Minutes of the Woodford-cum-Membris Parish Council Meeting Held on
Tuesday 14 April 2015 in the Memorial Hall Woodford Halse Starting at 19.00 hrs.

C61/15 Present
Mr. Darren Bennetts, Mr. Howard Burdett, Mrs. Kay Coles [Chairman], Mrs. Robyn Davison, Mr. Robin Gilling, Mr. David Hawes, Mr. Patrick Knight, Mr. George Osborne, Mr. Robert Snedker, Mrs. Julie Turner & Ms. Julie Williams.
Fifteen members of the public including PCSO Carl Barton [Daventry Police Safer Communities Team], Mrs. Jo Gilford [District Councillor] & Mrs. Elizabeth Griffin [District Councillor].
G. P. Smith [Parish Clerk]

C62/15 Apologies
Apologies were received and accepted from: Mr. Gary Denby.
Apologies received from Mr. Robin Brown [County Councillor] & Mr. Bob Patchett [District Councillor].

C63/15 Members’ Declarations of Disclosable Interest
Council received none.

C64/15 Police
PCSO Barton had nothing to add to his report recently published March 2015. He remains confident that the Parish fares exceptionally well compared with other villages of similar size, in respect of reported crime.

C65/15 Minutes of the Last Meeting
Council approved the minutes of its meeting of 10 March 2015.

C66/15 Matters Arising
Minute book Page 1550. Annexe “A”. Starred paragraph. In response to a question from Mr. Hawes, the Clerk confirmed that the Council is the ultimate authority for what is published on the Village Signpost website.

C67/15 Public Session
No matters were raised.

C68/15 Station Road - Vehicle Parking
Mrs. A. Bolton, proprietor of the Blossom Shop, explained that long term and inconsiderate vehicle parking deter customers from visiting many of the shops & businesses in Station Road which is severely affecting their viability.
Resolved: Council would seek via Northamptonshire County Council a one hour only parking restriction on Mondays to Saturdays [inclusive] across & along property numbers 8 to 44 Station Road.

PCSO Barton will issue “think before you park” notices and encourage drivers to park sensibly.

C69/15 Former Railway Embankment & Adjoining Land [Phipps Road/Byfield Road]
Considerable local interest had arisen with the advertisement, for sale, of these 22 acres of land formerly railway related and for many years under forestry. During this latter period the landowners had always permitted public recreational access to the area, for which the community has been very grateful. An on-site meeting was held on 29 March 2015 and a public meeting, called by Mrs. K. Coles [Parish Council...
Chairman], in The Memorial Hall, Station Road on 09 April 2015 was attended by 150 parishioners and interested parties, including all local Parish, District & County Councillors.

The meeting had heard from many speakers expressing the recreational value and benefit of what has become a wood and including:

- Mrs. Coles confirmed the content of a recent communication with the owners’ agent … the landowner had withdrawn the property from the scheduled auction of 28 April 2015 but as the auction catalogue had already been printed for imminent distribution the land will still be publicized. However the owners are willing to give the Parish Council an opportunity to raise the necessary funds to buy the land. Meanwhile the property will still be available for sale on a private treaty basis and if any offers are received the Parish Council will be informed. The owners remain free to accept a reasonable offer from a third party should it arise. If a sale is not agreed with the Parish Council within a reasonable time scale the probability is that the land will be re-offered for sale by auction, likely towards the end of June 2015 … She was very confident that the owners would allow the Council every opportunity of purchasing the land.

- Mrs. Jo Gilford [District Councillor] explaining the options available in nominating such an area of land for inclusion in the District List of Community Assets under the Localism Act 2011 so giving the Community the Right to Bid in any sale.

- Mr. I. Osborne and Mr. G. Southall of the local Railway Heritage Society, looking into means of preserving the former railway site for its local and national historical significance.

- Mr. P. Thornton and colleagues wishing to secure the land for the possible creation of a railways museum with a small line.

- Mr. Robin Brown [County Councillor] confirmed he would support the village should it decide to purchase the land for its community benefits.

The public meeting had closed following a vote [with one dissenter] urging the Parish Council to take steps to purchase the former embankment & associated land for amenity purposes.

Resolved on 14 April 2015: In consideration of the wish of the public meeting held on 09 April 2015, (1) Council will take all necessary and reasonable steps to purchase the embankment woodland & associated land for community purposes and (2) Mrs. Kay Coles [Chairman], Mr. David Hawes [Parish Councillor] & Mr. Gary Smith [Parish Clerk] are authorized to deal with this matter in all respects consulting Council in their best judgement.

