



# Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 19:30 via Zoom

**Present:** Cllr G. Barradell (Chair), Cllr P. Balicki, Cllr H. Chambers, Cllr A. Goodridge, Cllr E. McCarthy, Cllr I. Stott

**In attendance:** The Clerk (N. Webster), Phil Wood (Town Trust), Sue Clark (Hilton WI), Aileen Murch (Hilton Community Garden Group), Pete Chambers (Hilton Community Facebook page) and 8 parishioners.

Meeting commenced 19:38

## Welcome & Introduction

Cllr G. Barradell introduced himself and welcomed attendees to the Annual Parish Meeting

## Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr K. Dunk

## To Approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019

It was RESOLVED that these minutes were approved as a true record.

## Annual Review of the Parish Council Business – Chairman’s Report for 2019/20 and 2020/21

Report from the chair

This report covers two council years. We would normally have had an annual meeting around May 2020, but recent circumstances prevented that occurring, so this report covers the salient points from May 2019 to date. Covid has been the major event during that time and as you might expect it does feature in this report, but I will try not to dwell on the subject .

Since we last met in May 2019, two councillors resigned from the council and we have welcomed two co-opted members, so I am pleased to report that the council continues to operate at full strength. Details of the current serving councillors can be found on the Village Notice Boards and on our website.

This leads nicely to our new website. Early in 2020 we were made aware that our existing website would be unlikely to comply with the 2018 Accessibility Regulations. Following much discussion and technical input, appropriate quotations were sought, and the new

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website was completed in October 2020. The site is now accessible to a greater number of people and I hope you find it helpful. Website accessibility is usability with a screen reader for people with sight impairments, ability to change colours, contrast and text size, navigable by keyboard or voice, text descriptions on all images. The overarching aim is that the website is accessible to all, regardless of disability.

On the same subject of Communication, Council agreed to start a Facebook page in June 2019 which has been quite successful in alerting parishioners to news. The clerk also holds an email database for parishioners who would like to be contacted with PC related news. If you would like to be added to that list, please do advise Nicola. Examples of emails that have been sent to the distribution list: Annual parish meeting agenda, request for volunteers, surveys.

Traffic through the village is probably the major concern for many parishioners and the subject continues to occupy the council. A couple of recent initiatives were unsuccessful but our current LHI (Local Highways Initiative) bid was presented in February 2021 and is being considered by CCC. The application seeks to obtain a 24hr ban for goods vehicles travelling through the village and we would like to thank parishioners for the petition responses in support of this bid. We hope to hear news of the bid in June.

Although we have been unsuccessful to date it is good to keep the subject to the fore and this was proved when the PC was recently contacted by local radio to speak on that subject. I hope that many people heard Peter putting out points across to a wider audience. The reason for the contact was that some communities are claiming to be worse off following the opening of the new A14, southern bypass, and Hilton is one of those communities. However, we are assured by HE (Highways England) that a traffic survey will be undertaken for traffic flow through the village once the full project is complete, which unfortunately includes the current works around the Huntingdon bridge. It was also brought to council's attention that Satellite Navigation systems can direct traffic from the towns and villages north of us through the village to access the A1(S) and to access the A14 (W). So far communications with HE has not accepted responsibility for this, but we are concerned that an improved A428 could make matters worse. We remain in contact with HE and will put our concerns to the inspector presiding over that upgrade review.

At the end of last year, we also learnt that the quarry in Hemingford Grey will be reopening, with many lorry movements expected per day. This is a continuation of a licence that already exists, so the Council was not required to be consulted. However, we have contacted the operator and have been advised that the majority of lorries are expected to travel north, to a processing plant in Peterborough. The operator has agreed that any lorry movements through Hilton will observe a voluntary 20mph limit.

As expected, it is not possible to write this report without reference to the effects of Covid. Our last public meeting was a Planning meeting in late March held in the Methodist Church where we sat 2 metres apart. A week later all such meetings were prohibited.

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We would normally have met early in April, but that meeting was postponed, and we had our first virtual meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Virtual PC meetings have become the norm and I think the council has adapted well to the change. Apart from the delay to the April meeting, council has continued to meet (including Planning meetings) with the same regularity that would normally be expected. Agendas continue to be posted in advance and connection details for the (Zoom) meetings are advised on the agenda. Parishioners are welcome to join us and there is an open session at the beginning of each meeting for parishioner comment on agenda items.

