

**MINUTES OF THE PRESTON CAPES ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at 7.45 pm in the Village Hall**

Presenters:	Dixie Hughes	Parish Chairman
	Cllr Robin Brown	Northamptonshire County Council
	Cllr Rupert Frost	Daventry District Council
	Cllr Bill Dearn	Preston Capes Educational Charity
	Mike Delacoe	Preston Capes Village Hall
	Claire Hoare	Preston Capes Neighbourhood Watch
	Penny Eves	Preston Capes Women's Institute
	Sgt Sam Dobbs	Neighbourhood Sergeant, S Northants
Gerard Hoare	Warden, Church of St Peter & St Paul	

Gary Denby	Parish Clerk
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Public:	Cllr Sophia Maddison	Cllr David Cox	Elizabeth Dearn
	Roma Hughes	Sylvia Delacoe	Pauline Clarke
	Berlinda Heap	Mike Eves	Lorraine Bannister
	Total: 22	Pauline Clarke	Jill & Jason Whitwell

Welcome and any announcements from the Chairman Dixie Hughes

1. Apologies received

Cllr Jo Gilford	Sue Wilkinson	Mervyn Maddison
Mr & Mrs Brassie	Anabelle Lewis-Bowen	

2. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2018

Previously distributed and considered. No matters were discussed.

3. Reports received from village organisations

- 3.1 Cllr Dixie Hughes - Parish Council Chairman (Appendix A)
- 3.2 Cllr Robin Brown - Northamptonshire County Council (Appendix B)
- 3.3 Cllr Rupert Frost - Daventry District Council (Appendix C)
- 3.4 Cllr Bill Dearn - Preston Capes Educational Charity (Appendix D)
- 3.5 Mike Delacoe - Preston Capes Village Hall Trustee Report (Appendix E)
- 3.6 Claire Hoare - Preston Capes Neighbourhood Watch (Appendix F)
- 3.7 Penny Eves - Preston Capes Women's Institute (Appendix G)
- 3.8 Gerard Hoare - Church Warden, St Peter & St Paul (Appendix H)
- 3.9 Sgt Sam Dobbs - Neighbourhood Policing in South Northants (Appendix I)

4. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the bar at 9:10pm.

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Chairman

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Date



APPENDIX A: Cllr Dixie Hughes, Chairman of Preston Capes Parish Council

Good evening and welcome to Preston Capes Annual Parish Meeting

Just a few weeks after last year's meeting, on 3rd July, I attended what was billed as a consultation event in Towcester, re the reorganisation of local government in Northamptonshire. This event, attended by representatives from 60 Parish & Town councils, was regarding the Government's plan to abolish the County Council and District & Borough Councils, replacing them with two Unitary Authorities (UAs).

I won't go in to all the pros & cons of UAs here, but am happy to discuss it later...

Relevant to us; one of those proposed UAs was to consist of the area currently covered by Daventry District, South Northants and Northampton Borough. I was among the many that suggested a better arrangement would be Daventry & South Northants as one UA, and Northampton Borough as one on its own.

There was a long discussion and at the end of the event a vote was taken:-

1. How many agree with the government proposal; combining the Borough with Daventry and South Northants? Result 1 in favour, **42 against**, 17 abstentions.
2. How many agree with the alternative proposal; the Borough as one UA, and Daventry & South Northants as another? Result **42 in favour**, 1 against, 17 abstentions.

To be fair the one person with the contrary opinion did declare he was from Duston Council, a part of the Borough.

On 14th July, I attended a "Question Time" event, in Daventry, also regarding the proposed UAs, and attended by 61 Parish, Town and District councillors. The panel consisted of Colin Copus, Politics Professor at De Montfort University, Danny Moody, from NCalc and Councillor Ken Ritchie from DDC. We were given a lot more information re the effects of UAs, and the Q&A followed much the same lines as at Towcester.

At the end of that there was also a vote. Using an electronic voting system, we were asked to choose one from three options;

- A) Daventry in a UA with South Northants and Northampton Borough; the government proposal – 6 votes
- B) Daventry in a UA with South Northants – **37 votes**
- C) Daventry as a UA on its own – 28 votes

For those who are unaware, the aptly named *Secretary of State, James Brokenshire* has just announced that we will be entering into a Unitary Authority with South Northants and Northampton Borough; the original government proposal. Mr Brokenshire maintains that "*the proposal has a good deal of local support and the area of each new unitary represents a credible local geography,*" but admitted that "*Responses from businesses, members of the public, parish councils and community organisations were more mixed.*" I suspect that this is a euphemism.

