and also the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee. Further I have been Chairman of the Daventry Area Committee of the County Council which is responsible for allocating the "Minor Works Budget.," as well as acting as a consultation forum.

After twelve years of a Labour Administration I am delighted that the result at the Elections last week gave us control. The new look to the County Council is of 45 Conservative Councillors, 21 Labour and 7 Lib/Dem. I have been asked to be part of the new Cabinet under the leadership of Jim Harker and look forward to our policies being implemented when our rural communities can expect a fairer slice of the County budget and a return to value for money policies that ensure increased investment in "Core Services" whilst cutting waste and reducing bureaucracy. "

4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR.

Annual Report to Parish Councils

"Good Evening ladies and Gentlemen, Parish Councillors. I must first start with an apology for not being able to present this report in person.

This evening is my fifth report to Parish Councils and I have to say it doesn't get any easier. This year has seen some good news and bad news, but on the whole the business of Daventry District Council has been about trying to give best value for money and to safeguard the services we provide.

I still continue to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee and the Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee, although the latter has met only on very few occasions.

Planning has been very important this year trying to utilise the advantages of being part of the Urban Development Corporation and at the same time implementing the draconian regulations of Central Government. The main advantage of being part of the UDC is that Capital funding is being provided by the Government to help the Local Authority to purchase sites in the Town as part of the Town Centre Strategy. As an active part of the UDC we are involved in the decision-making process ensuring we have the necessary infrastructure in place before further development can take place. The disadvantage of Government Planning regulations are that they have increased the requirement, "to maximise the development of land" to a minimum density to 35 units per hectare on new developments and reduced car parking to provide a maximum of one and a half spaces per dwelling.

Last year the Council saw the resignation of the Chief Executive Officer and we took the courageous decision not to re-appoint a replacement. The original management structure consisted of Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Services, and four Directors forming the Management Board. Instead, for a trial period of twelve months, we have decided not to replace the Chief Executive and allow the Management Board of four directors to run the Council. This will have net savings including the cost of advertising the position of £120,000 to £150,000.

Unfortunately we have seen the closure of Daventry Museum, the closure the CAB and of the reduction and relocation of the Housing Advice Centre. In the last few months the Council have decided to close the outdoor pool in 2006 and to modify the current bus token scheme. I will give a brief summary of some of the reasons behind those decisions.

Daventry Museum was located in the Moot Hall; it is a requirement that all public buildings must be accessible by the disabled. To provide a lift and other necessary works to the building, such as replacing the defunct heating system, would require the Council to spend a quarter of a million pounds. The Trustees of the museum were given twelve months to provide a contribution to this figure and the District Council would match it. Unfortunately they couldn't and therefore the museum had to be

mothballed. Similarly as a cost cutting exercise and recognition of under use of the facilities the CAB and Housing Advice Centre had to be changed.

The outdoor swimming pool is forty years old and needed £200,000 to be spent to replace corroded plumbing and faulty wiring. Last year for every person who went through the turnstiles the Council Tax Payer paid a subsidy £23 per head. This was calculated at costing the Council a loss of £156,000 in revenue over a four month period. However the Council is tied to a contract to the Leisure Company running the outdoor pool until 2006 and therefore a decision was made not to spend the £200,000 on repairs but instead to make the two small pools safe for the duration of the contract and then close it. The site will then form part of the Town Centre Vision and will become new Leisure facilities for the future.

In 2001 the Government introduced compulsory bus passes to all Local Authorities. Daventry DC recognised that its bus token scheme gave greater flexibility, particularly for those who did not have a bus service or found it more convenient to use the tokens for taxis, and therefore it was agreed to run both schemes. However the cost of running both schemes became an increasing a problem. Out of the budget of £200,000, £63,000 was being spent on administration costs to run both schemes.

Rather than stopping the token scheme altogether it was therefore decided to modify the scheme, making it available to those who are in real need. The discount token scheme still operates for the disabled, carers and students, and the Council have written to all Parish Councils advising them that the tokens are still available to the Parish Council at face value. The Council are still looking at ways of helping those who cannot use the public service and we have sent a letter to the ODPM explaining the situation and asking for help and a Task Panel will be meeting this evening to explore any other way we can help.