From May 7<sup>th</sup> the current regulations that permit virtual meetings expire and councils will be required to meet in public, in a covid secure environment. Council is concerned by this early move to public meetings and has agreed measures to limit such meetings in the near future. Two forthcoming meetings have been brought forward to increase the time period before council is required to meet. Consequently, the May meeting will be on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May and it is unclear when the council will next meet after that date.

At the beginning of April, in conjunction with other village organisations, a “volunteer help” scheme was launched with a call for volunteers and also a call for those that would need help during the “lockdown”. We were in uncharted waters with the scheme but despite that, a most impressive number of volunteers responded (76), far exceeding those in need. Co-ordinated by Nicola, it is known that 20 parishioners were helped by the scheme but the thought that help was available would have been a comfort to many.

In August 2019 work on the new playground was started with a grand opening in December. The grand opening was short lived, and it was duly closed in April 2020. However, on the plus side, the new grass was probably the only benefactor of Covid 19. Since its re-opening in July 2020, the park has been well used and been a great asset for home-schooled children and their “teachers” alike!

In July 2019 two new benches and two picnic tables were installed close to the maze. Similar to the playpark these have seen good use since their installation and the new maintenance person has assured me that he will keep an eye on them.

Events postponed due to Covid:

- Fireworks ...followed by bonfire
- Litter pickup planned for April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- Copse of 10 new trees planned for the end of Wraggs Row
- Volunteer work

The council is about to start its 4<sup>th</sup> year of a four-year tenure, so elections are expected in May 2022. I would suggest that for anyone interested in becoming a councillor (and why not ?), virtual meetings are a good way to discover how the council works from the comfort of your home, before deciding to “take the plunge”! The Council meets 10 times during the

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year, normally on the first Monday of each month with additional meetings as required. Regrettably, it is a difficult job to undertake without a degree of IT skill.

In addition to the monthly meetings (above) other public meetings may be held and will be similarly advertised by agendas. Planning meetings occur on an “ad-hoc” basis when Planning Applications are received from the District Council. The parish council is a consultee in the planning process, along with neighbouring properties and meets to discuss each application. A recommendation is then submitted to HDC, the approving authority. 13 such meetings were held in the previous two years, with another one tomorrow. In addition to Planning meetings, Extra Ordinary meetings can be called to address time sensitive matters. Both types of meeting are run in a similar manner to the normal monthly meetings.

Minutes of meetings are available in draft form on the website soon after a meeting and then approved at the next Council meeting. There is also a summary published in Spectrum.

Thanks ( in no order )

- Covid volunteers
- Postman Matt
- Nicola and the rest of the PC team
- Litter pickers
- Our tree warden, Ian Stott
- To helpers following the Christmas 2020 rainfall
- For the volunteers associated with the Christmas lights on the Pavilion
- Traffic monitoring volunteers
- John for his continued grass maintenance & Duncan for helping to clear the ditches
- Volunteers for their landscaping skills in The Grove to complete the new playground project (turfing and gravelling)
- Dog walkers for picking up litter as they walk.
- Thank you to Ann, Lisa and Peter for their public presentations on our traffic issues
- And to everyone else doing good works around the village, thank you.

CLlr A. Goodridge added her thanks to the volunteers who monitor the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) located at the pub and also to Simon Perry for continuing to supply the power. She also thanked Andy Bush and Ken Attwood for both identifying that the heater needed replacing and then fitting the new heater.

### [Parish Council Financial Report for 2019/20 and 2020/21](#)

Nicola Webster presented the accounts from both 2019/20 and 2020/21 in her role as Responsible Financial Officer.

#### Financial Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 (2019/20)

- Largest item of expenditure was the new playground, though the net cost to the Parish Council was only £3,095.