There will be elections to the Shadow Authority in May 2020. Shadow Executives for the UA will be selected from those elected and will determine the structure, budget and service delivery models for the new council. Vesting Day will be, again quite aptly; 1st April 2021.

So, moving on... During 2018, the Parish Council organised two flag-raising events, and are extremely grateful to the Church for allowing us the use of their flagpole. We also thank Sheila Bull & the bell-ringers and the Church's "flag-yeoman," Richard Hale; all vital to these simple yet worthy events. The Armed Forces Day flag raising was on Sunday, 1st July and the

Red Ensign raising, to mark Merchant Navy Day was on Sunday, 2nd September. The latter was attended by the Lord Lieutenant.

We are also grateful to all those who made the effort to attend; showing support and acknowledgement of the debt we owe to our Armed Forces and the Merchant Navy; for their past sacrifices and ongoing service... For your diaries; This year those events will be taking place on **Sunday 7th July and Sunday 1st September 2019.**

That these events are on the first Sunday of the month, coinciding with the Village Hall Bar opening, is not serendipity; but organisation...

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting the Parish Council has sponsored two more Litter Picks, ably organised by our Vice-Chairman, Bill Dearn. These were on Sunday, 21st October and Sunday, 14th April, this year. I apologise, unreservedly for the fact that the latter clashed with the Palm Sunday Benefice Service at our church. Our only defence is that we were unable to get the necessary kit from DDC on any earlier Sunday; our fault for, obviously not planning ahead far enough.

So, another two dates for your diaries; The next two litter-picks are set for **Sunday 20th October 2019 and Sunday 15th March 2020.** I would point out we choose Sundays for this activity for two primary reasons;

- 1) It is the day on which the most volunteers, especially of working age, are available
- 2) It is safer.

Walking our country roads, staring at the ground is a risky business; but the risk is dissipated with the quieter traffic conditions of a Sunday morning... I would ask you all, if you can; to come along and help us pick up the rubbish others have discarded or dumped on our road-sides. We meet at the Village Hall, for bacon-rolls at 9.30; pick litter for two hours and return to the Hall, where the Parish Council stands every volunteer a drink.

I know that many of you go litter picking of your own volition at other times, and it will interest you to know that the Parish Council has now taken possession of three sets of the recommended kit; high-viz jackets, gloves, grabbers etc; donated by DDC. These are available for anyone to sign-out and use. Speak to our Litter-Tsar, Bill Dearn for details...

On Sunday 11th November, the Parish Council participated in an extremely successful Armistice Day Centenary event organised by the Village Hall; of which we will hear more later...

At our Parish Council meeting of 11th December, our clerk Sharon Foster handed in her notice; wishing to change her life direction and seek pastures new... A slight "cat-among-the-pigeons" period followed; and we advertised the vacancy... The serving Clerk to Moreton Pinkney Parish Council sent us an application with a comprehensive CV. On 24th January Bill Dearn and I interviewed him, and, with our recommendation; at an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council, on 6th February; he was appointed. For those of you who don't know him; this is Gary Denby, our now-not-so-new Parish Clerk. Where some 3 years ago, Sharon knocked us into shape; Gary is now working hard knocking us into another shape...

I will finish with telling you that since the last APM, Parish Councillors and I have attended 28 meetings and events; 10 ordinary meetings; 4 extraordinary and 4 working parties; 2 UA consultations; 2 flag-raising & 2 litter-picks; 2 Town & Parish Council meetings at DDC and four with the Northants Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner at Wooton Hall...

APPENDIX B: Cllr Robin Brown, Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)

Woodord & Weedon Division – ANNUAL REPORT April 2018 to March 2019

My report to you and your community is somewhat different to the previous years. I no longer act as a member of the executive of the elected administration. I am now a Back Bench councillor attending Full Council meetings (normally 6 per year) plus Overview & Scrutiny meetings, although not allowed to sit on the committees (by diktat of the Commissioners). I still see it as a key role to attend as an observer as often as practical.

The year has seen the appointment of Commissioners (following the Inspectors Report March 2018) initially to oversee Governance and Finance; but in November also the appointment of a commissioner for Children's Services. Also in March there was the appointment of a new Leader and Cabinet, (Leader Cllr Matt Golby previously a Cabinet member for Children's Services). Further there were appointments of a new Chief Executive and other senior directors, most of whom have been in place since September 2018.

The Auditors stopped the use of **Capital Assets & Section 106 monies** earmarked to balance the previous year's budget and in consequence a deficit of £35+ million was carried forward to this year. The administration then made changes to the budget under the new Chief Executive and one of the outcomes of this was that the contentious library closures were put on hold. It is interesting to note that the Lead Commissioner is on record as saying the County Council had enough funds to deliver its statutory services and did not need a "bailout from Government". However in November, Central Government allowed the administration to use up to £70 million from Capital assets to balance last year's budget and create a £20 million general reserve, thus ensuring such areas as Winter Gritting were reinstated where deemed necessary.

