

## **Ward councillor's report (Barby & Onley) May 2024**

### **Planning applications WND/2021/0767 & 2023/5783/MAF Barby Sporting Club**

I have recently brought it to the attention of the Executive Director of Planning Stuart Timmiss that it's over 3 years since the validation of the earlier application and the target decision date of 31/3/24 has now been missed. The explanation given is, rather than case officer workload, it is now responses from consultees which are contributing to this unacceptable delay. I am sorry that there is still no certainty as to when these applications will be brought to committee.

### **Blocked drain Daventry Rd Fix My Street ref: 5598154**

Investigation and clearing by Kier in March did not prevent a local resident experiencing further flooding around his property during heavy rain last month. Kier has now attended again and jetted the drains and will be conducting a camera investigation.

### **2 day closure of Welton Rd TTRO (24/25) W061 commencing 20<sup>th</sup> May**

Notification of this closure to carry out repairs of a section of Welton Rd was addressed to Badby Parish Council, so your parish council may be unaware of this road closure. The closure and diversion can be viewed on <https://one.network/?tm=138548367>

### **Public consultation on draft Carers' Strategy**

This strategy will shape how WNC supports unpaid carers. The draft strategy has been co-produced with carers with lived experience of caring. The consultation ends on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

[Consultation: Your views on the \(draft\) West Northants Carer Strategy 2024-2029 - West Northamptonshire Council - Citizen Space](#)

I am currently chairing a scrutiny group examining the support offer that WNC provides for unpaid carers. The value of unpaid carers nationally has been estimated to be equivalent to a second NHS and without them the social care system would collapse. Local authorities are legally required to offer carers an assessment of their own needs and there is lots of extra support available to them. As many as 22,000 carers in our communities are not known to any services and may well not recognise themselves as carers who are entitled to statutory support. If there is someone in your village in a caring role who is lacking support the website of [Northamptonshire Carers Association \(northamptonshire-carers.org\)](http://northamptonshire-carers.org) has a wealth of useful information and can be contacted on 01933 677907.

### **Energy efficiency upgrades**

The household income threshold for off-grid households eligible for energy efficiency grants has recently been raised from £31,00 to £36,00 per year. Eligible residents will be guided through the application process. Here is the link: [Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 \(HUG2\) | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **New grants scheme to help businesses reach net zero**

Businesses in West Northants can now access a decarbonisation support programme aimed at helping them to reach net zero and achieve their sustainability goals. The Net Zero West Northants project includes free business support, tailored energy audits and match funding up to £20,000 to help implement energy efficiency measures such as solar panels, cooling systems and insulation. [Ngage \(ngagesolutions.co.uk\)](https://www.ngagesolutions.co.uk)

## **Resignation of West Northants Council leader Cllr Jonathan Nunn**

Last month was a turbulent time for WNC, following the announcement of Cllr Nunn's resignation. He had been leader since the first elections of the then new unitary council in May 2021, but further allegations concerning his domestic life left him no choice but to step down. It was widely known that Cllr Nunn was convicted of violently attacking his then wife in 2004, the BBC then published further domestic abuse allegations from five women. Cllr Nunn "strenuously" denies all allegations other than the one relating to his conviction. He has now resigned the Tory whip and is sitting as an independent.

Cllr Adam Brown, the deputy leader is carrying out the role of leader until the Council's Annual Meeting this week. Local domestic abuse charities have sent an open letter to all West Northamptonshire councillors expressing deep concerns over how the Council has handled the allegations against Cllr Nunn and his continuation as a councillor and community representative. While WNC is unable to suspend or remove a councillor from office except in specific circumstances set out in the Local Government Act 1972 while he remains as a councillor the wrong message is given to domestic abuse survivors that it's ok to elect a councillor with a known history of violence against women to be elected or to allow him to stay in post. This also risks further damage to the Council's reputation.

Cllr Rosie Humphreys

13<sup>th</sup> May 2024