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- Many kind donations were received towards the playground and the Parish Council thank all of the donors.
- The income from the Fireworks & Bonfire Night event was lower than in previous years due to wet weather but, together with the allocation from the Hutton Fund, the event was still profitable.
- £5,185 was spent on tree work which included the tree work carried out late in the 2018/19 financial year due to wet weather plus invoices from two of the three contractors from the 2019/20 tree work (the third invoice was received after year end).
- £1,087 was spent on office supplies, this included the purchase of a new laptop for the Clerk and a copy of the new edition of Local Council Administration (known as the Clerk's bible), together with the ink and paper for several leaflet drops.
- There was an increased spend on utilities of £1,600. This related to the devolved responsibility for payment of street lighting energy from Cambridgeshire County Council to Hilton Parish Council.
- The Council spent £1,917 installing two new curved benches around the maze and two new picnic benches on the Green.
- Unfortunately, the Council had to spend £1,245 removing a traveller encampment from the cricket pitch.
- The level of general reserves was slightly low at £13,142.
- The Annual Governance and Accountability Review came back from the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, with no "Except for" matters raised.

#### Financial Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (2020/21)

- This financial year has not quite ended so there may be a change to these figures, though it is not expected. Obviously, these accounts have not been audited.
- There was no fireworks event due to Covid-19.
- Unity Trust bank have reduced the interest rate on the deposit account to 0% due to the reduction of the Bank of England base rate.
- £3,314 was received from Cambridgeshire County Council due to a credit on the account for street lighting energy payments. It appears that the Hilton Parish Street Lights were not on the inventory when the electricity bills were paid by the County Council and therefore, they have made the decision to refund the amounts paid by Hilton Parish Council.
- The salary cost for the Clerk has increased to £8,731. Hilton Parish Council reviewed the Clerk's salary in accordance with the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) guidelines and found that the salary needed to be amended. The Clerk has been working several hours overtime each month and so the Council has resolved to increase the Clerk's hours from 10 to 12 per week.
- The long-term agreement with the insurance company came to an end and the Council switched insurance providers which has reduced the insurance costs from £1280 to £700.

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- The amount for subscriptions seems high at £888 but this is because the CAPALC invoice was paid earlier this year, so this includes two years subscription.
- The training costs have been high this year at £1481 due to the Clerk undertaking the CiLCA training. The Certificate in Local Council Administration is the industry specific foundation qualification for Clerks. A qualified Clerk is a requirement for both the Local Council Award Scheme and the General Power of Competence, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.
- The audit costs were slightly higher at £600 as the Council had exceeded the £100,000 threshold in the previous financial year which meant they were in the next cost bracket.
- The Council paid £240 to replace street lighting lantern PC4 in Westbrook as it was irreparable.
- The Council commissioned a new website to comply with the new accessibility regulations which require all Parish Council websites to be compliant with the WCAG 2.1 AA standards. The cost of £880 covered the initial set up of the website and the first year of maintenance, support and hosting costs.
- Unfortunately, the Council had to spend £240 removing travellers from the Wilderness.
- For the first time, the Parish Council spent £177 putting Christmas lights on the Pavilion which were installed by volunteers.
- The reserves have not yet been agreed by the Council but if all agreed expenditure is earmarked in a reserve, the general reserve figure will be £16,467 which is slightly higher than the agreed 50% of precept and corrects the overspend of the previous financial year.

#### 2021/22 Financial Year

- The Parish Council have resolved to keep the precept amount the same at £30,600.
- The tax base has reduced from 455 to 450 so this equates to a 1.1% increase in the amount paid by homeowners.
- The tax base is calculated by looking at the equivalent number of band D properties in the Parish, adding the number of houses due to be built and taking away those properties in receipt of council tax support or single person supplement. In the case of Hilton, the tax base has been reduced due to the increase of properties in receipt of council tax support.

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## Reports from Village Groups including Hilton Town Trust and Hilton WI

### Report from Town Trust – Phil Wood - Clerk

#### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2019 & 2020

#### REPORT FROM HILTON TOWN ESTATE CHARITIES

##### BACKGROUND

The village of Hilton benefits from land and assets endowed over the centuries. The most recent definition of the charities was confirmed by a Deed dated 1899, in which year the gross yearly income from land and cottages was £41.

We operate two Charities. The land and assets are held by the Estate Charity, the senior charity of the two.

The 1899 deed requires that half of the annual income of the Estate Charity goes to the Parish Church to be used for repairs to the building; the other half is paid to the second charity, the Town Charity to be spent for the general benefit of the village.