One final comment on the Budget for 2019/20 is the Council Tax increase of 4.99%, with the Secretary of State having allowed for an extra 2%. This was passed by the Council on the 21st February. The administration stating that the final budget would therefore balance and leave the NCC in a better financial situation.

The most significant change however is the move to Unitary Government as signalled in the Inspectors report and since has been followed through by the County's District and Borough Councils (Exception Corby BC), with the Secretary of State allowing the elections for the D&B's to be delayed until 2020.

The legal process published by the County Council and passed at an emergency meeting on the 28th February 2019, does however question (and as yet unanswered) steep rise in costs of the changeover from £15 million to £44 million: In my view, this is unlikely to stop the move to reorganising local government in the County. Elections for the two new unitary councils are planned to take place in May 2020. I have no input to the discussions and only know what is in the public domain.

During the last seven months I have spent more time with the Parishes of Everdon and Woodford Halse as both have a NCC service that has been under threat of closure. In Everdon the Outdoor Learning Centre (a non-statutory service) is under offer to be sold as a going concern to the Parish Council (Local consultation and agreed Parish Council Finance still to be completed). I look forward to this being successful and the community becoming very involved in this nationally recognised outdoor learning centre.

Woodford Halse has a small library which is now being taken over by the Parish Council. The community benefit is immense and I congratulate all involved in being determined to save that facility.

I have expressed my concern to the Cabinet Member for Highways (Cllr Ian Morris, a colleague from the previous cabinet) regarding the **HS2 disruption likely on the A361** and it is pleasing to note that Byfield Parish Council are now represented on the committee responsible to deal with the HS2 issues locally.

I will continue to represent you through until the next elections and hope to keep you up to date with any further developments and to facilitate contacts. My personal view is that cities should be separated from rural areas, when developing Unitary Authorities.

Cllr Robin Brown

Contact details -: rwbrown@northamptonshire.gov.uk telephone 01327 842130

APPENDIX C: Cllr Rupert Frost, Daventry District Council (NCC)

Since 3rd May last year I have been privileged to serve as your district councillor alongside Jo Gilford and Liz Griffin. I hope the following summary of events at DDC in the past year is useful.

From the outset we knew that moving to a unitary authority in May 2020 was almost certain and this led to one of the first decisions being to **abandon the Daventry Canal Arm**. Two years was nowhere near enough time to see it through to completion, so concentrating on projects and initiatives that we knew could be finished in time was a logical decision.

An example of this is the £12.4m **cinema and restaurants Mulberry Place scheme** which was approved in February. It will occupy the site previously used by the Daventry library which has moved to the Abbey Advice and Resource Centre in St John's Square. The new library benefits from new fittings, furnishings and technology, with accessibility at the heart of its design. There is also a new, secure outside play area for young library visitors and it is hoped that residents will benefit from library services being placed alongside Citizen's Advice Bureau, Olympus Care Services, Daventry Area Community Transport and Time2Talk.

Daventry Country Park is set to undergo major improvements this year with £850,000 approved to improve the circular paths, building new walkways and jetties, and improving the café area and toilets. The project will be completed in four stages by spring next year, i.e. before we move to a shadow unitary authority.

Also in February this year the Council approved a £1.48 million budget to construct new premises for **Reach for Health / Daventry Health Rehabilitation Trust** on part of the Daventry & District Sports Club site at Western Avenue. The charity specialises in physiotherapeutic exercise for people who have experienced a traumatic health event, such as heart attacks or strokes, or who are suffering from long-term or life-long illness and work is set to start on building the new premises this summer.

It had been hoped that work would start this year on a new retail and leisure development at the Waterloo, Gasworks and Chaucer Way area of Daventry to include food stores and shops, family and fast food restaurants and a hotel, plus around 380 parking spaces. However in

February it was announced that the partnership between Henry Boot Developments and DDC had come to an amicable end putting the project on indefinite hold.

The Catesby bridge has been closed for nearly a year now and Liz, Jo and I are aware of the increasing frustration that this is causing people locally. Despite DDC agreeing a budget of circa £200K to ensure its speedy repair (by infilling), discussions between TotalSIM, DDC and NCC and their lawyers have hitherto brought little visible results. However on 15th May a meeting was held between officers and elected members from both county and district councils and a solution has been reached that should see the road reopened this September.

