

FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Parish Meeting
Village Hall
20:00 9th April 2014

A warm welcome to all of you for attending this Annual Parish Meeting at the Village Hall!

Firstly I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for their personal support and commitment over the past year. Thanks to our Clerk, Sue Shepard who has kept us on course throughout our deliberations. I would also like to welcome our new Councillor Sally Thomas who was co-opted last October when Dr Nigel Heywood left the Village

Last year we thought that would be the last attendance by our County Councillor Ron Sawbridge but despite losing in May to UKIP he successfully defended the bi-election following the death of Ken Melling who sadly we never had the opportunity to meet. I personally am delighted that Ron is still on board to support our various projects. Thanks also to our District Councillor Rebecca Breeze for her support.

Traffic Issues

Traffic continues to be a major focus of the Parish Council and in October 2013 our MP Andrea Leadsom and Councillor Sawbridge supported us when we had a visitation by David Farquhar (Head of NCC Highways Department) who promised to carry out several exploratory investigations to improve the A422 through our Village and hopefully reduce the amount of heavy goods vehicles. Whilst David agreed we warranted a bypass it is quite clear that this is many years away with current budget constraints. The objective set was to achieve various improvements to the roads around the village by the time of the next F1 Grand prix at Silverstone in July 2014. The major goal is signage relocation to avoid a 60MPH speed limit by the Farthinghoe Play Area and the road to Hinton Aerodrome.

Farthinghoe Solar Park

The Parish Council were advised by Green Energy in December 2013 that they intended to apply for planning permission for a 66Acre Solar Farm to the North East of the Village. It was agreed that in February there would be an opportunity for residents to discuss with the Land Owner and Green Energy their various concerns. As many of you will know a very active 'No Campaign' evolved and many people have signed a petition unaware of all the facts. The Parish Council hoped to have a democratic vote on this issue but unfortunately a list of 150 signatories opposing the site has we understand been submitted to SNC by the Action Group and a Group of 40 attended the Public Time of the Parish Council Meeting in March. Since representatives from across the Village attended this meeting the Parish Council felt obliged that Public Opinion was against the Solar Park.

Unfortunately the Parish Council negotiations with Green Energy where we obtained in writing a £1000 per Megawatt Community Donation for 25years may now have been in vain. £250,000 would have gone a long way towards the School, Church, Play Area and Village Hall maintenance aspects until 2040. We would have also received £50,000 up front to allow for early projects to take place. The £1000 per Megawatt would have been index linked.

As I constantly tell Parishioners I will only Act the way the Village asks me to and clearly the majority of you are not in favour of renewable energy in Farthinghoe?

Village Web-site

The Village web site continues to display a soft copy of the Farthinghoe Chronicle and various reports as they become available. Links are provided to the School, Limes Farm and Fox Inn. The web address is www.farthinghoeparishcouncil.org . This report is available for downloading now on the website!

Farthinghoe Chronicle

Thanks to Shirley Downing for editing the Chronicle over the past year and for keeping us aware of activities taking place in the community and thanks to the Fox Inn and Limes Farm we have been able to keep the cost to Parishioners at zero. The new format is fresh and informative!

Grass Cutting

Jon Hampson has done an excellent job over the last year cutting the grass at the Play Areas and nominated areas we attempted to Register in the name of the Village. During the visit by NCC last October the Parish Council were encouraged to continue to beautify the Village when and where we feel appropriate and funds permitting we will continue to do this.

Children's Play Area

The Parish Council still intends subject to available funds to update the equipment at the Farthinghoe Play Area and this would have been our first priority had the Solar Farm gone ahead. FPC and NCC together with Councillor Dashwood hope a reasonable project can be implemented over the next 12 months.

Although Becky and Louise asked through the Farthinghoe Chronicle for your support and ideas on this issue the Parish Council is yet to receive a Public Time Presentation on this issue.

The Local Plan

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Councillor Thomas and other Councillors who contributed to the South Northamptonshire Settlements and Development Management Local Plan. Information regarding this plan can be found at www.southnorthants.gov.uk

Finally I would like to thank my Vice Chairman, Councillor Grant for chairing meetings when I am unable to participate due to overseas projects.

Professor David P Mellor OBE
Chairman