Both the Estate and Town Charities are administered by the Trustees and are chaired by the Revd David Busk.

The Parish Council appoints two trustees, presently Brian Ward and Rachel Lawton; and the Church appoints the other two trustees, currently Nick Sarkies and Rachel Wood. Phil Wood is the Clerk.

Trustees publish the purposes of the Charity in Spectrum each year, and the wider public is informed by the Charity Commission's Directories. An annual report is sent to the Charity Commission.

#### TOWN CHARITY REPORT FOR CALENDER YEARS 2019 & 2020

At the beginning of 2019, the Town Charity held £16,144 in hand.

In both 2019 & 2020 income amounting to £5,000 each was received from the Estate Charity, interest totalled £152 & the WW1 event supported by the Trust returned a surplus of £153.

Although the Trustees have no specific mandate, a mix of grants are made under the general terms of the Deed including capital grants, educational grants, grants to organisations directly serving the needs of Hilton.

Projects supported by the Town Charity in 2019 & 2020 included:

£

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Playground refurbishment	2500
Village Hall brickwork refurbishment	1000
Speed Indicator device & recorder	800
WI	500
Village Panto	250
Christmas hamper distribution	192
Support to a family	100

The Town Charity had £21,097 in hand at 31/12/20 with an expected income for 2021 of £5,000.

2019 was a fairly 'normal' year for grants with projects like the Playground & Village Hall refurbishment. When the pandemic happened in 2020 the Town Trust joined with other groups to offer support to the village. The Charity kept funds available to support villagers during this challenging period, but the uptake was only limited (which is hopefully a good thing!)

2021 will be more about aiding recovery, the Charity has allocated funds to support the Feast Week Committee with their feasibility plans to hold some form of Feast Week for the village. As always, the Trustees remain open to proposals from villagers for either individual needs or community projects. Contact can be made with the Clerk, any Trustee or via the contact number in Spectrum.

### Report from Hilton WI – Sue Clark – President

As President of Hilton Women's Institute, I really appreciate this opportunity to report back on what we have been doing through this past year ...a year when sadly our planned outings and regular monthly meetings in the Village Hall were cancelled ....but we did our best to carry on regardless!

Many of our members ...those who were active in the village WI way back in the 1980's and 90's for example...have now well passed their 70<sup>th</sup> birthdays and so lockdown hit very hard and very fast as we were all ordered to "stay home and stay safe!!!"

In addition, quite a few members live on their own and often their extended families live too far away to offer practical assistance. So, on that very first day of lock down, we started to send out a daily email and that continued every day for ten weeks....we let our members know which local shops were open, which would deliver, how to get prescriptions etc and above all tried to offer reassurance that no one was alone, we were in this together.

All of our 60 members are on email, albeit not frequently, so we decided to use lockdown as a way of getting to know more about each other.... and by early April three of our Committee....Pam, Pauline and Margaret.... were already editing and sending out a weekly Newsletter filled with contributions from our members... stories of events in their lives,

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poems, jokes, photos....and surprisingly we found that husbands and friends were contributing as well!!... in total we have had items from over 65 different people. The Newsletter was great to look forward to each week and just before Christmas we produced a softback A4 printed edition of our "Hilton in Lockdown" Newsletters which will be in our families for posterity...we sold 50 copies then, but the Newsletter continues, it is sent out fortnightly and we may yet produce another book.

Editing our Newsletter and keeping on top of numerous emails caused us to realise that our WI Laptop was past its "sell by" date. It was so slow that we wondered if it would actually wake up each time it was used. We applied to Hilton Town Trust for a grant and they very kindly gave us £500.00 towards a replacement laptop which was much appreciated.

In March last year no one knew the first thing about zoom of course and we had to learn...fast!!! It is funny to think back to our first committee meeting in April when it took half an hour for just eight people to join, now we are all there ready and waiting right at the start of meetings ready to come up with new ideas to keep our members involved.

We have continued to adapt to the changing restrictions. All our Committee and Monthly Members meetings are held on zoom and although that does not appeal to everyone, I am delighted that we now usually 25 or more members joining in.... we have had several quizzes and we have virtual speakers.... for example, we have had a talk from a sight impaired person on behalf of the Guide Dogs Association, one about the archaeology of local roads and recently members donated over £400.00 after hearing about "Operation Smile...enough to fund two operations on Cleft Palate.