As can be seen from the information above the Council have had a difficult year ensuring we can justify every penny without increasing our Council Tax beyond our manifesto pledge. We agreed not to increase the Council Tax beyond the rate of inflation plus any costs imposed upon the Council by Central Government. Again this year we have kept to this promise by increasing the Council Tax by 3.2 percent inflation plus 10.4 percent caused by the reduction in Local Authority Grant from Central Government. We have read in the papers that the Government gave Local Authorities extra money this year, prior to the election, but the fact is that the extra money does not offset the reduction in Grant. The Government still under-funds this Authority by a staggering £412,000 and this is set to rise to £1.9 million by 2009/2010. Even with the stringent cuts the Council have made the shortfall was still £198,000.

The Government have threatened to cap the Council forcing it to reduce its budget to Government percentages, but the Council have responded in a twenty two page submission explaining why the budget had to be set at 13.6% and expressing the Council's willingness to take the Government to a Judicial Review if they are determined to carryout the 'capping'.

The Council's argument in essence is that the Council Tax is within the lowest quarter of all Local Authorities in Great Britain, it is below the Governments own figures for a Local Authority of our size, the position is forced upon us by the Government itself phasing in reduced grant levels to offset the negative subsidy on Council House rents and finally if the Government were to impose capping there would be an additional cost of £100,000 to re-bill it's residents.

At the end of the day we must remember that the DDC proportion of the Council Tax is 8%. The actual increase is equal to 25p per week for a Band D property as opposed

to 9p

if the rate was 4.9% as recommended. Taking everything into consideration we believe the Council have acted responsibly and ALL political parties of the Council agreed to the increase, which has been subsequently endorsed by the District Auditor and the National Association of Local Government.

To end on a positive note I can say that I have been the LEA representative on the Staverton Primary School Board of Governors for the last four years and this year I will have served as it's Chairman for the last two years. Without wishing to steal Miranda's thunder I think we can all see a difference in the School. We have a newly appointed Head teacher and we are spending nearly £200,000 on improving the school and providing a covered play area for the reception class. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Peterborough Diocese and in particular the Trustees of the Staverton Education Foundation for their financial support, without which, I very much doubt the new improvements could take place. I would also like to thank FOSS who have raised funds to support the teachers and pupils with equipment and other items; and could I take the opportunity to invite everyone to our Fete to be held on the 18th June 2005 to celebrate the schools 40th Birthday, all are welcome. The School has become very popular and the new intake for September will swell the numbers to 81 pupils.

The school is proving to be growing success and one which, we hope, will continue as a very important part of the village of Staverton."

Councillor Tony Scott

Questions to Cllr. Scott

Q. Does the District Council get the full benefit of council house rents?

A. No. Over a 5 year period, central government phased in the off-setting of these receipts against government grant to the district council.

Q. Who pays for Daventry's Town Centre Vision?

A. Some grants – eg. £1million grant was used to purchase the library site. Some "capital receipts" from disposal of assets.

Daventry District Council has used £4M / £5M from capital receipts to fund Housing Association building,

Q. Who determines the limits and boundaries for development of Daventry town.

A. The Planning Department controls development.

Q. If central government requires housing development to be high density, does this mean that

planning applications for 3 storey dwellings in villages will automatically be granted.

A. No. The Planning authority can turn down applications for the usual reasons eg. "out of character

with the area". However, applicants can always appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

5. REPORT BY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

PARISH COUNCILLORS

The co-option of Sheila Gilling in April 2004 and Paul Marshall in March 2005 means that the Council is up to full strength.

Vic Maull retired from the council in January 2005. The Chairman expressed his

thanks for all Vic's good work in the past and best wishes to him for the future

PARISH CLERK

Sue Harris joined in April and left to take up a post with Brackley town council in October.

Peter Halliday took the post in November 2004.

