

Parish Meeting Update for Naseby - 2 October 2025

Cllr Christine Ware

Hello. I am sorry that I am unable to join you on 2 October for your Parish Council Meeting. Please accept my apologies. I hope to see you soon and in the meantime here is an update for you.

Finances/Budgets at WNC

The council has started work on its 2026 - 2027 budget. This year it will prove more difficult to develop base assumptions as the Government is proposing some changes to Fair Funding Arrangements (which set the level of grants that the council will get to support its work for 2026-2027). There is a possibility that some indicators may be reset (for example, deprivation indices, growth indices) which may have a beneficial impact on funding awarded to the council. It may also be the case that we see a multi-year deal or settlement. However, as in previous years, the council will not know what funding it will secure until the middle of December.

At present, medium term indicators suggest that there is a shortfall of some £50 million, which is a large gap to close.

As at period 4, the council is predicting an overspend of £9.6 million. Technically, the overspend is much higher but is reduced because the council has used the contingency fund of £11 million. This is significant as the contingency has been used far earlier in the year than before. The £9.6 million is also the largest predicted overspend since the inception of West Northamptonshire Council. The overspends are in the usual pressured areas of Adult Social Care, the Children's Trust and Temporary Accommodation.

Local Plan/Regulation 18 Consultation

Workshops on the Local Plan are ongoing. I attended the first in Towcester on 27 August and the second in Northampton on 10 September. The next Regulation 18 consultation looks likely to be in early 2026 rather than Autumn 2025 as we were expecting. We are still waiting for spacial allocations to be made and we will be looking for around 9800 additional houses for the duration of the plan (up to 2043). The aim is that the plan will be submitted for inspection by the end of 2026.

Neighbourhood Development Plan Funding

Following my correspondence with Stuart Andrew MP who, on our behalf, raised the concerns from parishes about the removal of funding for Neighbourhood Development Plans with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, I have had a disappointing but not unsurprising response from Baroness Taylor of Stevenage who is the Undersecretary of State for Housing and Local Government. No further funding available from government and no indication of this changing at all.

A reminder that WNC has a current consultation on Planning Application Requirements which is open on the website until 26 October.

Brixworth Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

I have been advised that all HWRCs (including Brixworth) will have a change in arrangements from 1 November this year. The council has decided to move an online and telephone pre-booking system. The pre-booking system will open on 20 October. West Northants Council website will be updated to reflect the changes. This change has not been consulted upon and will be for all sites across the West Northants area. There is a petition to request WNC to consider piloting this approach before a blanket rollout. You can find the petition on the West Northants Lib Dems website - www.wnld.org.uk.

WNC Staffing Update

WNC Finance Director, Martin Henry, will be appointed as Interim Chief Executive from the 7 November until a new CEO is appointed.

This month has also seen the arrival of a new Director of People (responsible for Adult and Children's services) - Melanie Williams and a new Director of Public Health - Dr David Johns.

Consultations

There are currently 4 live consultations/ surveys, (planning applications, buses, Cycling and walking infrastructure plan and emergency prep), all of which can be found on WNC website.

Naseby

As you know, on behalf of Cold Ashby Parish Council I have raised issues regarding A14 and A5199 junction. These include contravention of current planning permissions and raising an alleged contravention with the Environmental Crime Team.

Following a multi-agency meeting with the landowner in July the landowner there was indication of a revised planning application for the site. I understand that EGOTM (the landowner) had a plan ready for submission but withdrew it to make amendments, for reasons not disclosed; as such there is currently no new plan in for consideration with WNC or National Highways. I should be advised when and if that changes.

Kind regards
Christine

Christine Ware

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