During the brief summer "break from lockdown" small groups of members took a picnic lunch to the Village Green each week, we held a socially distanced Treasure Trail and we managed to squeeze in our annual Summer Buffet by bringing our own food. Then in late Autumn as the days shortened, we started a weekly "Tea Time Chat" with a themed topic, that will continue until we can get back to meeting in person again. Summer sunshine had lots of members out gardening and we gathered their photos into a virtual gallery of "Open Gardens" for all to see. At Christmas, Committee members delivered a goody bag and pot of daffodil bulbs to each WI member and we will be doing the same at Easter.

Our monthly Craft Group, Book Club, Drawing Group moved to WhatsApp and members keep in touch with what others are making and painting... and we share comments about the book of the month as well as sharing humorous memes!! Last year marked 100 years since Hilton WI joined Huntingdon Federation... we are presently creating and sewing a colourful new tablecloth to mark the occasion and we hope that it will be on show for our first meeting back in the Village Hall.

We supported the national Climate Coalition "Show the Love" Campaign in February by hanging green hearts around the village and creating a display of information at the Sports



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Pavilion. In the early months when there was a PPE shortage several members joined in making scrubs for local GP's and hospitals, some have knitted for people with dementia and for premature babies.

As you can hear, we have kept busy, we have adapted and done the best we can to keep in touch with members while conforming to lockdown and social distancing rules. National Federation have given all WI's the flexibility to reduce our share of the annual membership fee and, as we have inevitably made savings on our usual expenses, we are delighted to pass that on in full to our members who will pay a much reduced membership fee for the coming year. I want to thank the Committee for all their support throughout the past year, we are still planning ahead, adjusting the plans each month as lockdown continues and varies, but we all know that we will eventually be meeting back in the Village Hall, able to enjoy seeing each other in person again and hopefully welcoming new members to our wonderful WI.

### Report from Hilton Village Hall – Liz Bush – Chair (read by Nicola Webster)

The last year has had its challenges for the Village Hall Committee, as it has for all of us. The Village Hall had to close its doors in March 2020 due to COVID restrictions and remains closed currently with the hope of a phased opening in May this year.

Over the year, the Committee have continued to maintain the upkeep of the Village Hall by checking in on a weekly basis, to ensure no major issues occurring with the building and/or services, maintaining the grass cutting and hedges, providing the hanging baskets as usual over the summer, collaborating with the Parish Council to light up our central village buildings for Christmas with a large Christmas tree and lights outside the Hall – something I am sure will become an annual event from now on. We have kept in contact with our regular hirers, although information is constantly changing, and each group has different requirements.

As with all Charities, conventional fund-raising has not been feasible over the year, but the Village Hall Committee have ensured that where possible, we have applied for, and been successful, in receiving grant funding support for the general upkeep and running of our public buildings. We were also successful in our submission for a Communities Capital Fund Grant for a Sound System for the Village Hall and are completing the final stages of installation – something that has been on our 'Wish List' for a number of years and for which we were already actively fund raising. We hope this will be a fantastic resource for the village and for many of our hirers.

We look forward to opening our doors and welcoming you back safely in the very near future.



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## Report from Hilton Community Garden Group – Aileen Murch

I am delighted to present this first report from the Hilton Community Garden Group which is leading a new and exciting venture for our village.

Mindful of the importance of good physical and mental health, especially in the current climate, we are keen to find ways to support these crucial issues especially for the most vulnerable in our community.

Our vision is to create, as our name suggests, a community garden for all residents of Hilton to enjoy. We hope to create a multi-faceted area comprising sections for growing produce to share, encouraging wildlife and enjoying relaxation and quiet contemplation and it is our hope that we can bring together people of all ages to share expertise, enjoy working together in the fresh air, be able to relax in tranquil surroundings and, especially in the case of our younger members, participate in valuable hands-on learning experiences.

Eight enthusiastic volunteers comprise our newly formed committee and, under the chairmanship of Heather Chambers, we have begun by creating our constitution and are currently in the process of finalising the necessary policies required for this undertaking as well as turning our attention to the more exciting, practical aspects of planning effective ways of bringing our vision to life.