On 14th May Communities Secretary James Brokenshire announced that Northampton's local elections in 2020 will be to "shadow authorities" during a transition period lasting until 1st April 2021 – Vesting Day. He envisages elections being held on the basis of 3 member wards, resulting in West Northamptonshire Council (as it will almost certainly be called) having 93 members. The full statement can be found at the following link:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2019-05-14/HLWS1518/>

In answer the questions from attendees, Cllr Frost reported that the September re-opening of the Catesby bridge is not set in stone, but Cllr Jo Gilford is hopeful to receive an email confirming it. Cllr Robin Brown was also able to add a little to the regulatory background.

APPENDIX D: Cllr Bill Dearn, Preston Capes Educational Charity (309846)

The Charity was formed in 1981 and brings together the former Church School proceeds of sale and the Apprenticing Charities. Following the sale of the school, all the funds were amalgamated into one entity for the benefit of the Parish. As indicated in the name, the Charity is registered with the Charity Commission.

The essential criteria of the Charity are that applications should be for and from young persons under the age of 25 years, who are resident in the Parish and require assistance with grant aid for educational, extra-curricular activities, sports equipment, training etc (the following gives more detail of the eligibility criteria for grants).

The Trustees of the Charity are the Rector and two Churchwardens (Gerard Hoare and V Brassey). The co-optative Trustees are Graham Stanton and Bill Dearn (who is also the Treasurer). The families of the Trustees are debarred and have not and cannot benefit by way of awards from the Charity.

At April 5th 2019, the Charity's funds had a **total value of £143,849** (2018 £139,634). Current gross income is forecast at approximately **£4,300 per annum**, being the amount the Trustees can apply towards the minimal running costs, charges and grant awards.

The investment portfolio of the Charity (valuation of 05/04/2019 at £139,394; 05/04/2018 £136,342) is managed by JM Finn & Co, who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. The net income of the Charity, after running costs, is spent on annual awards. The detail of these awards is strictly confidential but in the financial year ending 5th April 2019, £3,170 (2018 £4,800) were paid by way of 11 awards (2018 10 awards).

Letters seeking applications from families resident in the Parish with eligible young people for the 2019/20 academic year will be delivered shortly.

Bill Dearn, Co-optative Trustee / Treasurer. 22 May 2019.

The areas in which the Charity may be able to help eligible young persons [less than 25 years of age], under the Charity Commission Scheme, are as follows:-

- a) In awarding to such persons scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, maintenance allowances or grants tenable at any school, university or other educational establishment approved for the purpose by the Trustees.
- b) In providing for such persons financial assistance, outfits, clothing, tools, instruments or books to assist them to pursue their education [including study of music and other arts]., to undertake travel in furtherance thereof, and to prepare for and enter a profession, trade, occupation or service on leaving school, university or other educational establishment.
- c) In providing or assisting in the provision of facilities not normally provided by the local education authority for recreation and social and physical training [i.e. sports equipment] for such persons who are receiving primary, secondary or further education.

Points raised from attendees included that the Financial Services Authority was abolished as a regulatory authority in 2013; that the Trustees might consider under whose guidance they are operating? en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_Services_Authority Another point was that under the Equality Act 2010, it may be discriminatory to exclude those over the age of 25 years? www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance The (new) Parish Clerk used himself as an example of an adult who benefited greatly from grants received to enable his re-admission to university training in healthcare when aged 40 years – there are no longer any careers for life!

APPENDIX E: Mike Delacoe, Preston Capes Village Hall (Charity 282040)

Trustee Report for the Village Hall AGM on 15/04/2019

The Charity Trustees and Officers during the year to the 31st March 2019 were:-

Peter Bull (Trustee)
Dixie Hughes (Trustee & Parish Council Rep)
Mike Delacoe (Trustee)
Andrew Bracher (Treasurer elected at 2018 AGM)
Sylvia Delacoe (Licensee)
Sophia Maddison
Gerard Hoare (Parochial Church Council Rep)
David Grahamslaw
Various WI Reps.
Rachel Bracher

2018 Fundraising activities:-

Monthly Friday / Sunday bars & Christmas Bars
Quiz nights(2)
Fashion Show (thanks to Sophia Maddison)
Inter-village Croquet
Cook Out
A walking Treasure Hunt
6 Nations Rugby
Launch of the Local Lotto (a small regular income) & Hall Hire
Regular use for the Parish Council meetings
Regular use by the WI
Occasional use by the Parochial Church Council.

In January 2019 the committee agreed to a one year trial of free use of the hall for village residents for non profit making activities, in order to increase hall utilisation.