The Chairman gave her assurance that Council would actively pursue the wish of the public meeting of 09 April 2015, a process that requires due time and care.

Mr. I. Osborne thanked all councillors involved in the advice & considerations and accepted the Chairman’s request for restraint in activity outside of the Council whilst negotiations progress.

Members noted a resident’s letter urging Council to give serious consideration to the future of the embankment - supporting amenity use but having regard to the future application of part of it as a contribution to the pool of residential development land instead of having to lose more prime agricultural land.

The Clerk reminded Members that this matter, bearing significant financial & legal implications, should be treated confidentially, in the public interest.

**C70/15 County Councillor’s Annual Report to Council**
The Chairman thanked Mr. R. Brown for his work on behalf of the Parish and Council noted his annual report, as follows:
Friends Life Women’s Cycling Tour
Last May, we hosted the start and first two stages of the 5 stage “Friends Life” Women’s Cycling Tour through Northamptonshire. The cream of the international and Olympic cycling world participated with 300,000 spectators over the five days and a total of over a million television viewers which equaled the viewing figures of the British leg of the Tour de France. The event was an incredible success for Northamptonshire, both economically and for the prestige of the County. I am delighted to report that we have successfully negotiated 3rd stage of the 2015 tour back to Northamptonshire on 19th June starting in Oundle and finishing in Kettering.

Educational Excellence: Race to the Top
February 2015 saw the launch our “Race to the Top” strategy to raise educational attainment in our schools. We are aiming to make Northamptonshire one of the highest performing counties for education by 2020 by encouraging schools to strive for excellence. An innovative Strategic Education and Skills Partnership Board will be created to lead the programme, bringing together education and business leaders. The project has the support of, George Osborne, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Education and Lord Heseltine who has been working closely with the County Council to make this a reality.

Race to the Top has been prepared with collaboration with the Department for Education and has three main strands:
1. To identify and intervene in schools across the county which are judged to be failing or in need of improvement. These schools will be given time to produce improvement plans, with a promise of local authority intervention if they fail to improve.

2. An invitation to all schools to apply for a share of the £1 million improvement fund for projects to improve young people’s aspirations. The bids will be assessed by a panel, including representatives from the business sector via Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership and Northampton University, and the Regional Schools Commissioner.

3. Sixteen new schools will be needed in the county over the next 12 years and the council will be looking for a number of top quality sponsors, with clear track records of success, to collaborate with the LEA in providing these schools.

Good educational attainment is a key cornerstone of the prosperity agenda of our County and we plan to engage local businesses and schools to work more closely together to provide better outcomes for our children.

Tri County Alliance
In December 2014, the leaders of Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire County Councils made an alliance, to work together with the three Local Enterprise Partnerships, (LEPS), to focus on their common economies of innovation, science, technology and creative industries.

Our strategic alliance is asking Government to allow joint new plans to be developed for transport, spatial planning and other key infrastructure. We want to devolve employment and skills funding so employers’ needs can be properly met locally, and support a devolved approach to the local trunk road network. We want enhanced powers over bus services and the ability to maximise public transport between key towns and cities.
and ensure the best economic benefits are unlocked from projects such as East-West rail and the connectivity of technology centres like Silverstone to the national road network.

Our Tri County area has a Gross Value Added of £45 billion, a population of 2 million people and is the equivalent combined Authority for Greater Manchester. We believe that by creating this alliance, we can find smarter ways to achieving savings for all three Councils and also secure genuine devolution of powers and funding, similar to the Greater Manchester model. It is important to point out that this alliance is not about setting up a super county, but is simply about collaborating on the issues that we have a statutory responsibility for. The alliance is still in its early stages and over the next couple of months we will be working out the details to present to the government after the May General Elections.

Our Infrastructure Programme
The County Council is in the middle of the largest infrastructural investment programme in its 125 year history. In the last five years we have spent over half a billion pounds. During the next five years we will be investing a further £600 million upgrading and building new schools, roads and Superfast broadband. Last year saw the opening of the £35million Corby Link Road and workings on upgrading key strategic junction pinch points. We are laying the basis for the next stage of the dualing of the A43 between Northampton and Kettering.

Other important road projects include the A45 Daventry link Road, the Weekly Warkton bypass and the A6 Chowns Mill Junction. The Kettering East Development will see the opening of the first of two new primary schools in September.

Work will also begin in the next couple of months of the County Council’s New HQ. This is an ‘Invest to Save’ project that will see the closing and selling of twelve old, expensive to run existing buildings. This project will bring 2,000 plus public sector workers back into the town which is an important boost to our County town and more importantly, will reduce our running costs and make significant savings. We estimate that in the first year of running, we will be £300,000 better off and in the next thirty years our annual operating costs will be half of what we would be spending on the twelve existing buildings.