We have been working hard to get this project off to a good practical start and have already, through the generosity of Mr and Mrs Randall of Monach Farm, acquired the use of an area of land adjacent to The Wilderness on which to site our garden and have secured some initial funding – we are continuing to explore further possible sources of financial support several of which look very promising.

Hoping that we can benefit from their expertise, we have also contacted other, well established projects with similar ideals and have set up visits so that we can see at first-hand what can be achieved.

In addition to getting the community garden up and running, we are keen to bring more colour and life to other green areas of the village by planting bulbs, wildflower seeds and, if possible, some fruit trees and have already contacted our local councils to see how we might move forward on this.

So, there is lots to be done – from being an active member of the committee to sharing ideas and expertise or getting on your wellies and wielding a spade or fork there is room for everyone to be involved! Please come and join us!

To find out more please visit the village Facebook page or contact any member of the committee: Heather Chambers, Sandy Monk, Aileen Murch, Sue Clark, Pauline Reynolds, Malcolm Lynn, Attwood, Heather Woods.

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### Report from Hilton Community Facebook page - Pete Chambers

We founded the Hilton Village Community page back in January and since then we have grown to about 230 members from Hilton and the surrounding villages. We tend to get quite a reasonable number of posts during the week and up to three a day on the weekend. It has been used for a lot of things like buying and selling of goods, communicating events in the village, and finding lost horses, which was an entertaining highlight! It was founded out of a desire to have a page that the community could interact with as we cannot go to large gatherings and so it provided something that we thought there was a need for.

### Report from Cambridgeshire County Council – County Cllr Ian Bates (read by Nicola Webster)

Most of you are aware that, from almost the beginning of 2020, the year has been extremely difficult for individuals, families, and communities. During this difficult time, Cambridgeshire County Council, working alongside Huntingdonshire District Council, have continued to support vulnerable individuals, educational needs e.g., for parents working from home and having to school their child/children at home. Also, CCC Staff have been re-deployed out to assist with Covid-19 enquiries/call-centres and, in my own area, this resulted in 80 Transport Staff being re-deployed.

Over this period, all meetings for CCC Staff, along with Councillors, have been carried out virtually (Zoom etc), personally, this required a very intense learning curve for me – my longest Zoom being from 09.00 – 18.30 hrs (we did have a few mini-breaks!) I very much believe this will continue as we emerge, slowly, from lock-down, I am predicting that people will not travel regularly into work as they once did, but to (occasionally) continue to work from home – if they are able.

Regular up-dates have regularly been held via virtual meetings by the Chief Executive of the Council also, most importantly, from the Director of Public Health who provided regular up-to-date, vital information for us all. Now this information is able to carry the good news of the increasing numbers of people receiving their 1<sup>st</sup> vaccination, with many also having their 2<sup>nd</sup> – these numbers continuing to rise.

Also, there have been regular up-dates provided by General Purposes, Adult Services, Children & Young People, Commercial & Investments, Communities & Partnerships, Environment & Sustainability, Health and Highways & Transport (which I Chair).

We have continued with our Full Council Meetings in fact, 6 times over this period, with all meetings being recorded and can now be viewed on CCC website, which also provides access to ALL reports, minutes etc.

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A special thanks must go to our local community neighbours who have been involved in 'time-banks' and 'community hubs', along with the many individual volunteer residents giving time to support neighbours in any way they are able.

Just a reminder: Cambridgeshire is the fastest-growing County in the country, which brings with it many challenges. To give an e.g., Alconbury Weald will have one secondary school, 3 primaries, 1 special school, along with associated other facilities. There are 2 other sites of similar size, i.e., Northstowe which you can note from any Guided Bus journey, and Waterbeach.

I am sure many of you will be aware, there was quite a bit of 'rain falling out of the skies' during the Christmas period! This, naturally, caused flooding in places as the water tables were already full and could take no more. There are many agencies involved in this type of issue, i.e., Environment Agency, Anglia Water, Middle Levels, Internal Drainage Boards, District Councils along with The County.