Village Hall improvements:

At present the overall fundraising and hall hire easily cover that cost. Mike Eves is now the Caretaker. We should not lose sight of the need to maintain a healthy bank balance in case of unforeseen remedial works being required. Thanks.

New front entrance doors have been fitted.
Proposed kitchen redecoration, and updating of some kitchen appliances.
General paint touch-up in the main hall.

[Permission is now granted to remove the tree undermining the perimeter wall]

All of these events and activities take a considerable amount of planning and work by Committee members and their families, for which a thank you is due.

Last but by no means least, a special thank you to Sophia Maddison who after six years on the committee has decided to step down. Always willing to pitch in to help and provide event suggestions, she has earned the right to enjoy a bit more family time and of course outings on their narrow boating. A G&T in hand and Mervyn piloting the boat awaits!

Mike Delacoe (Trustee) 14/04/2019

APPENDIX F: Claire Hoare, Preston Capes Neighbourhood Watch

Little is sent through that has local relevance. There were two break-ins to parked vans. Dixie posts notices onto the village web site.

APPENDIX G: Penny Eves, Preston Capes Women's Institute

We have fourteen members, being one of the oldest established in Northamptonshire. We meet regularly on the 4th Tuesday of each month in the Village Hall at 7:45. With concerns expressed over the business part of the meeting, most is now circulated through an electronic newsletter. Non-members are welcome to attend up to three meetings at £4 a time.

Activities include Pub Lunches and the Christmas Shoe Boxes, with Coffee Mornings and 'Winter Warmer' fundraisers.

APPENDIX H: Gerard Hoare, Chuch Warden, Chuch of St Peter & St Paul

Annual PCC report

The Village will know that our recent Rector, the Rev Sue Faulkner, left the parish and Group in January for a big parish in Northampton. Hence we are in vacancy for the time being and the churchwardens are your first point of contact if you need access to a priest or a special service etc. Please just ask!

Our challenge is to meet the rising costs that the Diocese expect to share with us particularly the cost of our priest who looks after Badby, Newnham, Fawsley and Charwelton as well, with the Vicarage situated in Badby. The cost of a priest is very substantial when stipend, NHI, housing, pension, and long training, are taken into account. This parish will have to pay close to £12,000 next year. Believe me it takes a lot of raising!

As always we have a wish list of improvements we want to make to our church which a fortune is required to fund. We are realistic and go forward carefully as we have a Grade II * building to maintain. We are so grateful to the six-monthly working parties which carry out vital maintenance like clearing gutters and hoppers. We were given £5000 to fund the Sound System recently installed which is a great benefit, having not only a loop but mics and playback as well.

The clock, despite our winding team's on going efforts, has given us more trouble this last year and is costing a great deal. Engineers are expensive and some work is unreliable. We paid £1,300 out last year, refused to pay another £600 this year and we still have no working strike on the hour. More cost to come?

The PCC is very grateful indeed for the wide support the village give to the church, and we cannot thank sufficiently all the people here who give generously, and work, support, and attend our various functions. But please remember is 'OUR' church, it is there for all of you to use especially for happy or sad family occasions and Sunday worship.

In return for all the church gets from you we give as well, supporting charities, sponsoring the Easter egg rolling, running the Educational Charity, providing The Link free of charge, supporting Flag Days etc. If there is anything else we might do please ask.

APPENDIX I: Sgt Sam Dobbs, Neighbourhood Policing, South Northants

Sgt Dobbs was accompanied by PC Susan King, reporting on a year a great change within the county and local police force. Gone is the *Threat – Harm Risk* model of local policing developed over recent years... We have a return to the basics of *Fighting Crime, Protecting People*. This includes the re-introduction of traditional values and the 'black stadium helmet'; consistency and emotional connection with the community; also a Burglary Team which is seeking to visit all victims (not just booking over the phone).

This may have been triggered by a new Deputy Chief Constable Simon Nickless, who is unafraid to ask pertinent questions; also having a Police & Crime Commissioner in Stephen Mold who is more protective of police funding, which should enable recruitment of a further 200 PCs (to 1,300+). This will certainly be needed, since many are rapidly approaching retirement. An anticipated poor HM Inspection of efficiency is likely to recognise that these changes are required.

Reviewing the local policing statistics available to him, Sam reported that our neighbourhood crime is following national trends in rising by 7.5% (with better and more consistent reporting for all areas of the country). There is a focus on knife, gang and county lines (drugs peddling) criminality. Theft from vehicles has risen by 15%, with unlocked vehicles and items on view (easily remedied!). Whilst there have been increases in violent crime and public disorder, reported rural crime fell by 3%. Work is ongoing with Joint Action Groups (for example, with regards to local speeding awareness).