The Council Budget and Next Generation Working for Public Services
The pressures on Strategic Local Authority services are immense. We have already taken out nearly £200 million from our base budget and we have another £148 million left to take our over the next five years. Quite simply, we cannot go on as we are. Our current operating model is not fit for purpose.

Over the next five years the costs of providing services due to a continued surge in demand and other pressures will rise by £104m while the money given to us by government will reduce by £79m. This means the cost of running services will be double the amount of money available to us. At our February Council budget meeting we passed our 2015/16 budget and our new Council Plan to meet these demands and protect front line services.

Our new strategic direction means that by 2020 we will see a far smaller retained organisation, the right-sourcing and commissioning of services from a new set of accountable organisations and social enterprises which may be owned, managed and run by current council staff. We will be using the Community and Voluntary Sector more in delivering vital local services and most importantly giving our service users more choice and control in the services that they use.

For more information on our council plan see our website

Empowering Councillors Scheme
Our Empowering Councillors scheme is as popular as ever. Countywide we have funded well over 2,500 community projects to the tune of over £2.5 million. In my district I made sure my money has made a positive difference by funding the following:

- £650 – WWI Commemorative Clock and Weathervane

Kind regards, Cllr Robin Brown …

C71/15 Summer Street Fair & Boat Race 26 June 2015
Resolved: Grant £110.02 to the organizers to cover their public liability insurance premium.

C72/15 Parish Clerk - Salary
Resolved: The Clerk’s salary is increased with effect from 01 January 2015 according to the rates agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

C73/15 WW1 Commemorative Clock & Soldier Weathervane
The Chairman thanked Mr. Denby and Mr. Bennetts, greatly aided by Mr. Clive Thomas, for their detailed proposals [08.04.15] for the installation of the clock and weathervane.

Resolved: the installations proceed according to these proposals, including the electrical connection by Electrical Services [Banbury] Ltd T/A AJR Electrical Services for £368.00 + VAT.

C74/15 Grants Hill Residential Development - off Byfield Road - Street Naming
Council recommended the nine street names should be selected from within the theme of local, rural crafts comprising: Blacksmith, Bootmaker, Carpenter, Lacemaker, Limeburner, Maltster, Miller, Ploughman, Spinner, Stonemason, Thatcher, Wheelwright.

C75/15 Areas of Poor Drainage & Flooding in the Parish
In continuation of his attention to areas of flood and drainage problems, Mr. Burdett, reported some progress and had identified a number of locations where clearance is still essential. He will conduct further investigations and advise the Clerk where written approaches to landowners are required.

Mr. Knight confirmed he is liaising with Northamptonshire County Council where flood water is affecting the highway.

C76/15 Campaign to Protect Rural England
Resolved: Council to pay the £36.00 annual subscription to the CPRE.

C77/15 Council’s Halls Business Group
Mrs. Davison reported that in consideration of customer feedback on the proposed new Booking Form and Terms & Conditions of hire further consideration will be given before introducing revised versions, later this year. She also confirmed that the new hire tariff for the Dryden Hall, Farndon Room and Memorial Hall, previously approved by Council, has been implemented effect from 01 April 2015.

C78/15 Neighbourhood Plan
Mr. Snedker reported that he was in constant touch with Kirkwells Planning Consultants regarding an £8,000.00 grant application to fund preparation of the Plan and would keep Council informed of progress.

C79/15 Other Business
- Regrettably, due to new professional commitments Mrs. Turner has had to withdraw from Council’s Publicity Group. The Chairman thanked her for her contribution and urged members to consider taking up this role.
- Mr. Snedker was concerned at the danger to persons and traffic posed by a bulging stone wall at Kings Corner Close/Parsons Street. The clerk will contact the owners.
- A member of the public said that Daventry District Council had introduced further measures to combat dog fouling. A new regulation would oblige people walking their dogs to carry clean-up materials with them. Fines would be applied for non-compliance, by an Enforcement Officer operating District wide. Residents are encouraged to report the names of known offenders to the Officer.

**C80/15 Receipts & Payments**

Council noted receipts and authorized payments:

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<td>WoW advertising</td>
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<td>A. Webb property maintenance</td>
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<td>Burial fees</td>
<td>412.00</td>
<td>Youngs VC windows two months</td>
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<td>Village Centre hire</td>
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<td>Memorial Centre hire</td>
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<td>NHS MC lease</td>
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<td>Unit Clean MC, VC, property</td>
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**C81/15** There being no further business the meeting was closed at 20.25 hrs.