With regards to our finances: there has been much discussion over the last year regarding budgets, particularly in relation to Adult Social Care. We have received Central Government monies to support our programme. At CCC Full Council Meeting, held on 9<sup>th</sup> February, a balanced Budget was set, with the most significant increase being for Highways maintenance, this allocated an extra £20m for footpaths maintenance yes, a huge amount! This amount to be spread over the period 2021/26. Further monies were also allocated for gully clearing and verge maintenance.

Remember: the up-coming County Council Elections in May for which I will not be seeking re-election, having decided to retire after my 20 years as your County Councillor, this followed from a 20-year involvement with HDC (the 2 Council positions overlapping). I began my long Local Government 'career' on Hilton Parish Council, being Chairman for many years!

### Report from Huntingdonshire District Council – District Cllr David Mead (read by Nicola Webster)

2020/21 has obviously been a very difficult year for many people. I cannot believe it has been 12 months since the first lockdown. At that time, the District Council set up a hub to support those in need. Working with volunteers, community groups and parish councils it was possible to provide informal support for those that needed it. It was quite amazing to see so many people working together. The District Council had to try and ensure that as many of the services it provided continued to be delivered without disruption. All staff that could work from home did, whilst trying to ensure that services were maintained. It is notable that Huntingdonshire was one of only 5 per cent of all councils that continued to deliver a full waste, street cleaning and operations service at the beginning and throughout the pandemic.

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The District Council helped to facilitate the distribution of Government grants to local businesses. I have direct knowledge of this and spent a significant amount of time explaining to local business how they should apply for these grants and notifying them when new ones became available. The District Council have so far distributed over £45million of grants to local businesses. There is still more to do on this as the country begins to re-open. The District Council will need to continue this roll in the future as well as having to invest and make improvements to support the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area. In particular we need to work closely with existing business that serve the smaller communities such as Hilton to make sure they have what they need to re-open and remain open.

I do know that from speaking with residents of both Hilton and Fenstanton that engaging with staff at the District Council can sometimes be difficult. I know that from my own discussions with residents on all sorts of matters including planning, waste collection, housing, trees, and licensing. However, the staff at Huntingdonshire District Council have put in a huge amount of work over these very difficult times. I would simply ask that this is acknowledged, and I will help to move things along if needed.

I would ask residents to continue to contact me if they have issues regarding the services that are delivered by Huntingdonshire District Council and I will do my best to try and resolve them. As stated above I have worked with various residents over the last 3 years regarding various issues and will continue to do so throughout the next year.

I will finish by wishing everyone the best as we move forward locally and nationally. I think we are now starting to move forward, and I am hoping that we will start to see a return to normality shortly.

### Report from Hilton Feast Week Committee – Nicola Webster – Chair

The Hilton Feast Week Committee are hoping that we will be able to run a Feast Week this year. This is regulations permitting, we will need to get to that magical Stage 4 before we can go ahead. We are starting to pull the pieces together to allow us to plan for Feast Week. Dates for your diary – Feast Week will be from Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July. Our biggest concern is finances as we have not been able to carry out our normal fundraising. Currently our only source of income is the 200 club, and we encourage parishioners to join – you have to be in it to win it! The Town Trust have very kindly agreed to underwrite Feast Week this year and have given the Feast Week Committee the confidence to plan the event. It may not be the full Feast Week programme, depending on how the funding goes as some of the major costs have increased this year. The theme for Feast Week will carry forward from last year and will be “All at Sea”. We ran a competition last year for a child to design the front cover for our programme and so the winner of that competition will still have her design on the cover. Hopefully, we will see you all at Feast Week!

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## General Question Time

A parishioner stated that it was illuminating to hear reports from wonderful people doing wonderful things. He also commented that horse riders were using the Public Footpath towards Conington which was causing issues for dog walkers and asked whether it was a Parish Council matter. Cllr G. Barradell commented that horse riders were allowed on bridleways, but the Parish Council have noted that there is more activity from horse riders across the Green, where horse riding is not permitted. Unfortunately, the riders have not listened to the Councillors that have spoken to them on this matter. The Clerk stated that the rights of way are the responsible of the County Council and that any parishioner can report a highways fault on the County Council website and alert the Rights of Way Officer.

Cllr G. Barradell thanked those people who have provided reports for this meeting and expressed his hope for meeting in person in the near future.

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 20:48.

Signed.....Date.....

DRAFT

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