ROAD WORKS

The new surfaces were bedding in well. The smooth surface is certainly preferable to pot-holes

CEMETERY EXTENSION

Following protracted negotiations the Council eventually acquired a piece of land in May 2004 - from D Fennel. The legal process for re-routing of Footpath EB11 is underway via Daventry District Council.

The chairman expressed his appreciation for all the hard work, past and future, by the working parties. Special mention for Mike and Mrs Richards, Ian Bromwich, and David Fennel.

(The Chairman also paid tribute to his fellow councillors for all their work outwith the Council)

TREES

The planting of 5 new trees had been completed by the Parish Council as promised. The chairman expressed his thanks to the residents for their contribution to the debate, to the members of the working party for their efforts in planting the trees, and to the residents who had generously donated money – thereby allowing the Parish Council to avoid any of the cost of supply and planting of the trees falling on the council tax payers.

PLAYING FIELD

The Parish Council and the Cricket Club had reached agreement whereby the boundary line was moved back in exchange for the commitment that the Cricket Club would mow the whole field throughout the growing season.

New wheelie bins and new locks had been installed at the Field.

Unfortunately, one of the goal posts and the basket-ball net had become unsafe and were therefore removed. The remaining goal post would continue to be monitored for safety.

Many thanks to Eleanor Ramsbotham for her work and commitment in looking after the Playing Field.

Mrs Ramsbotham made a plea for the lock on the gate never to be left in the open position as anyone could read off the code. Even when leaving the gate open, the lock should be snapped shut and the numbers rotated.

NEWSLETTER

The Chairman thanked Ian Bromwich for his work in producing the regular editions of the village newsletter.

FINANCE

Mr David Pearce was appointed as Internal Auditor to the council in April 2004

Un-audited figures for 2004-2005

Expenditure was **£19,900** against a budget of £22,000 (which included a contingency of £2,500)

Bank balances carried forward to 2005-2006 - **£6,450**

Budget for 2005-2006

Planned Expenditure - £14,903

Precept set at £13,000.

6. REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Read by Mrs S Wilson on behalf of Dr Colin Cripps.

"We have had to accept, with regret, that the days of personal contact between the police and the village neighbourhood watch are over and contact is now via the computerised "Ringmaster" system. Even contact with the Community Beat Office is reduced as we have had 3 changes in the past eighteen months with no time to establish any personal rapport with any officer. However "Ringmaster" over the last year has been much more robust and this gives notification of crimes within the Police Western Area as well as general security warnings. Trading Standards issue warnings on "cowboy" operators and telephone scams. There are also requests for watch members to report sightings of specific vehicles and there have led to successful arrests on a number of occasions.

We are grateful for the permission to use the village notice boards. The police will only allow general advice and warnings to be displayed in this way but this is of value. Our capacity to receive Ringmaster has been greatly increased by new members with e-mail facilities largely in response to my appeal at the last parish meeting. The watch system works at its best with many members to spread warnings to the village. We would, as ever, welcome any new members with or without e-mail facilities.

We are lucky to live in an area where crime figures are relatively low but this is no consolation to those who may be affected and no reason not to do all we can to reduce the figure to zero."

7. OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHONIERS.

- a. *Playing Field.* The Parish Council was exhorted by one resident to take much firmer action with anyone misusing the Playing Field. Eleanor Ramsbotham responded that there was a limit to the action that could be taken. She asked for the help of the whole community with the problem. Eg. Vehicle numbers could be noted and reported. She also wondered if youths should be encouraged more to communicate their issues by attending the Parish Council meetings?
- b. *Police.* Following on from the discussion re the Playing Field, there was a general expression of deep dissatisfaction with the service given to the village by the Police.
- c. *Cemetery.* Ian Bromwich assured a resident that the intention was NOT to fill the Saxon Ditch with spoil from the cemetery
- d. *Village Hall.* In reply to a question, Ian Bromwich said that the committee

had re-submitted the Stage 1 application for £30K to Northants County Council. A decision would be made in June or July.
An application for a further £30K to Biffa was in preparation.
If these 2 applications were successful, the balance required for the work was available from the £11K of current account funds of the Village Hall.

There being no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.32pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE