

FAR COTTON AND DELEPAPRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meeting 25 February 2021

To: All Northampton Borough Councillors for the wards set out in Schedule 1 to the Northampton Borough Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) No.3 (Far Cotton and Delapré Community Council) Order 2020

You are summoned to attend a meeting of Far Cotton and Delapré Community Council to be held by remote means through Zoom at 19:00 on 25 February, 2021.

Kate Houlihan Interim Clerk and RFO
clerk@farcottonanddelapre-cc.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 28 January 2021 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true and correct record of the proceedings
4. Logo for Far Cotton and Delapré Community Council: To consider running a competition for young people to design a logo for the Council.
5. Police Information:
 - To receive a police report for the local area (information to follow)
 - Police Liaison Representative: To appoint a police liaison representative to act as a single point of contact with Northamptonshire Police (information from NcALC herewith)
6. Planning matters:
 - Applications for consideration (if any)
7. To receive an update on implementation of the reorganisation order and set-up of Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council (report herewith)
8. Public participation: To consider how Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council will manage public participation at future meetings (report herewith)
9. Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council Website: To receive an update and demonstration on the development of a website for Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council.
10. Promoting candidacy at the May 2021 elections: To consider and agree ways of promoting candidacy for the May 2021 elections. (report herewith)
11. Other items for information only

Press and public can witness the meeting at
<https://www.youtube.com/user/northamptonbcTV>
For further information contact clerk@farcottonanddelapre-cc.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 3

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

FAR COTTON & DELAPRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Thursday, 28 January 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Walker (Chair); Councillor Roberts (Deputy Chair); Councillors Davenport, T Eales and Larratt; Mr Mark Plowman.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Far Cotton & Delapr  Community Council and announced that Cllr Oldham had stood down as a member and welcomed Cllr Larratt as a member of the Far Cotton & Delapr  Community Council. There were no apologies received.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Far Cotton & Delapr  Community Council and announced that Cllr Oldham had stood down as a member and welcomed Cllr Larratt as a member of the Far Cotton & Delapr  Community Council. There were no apologies received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 January 2021 were agreed subject to the inclusion of Cllr B Markham on the attendees list and the amendments in items 7 and 8 to correct Kingsthorpe Council to read Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council.

4. TO FURTHER CONSIDER AND AGREE THE BUDGET RECOMMENDED BY THE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP AND TO AGREE THE PRECEPT (COUNCIL TAX) DEMAND FOR 2021/2022

At the Chair's invitation, the Deputy Chief Executive from NCALC, Lesley Sambrook Smith presented the report and explained that as members requested at the previous meeting and updated budget report had been provided. She explained that the proposed budget had changed slightly, as a rounded figure had been provided previously with the updated report giving a more detailed breakdown of costs giving a total of £147,424.

Members were concerned with the accommodation cost of £10,000 allocated in the budget and the level of reserves. Members also felt concerned regarding the transfer of allotments which were currently managed as part of the Ide Verde contract, as the income costs and running costs were not detailed in the report. Members recognised the current situation with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and requested that further consideration of the budget would be made so that the precept costs to residents could be accounted for as it would affect those experiencing financial difficulty.

However, some members felt that the budget would help set up the Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council for its first year and would allow the Council to invest in the local community. The contingency budget would be for those elected onto the Council to decide on which services and initiatives were important to the community, and the budget would be reviewed by the future Council after its first term.

The Chief Executive of NCALC expressed that he empathised with members as it was a

difficult task to agree a budget for a Council that did not officially exist until after the election. In addition, members were aware of the current situation with Brexit, Covid-19 and other contributing factors. He reminded members that they must set a budget at whichever level they decided, to allow the Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council to be safe and legal, as well as financially secure from its first day of operation with sufficient reserves as required by audit. The Chief Executive NCALC encouraged members to consider the positive aspects of the budget, and the services that the Council could potentially deliver such as covering accommodation costs to provide a 'One stop shop' for residents which would deliver a variety of services to benefit the community. The Council required the necessary budget and resources in order to thrive, and it was important for the promotion of the Council so that members of the community would come forward to work for the Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council in a professional manner as well as members to stand as Councillors for the election in May 2021.

Members requested an explanation on the £50,000 allocated in the budget for the development of future services and the transfer to reserves. The Deputy Chief Executive, NCALC explained that the £50,000 presented in the budget represented 6 months of reserves for the Council and members could use funds from this budget to deliver services if they needed to do so, as long as 3 months of reserves were left.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer assured members that the contingency budget was legal and contained what was required under legislation for Parish Councils. From his experience of setting up councils, this was usual practice and the modest budget would allow the Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council some flexibility to deliver initiatives as they wished to after May 2021. He encouraged members to consider and discuss the budget, and explained that the Ide Verde contract was currently being looked into and it was hoped that an agreement could be made to lower costs and comprise of allotments across the three new Councils: Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council, Kingsthorpe Parish Council and Northampton Town Council.

The Chair moved Council to vote on the motion and the motion was carried. Councillor Roberts abstained from voting and commented that she could not vote as she felt she had not received enough detailed information on the budget to inform her decision.

RESOLVED: That members:

- Agreed the budget as shown in 1.2 of this report and to use the figures as the basis of the first precept to be set by Far Cotton and Delapr  Community Council.
- Set a precept of £147,424 for 2021/22.

5. TO AGREE THE DATES FOR THE NEXT MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair proposed that the date for the next meeting would be held on 25 February 2021 at 7pm.

RESOLVED: The date for the next meeting was agreed.

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Roberts proposed that the Council included the crime figures for Far Cotton and Delapr  as a monthly item on the agenda. Councillor Roberts then introduced the report received from the Northampton Neighbourhood Policing Team which detailed the burglary residential, burglary non-business, criminal damage and vehicle crime figures for January 2021 with comparative figures in brackets from the previous month December 2020.

The Chair thanked Councillor Roberts for the suggestion and welcomed the police report as a regular item. He hoped the Council would continue the good working relationship with Northamptonshire police and welcomed their attendance at future Far Cotton and Delapré Council meetings. Kate Houlihan, Parish Clerk, informed the Council that a report from the police would be provided at the next meeting and the Council would be able to appoint a police liaison representative to act as a single point of contact with Northamptonshire police.

The meeting concluded at 8:00 pm

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Police Liaison Representative (PLR) Role Description

Appointment

At its annual meeting, the parish council will appoint a Police Liaison Representative (PLR) who shall hold office until the next annual meeting unless the appointment is terminated by the council. A person may be re-appointed from one year to the next. The Police Liaison Representative may be a member or officer of the council or a member of the public.

Role

The role of Police Liaison Representative is non-statutory and has no authority to make decisions that bind the council to taking, or not taking, any particular course of action. The role of the Police Liaison Representative shall be to:

- Establish contact with the relevant members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- Attend an annual meeting of Police Liaison Representatives.
- Promote awareness of 101 and Crime Stoppers.
- Understand the role and impact on councils of the Crime and Disorder Act.
- Monitor crime statistics for the area and report to the council on any significant trends.
- Where there is a council-sponsored PCSO, communicate as appropriate with the council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the PCSO.
- Act as the point of contact between the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and the council and help promote the Neighbourhood Watch.
- Receive news and information from the Neighbourhood Policing Team (general and related to specific local incidents) and disseminate it in the council's area as appropriate.
- Liaise with other groups/persons in the council's area on the broader community safety agenda, including fire prevention and emergency planning and bring items of interest to the attention of the council.
- Liaise and engage with the Northamptonshire Independent Advisory Group (IAG).

Time commitment

Hours will vary from community to community and person to person, but it is envisaged that the role will require between five and ten hours per month.

Commitment to electronic working

The vast majority of information will be shared electronically (e-mail and social media). Police Liaison Representatives should be comfortable working electronically.

Limit of role

Police Liaison Representatives are not involved in operational policing and are not an appropriate person to receive reports of incidents or crimes from members of the public, who should use 101 or 999 as appropriate.

Report to: Council 25 February 2021

Report on implementation of the reorganisation order and set-up of the council

Summary: A report on the set-up of Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council and the implementation of the reorganisation order

Recommendations:

- a) to note the report,
- b) to resolve to open a bank account with Unity Trust Bank,
- c) to appoint NcALC as the councils internal auditor,
- d) to appoint Smaller Authority Appointments Ltd as the external auditor,

1.0 Background Information

There are a number of items that the council needs to put in place in the coming weeks and months to ensure that council operates legally and effectively.

Some of these items require further investigation, however this report seeks to detail all matters and the report will be updated each month as items are agreed and implemented.

2.0 Land and Property to be transferred to Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council

Schedule 2 of the reorganisation order details the following land and property to be transferred to the Parish Council:

2.1 Allotments

- Mereway
- Pleydell road

The allotments are currently being managed as part of the Idverde contract and this contract will transfer to the West Northamptonshire Council. Investigations are underway as to the future costs of managing these services and the Clerk will update this council as soon as further information is received.

There is no specific budget for this item and any costs in 2021/2022 Financial year would need to be met from the contingency fund

2.2 Property (Office space)

The re-organisation order details that “suitable office space” will be transferred to the Parish Council. Initial contact has been made with the property department at Northampton Borough council and a meeting is being arranged for week commencing 22nd February 2021.

3.0 Finance

3.1 Precept

The precept will be the councils main (only) source of income in 2021/22 and will be received in 2 tranches 30th April 2021 and 30th September 2021. Until the precept is received the council has no funds.

3.2	<p>Bank account</p> <p>In order to receive the precept funds and operate its finances the council must of course open a bank account.</p> <p>NcALC recommend that the council open a bank account with Unity Trust Bank. This bank is a specialist in the local council and charitable sector and has procedures in place to ensure that local authorities meet the dual authority requirements as laid out in the council’s Financial Regulations.</p> <p>It is proposed to open a bank account with Unity Trust, with the Interim Clerk initially as the sole signatory so that funds can be received. Members of the council will need to be added as signatories to the account before payments can be made to comply with the dual authority required.</p>
3.3	<p>Audit</p> <p>At the current time it is not anticipated that the Parish council will receive any income prior to the 1st April 2021 and therefore the audit for will be a “nil” return. However the council should still appoint internal and external auditors and it is recommended that the council formally appoints NcALC and Smaller Authorities Audit Appointment Ltd to provide internal and external audit services respectively. This is in line with budgets.</p>
3.4	<p>Insurance</p> <p>As a minimum the council should have insurance to cover public liability, employers liability, fidelity insurance and assets. A report will be presented to the March meeting for the council to approve the insurance provider for 2021/2</p>
4.0	<p>Office set-up</p> <p>The council will need to consider the various items in regard of office set-up This will include: Phones Laptop/Printer Virus software Finance system Office supplies Postage</p> <p>Note that the interim clerk will provide their own laptop/printer and virus software in the short term. But the council will need to consider the best option for phone services and again various options will be presented at a future meeting.</p>

Implications:		
Council objectives:	Legal and effective.	x
Equalities & Human Rights	There are no equalities and human rights issues	x
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder have been considered	X
Biodiversity	There are no bio-diversity implications	x
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage	
	There will be financial implications	
	There is provision within the budget	
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure	
	Decisions may have potential for income generation	
Legal	Power: Local Government Act 1972	X
	Other considerations: None	
Risk Management	Material risks exist and these are currently being assessed.	X

	- Inherent risk score:	
	- Residual risk score:	
Person originating this report: Kate Houlihan: Town Clerk		
Date: 16 February 2021		

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Agenda Item 8

FAR COTTON AND DELAPRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Report to: Council 25 February 2021

Report on public attendance and participation at council meetings

Recommendation:

- a) That meetings future meeting are held on zoom and that the code is published with the agenda for the public to join the meeting.
- b) That a “police and public session” is included on the agenda for future meetings.

Attachments: NONE

1.0 Background Information

The attendance of the press and public at council meetings is a cornerstone of local democracy and, this has already been recognised by this council. Access to meetings is essential if residents are to engage with their local council.

2.0 Legal framework

The attendance of the press and public at parish council meetings is governed by the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960. This gives the public the legal right to attend meetings and report thereon, save in a few circumstances where the business is considered confidential, as defined within the act.

This act has been amended to incorporate The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. These regulations came into force in April 2020 and allowed local councils to meet electronically.

The regulations also give the public the right to access meetings electronically, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.

3.0 Options for the public to attend and participate in council meetings:

3.1 Current situation

To date meetings of the community council have been supported by democratic services at NBC and meetings have been live streamed via Northampton Borough Council’s YouTube channel.

The public can view meetings but are not in attendance, unless a specific invitation has been extended or if a member of the public has requested to speak.

3.2 Future meetings

The current support from Northampton Borough Council will cease at the end of March and so it is important to consider how meetings will be managed moving forward.

There are 2 main options to be considered:

	<p>a) Live streaming (as currently)</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible and can be viewed at a later date by those unable to attend the meeting. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council would need a YouTube account or similar, some councils have found the technology difficult to manage and onerous for a small council. • Members of the public are only viewing the meeting and not “in the meeting” • Members of the public need to pre-register to speak. <p>b) Include zoom code on agenda and allow open access for all (Note all existing parishes in the Borough of Northampton currently do this)</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible, no pre-registration is required. • Easy set-up, no other streaming services required. • The agenda can include a “police and public” session allowing residents to raise queries with the council without the need to pre-register. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of councils have been subject to “zoom bombing” • Difficult to manage the meeting if there are a very large number of public attendees <p>4.0 Meetings from 7th May 2021</p> <p>It is of course important to note that the regulations allowing councils to meet remotely cease to be valid on May 7, 2021 and the government currently has no plans to extend these.</p> <p>The council must therefore consider and make arrangements for holding meetings in person if required. The clerk is therefore investigating space at local community centres and will update the meeting.</p> <p>5.0 Recommendation:</p> <p>a) that the zoom code is published with the agenda for all virtual meetings and that all public can attend the meeting.</p> <p>b) that future meetings include a “police and public session” with a suitable statement such as the one shown below:</p> <p><i>Members of the public are invited to address the Council. The session will last for a maximum of 15 minutes with any individual contribution lasting a maximum of 3 minutes. Representations shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate. Members of the public should address the chairman of the meeting, who may direct that a written or oral response be given.)</i></p>	
Implications:		
Council objectives:	Legal and effective.	x
Equalities & Human Rights	There are no equalities and human rights issues	x
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder have been considered	X
Biodiversity	There are no bio-diversity implications	x
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage	
	There will be financial implications	
	There is provision within the budget	

	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure	
	Decisions may have potential for income generation	
Legal	Power: Local Government Act 1972	X
	Other considerations: None	
Risk Management	Material risks exist and these are currently being assessed.	X
	- Inherent risk score:	
	- Residual risk score:	
Person originating this report: Kate Houlihan: Town Clerk		
Date: 16 February 2021		

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Agenda Item 10

FAR COTTON AND DELAPRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Report to: Council 25 February 2021-Item 12

Report on promoting candidates at the May 2021 elections

Summary: A report on the set-up of the Community Council and the implementation of the reorganisation order

Recommendations

- a) to note the report
- b) to launch the Council website
- c) to set up a Facebook page and Twitter account
- d) to use resources from NcALC/NALC and other agencies/partners
- e) to distribute posters/leaflets as widely as possible whilst adhering to Covid restrictions

1.0 Background Information

The first elections to Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council are being held on Thursday May 6th 2021, which is in just 47 days' time. It is therefore essential that the elections and candidacy are promoted. This report sets out a number of ways in which the council can do this.

2.0 Ways of promoting candidacy

2.1 Website

Members will have seen the website for the parish earlier in the meeting and subject to any amendments agreed, the website should be launched as soon as possible, and no later than 26 February 2021.

2.2 Social Media

Given the short time scale to promote the elections use of social media seems the best way to share the message as widely as possible. The Clerk therefore seeks agreement to set-up Twitter and Facebook accounts for the Parish. These accounts will initially focus on promoting candidacy but can be expanded to all areas of the councils work as time progresses.

A policy on the use of social media can be considered at a future meeting.

2.3 Northamptonshire County Association of Local Council/(NcALC) National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

Both the NcALC and NALC have a number of resources that can be used to provide content for the website and social media posts. NcALC are also working with other partners to develop further resources.

2.4 Posters / Leaflets

Members will be aware that at the current time guidance is in place which prohibits political door to door campaigning and leafleting. NcALC are seeking clarity as to whether or not this applies to the distribution of materials promoting candidacy.

However, it will still be possible for posters to be distributed to local shops and public noticeboards and the clerk will seek to distribute posters as widely as possible throughout all wards in the Parish.

Implications:

Council objectives:	Promoting democracy	x
Equalities & Human Rights	There are no equalities and human rights issues	x
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder have been considered	X
Biodiversity	There are no bio-diversity implications	x
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage	
	There will be financial implications	
	There is provision within the budget	
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure	
	Decisions may have potential for income generation	
Legal	Power: Local Government Act 1972	X
	Other considerations: None	
Risk Management	Material risks exist and these are currently being assessed.	X
	- Inherent risk score: - Residual risk score:	
Person originating this report: Kate Houlihan: Town Clerk		
Date: 16 February 2021		