

## **Aynho Annual Parish Meeting 2026**

**Draft Minutes** – 20 April 2026 @19:00

### **2601 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair, Cllr Dawn Willis, introduced herself and welcomed attendees to the meeting. She explained the context of the meeting, noting that it was a meeting of the Parish rather than a formal Council meeting. She advised that full reports are available on both the Parish Council website and the Aynho Village website, and that paper copies can be delivered to residents upon request, subject to them providing their address details.

Apologies were received from Cllr David Leigh.

The Chair then invited all Councillors and the Clerk/RFO to introduce themselves to those present.

### **2602 Approval of Minutes - 28 April 2025**

On the proposition of Les Horley, unanimously agreed, minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 28 April 2025 were approved.

### **2603 Chairman's Report**

By Cllr Dawn Willis, Chairman, Aynho Parish Council

Thanks to all Councillors for their continued commitment to Aynho Parish Council. As always, all Councillors serve in a voluntary capacity, giving their time for the benefit of the village. This year we would like to record our thanks to Richard and Emma, who have stepped down due to family commitments. Their contribution to the Council has been greatly appreciated, and they will be missed. This has created two vacancies on the Council, and we would encourage anyone interested in joining us to get in touch.

We would also like to thank Perry Tree Farm for their extremely generous donation of the village Christmas tree. Thanks also go to all those who helped erect, decorate, and maintain it throughout the festive period, including David and Ray for regularly changing the lights battery. The tree was widely enjoyed and once again made a lovely focal point for the village at Christmas.

We continue to encourage residents to contact us if they do not have online access and would like paper copies of reports, which are also available on the Parish Council and village websites.

### **Maintenance and Village Improvements**

This year has seen continued investment in our village facilities using Community Funds and contributions from the Village Fete. New additions include a disability bench and table tennis table at the Sports Field, a sandpit table at the Playpark, and new toddler swing seats. WiFi has also been installed at the Pavilion.

We would like to thank Ray for his extensive work installing and maintaining this equipment, as well as ongoing repairs and painting at the Playpark, including spring rides. A bench was kindly donated in memory of Chris Savings and installed with a plaque bearing her well-loved message: “I’ll come and sit down in a minute”.

The Pavilion and wider facilities continue to be maintained and improved, ensuring they remain a valuable asset for sports and community use.

### **Village Clean-up**

A successful Village Spring Clean was held in March and was well supported by residents, including new volunteers. We would particularly like to thank the team from RH for their support in clearing Station Road, collecting a significant amount of litter. Another clean-up day is planned.

### **Roads, Footpaths and Maintenance Reporting**

The Council has continued to report issues via Fix My Street, including potholes, waste bins, and road repairs. New bins have been installed on Croughton Road and Portway, and improvements have been made to footpaths, including Black Path and Charlton Road. Hogweed has also been cleared from key areas.

Requests have been made for further traffic restrictions at Little Lane due to nuisance access by delivery vehicles, and a grit bin for The Square remains under consideration.

### **Traffic Management**

Traffic safety continues to be a priority. A new Community Speed Watch camera has been purchased for year-round use, and volunteers are being sought to support its operation.

Following continued engagement with WNC, a zebra crossing has now been installed, along with a VAS sign at Cartwright Gardens, with another planned for Roundtown. Additional street lighting is also expected on Station Road and Roundtown.

### **Community Events and Projects**

The first Aynho Classic Car and Motorbike Show was held in 2025 and was a great success, attracting over 70 entrants and raising £400 for the Playpark fund. Following its positive reception, the event will be repeated in September 2026.

Work is also underway exploring improvements to the Playpark, including potential new equipment, which will require fundraising and grant applications. The Council is also investigating the creation of a circular village walk via a footpath behind Deer Park.

### **Village Facilities and Notices**

A reminder was issued regarding the bus stop book exchange, which is maintained by volunteers, and residents are asked to ensure only books are left and any containers are removed.

There has been limited interest in reviving the Neighbourhood Watch and Car Share schemes, and residents are encouraged to get involved.

## **Planning**

The Baynards Green warehouse development has been approved, and the Cartwright development scheme has also been passed. The Council will continue to monitor both developments closely. Following engagement with residents, it was agreed not to trigger the Asset of Community Value process at this stage.

## **Financial Report – Annual Parish Meeting 2026**

This year represents a strong and stable position for the parish council's finances. Through prudent financial management and careful budgeting, the council was able to hold the parish precept at the same level, avoiding an increase for residents while continuing to maintain and improve parish facilities.

The council maintains healthy financial reserves, in line with guidance from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). Maintaining appropriate reserves ensures that the parish council is able to manage unexpected costs and continue investing in the long-term upkeep and improvement of community assets.

All accounts are available for inspection under the usual rules governing public funds (clerk@aynho-pc.gov.uk).

This report is prepared based on the guidance set out in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide."

Important note: These figures have been prepared on a RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS basis.

Finances are checked each year by an Internal Auditor. This year, the auditor particularly thanked the Clerk for his contribution, in a statement to the Chair of the Council: I completed the year-end audit review of Aynho Parish Council remotely which included an online meeting with the Clerk between 1st April and 10th April 2026. . . .All was found to be in good order, . . . for which the Clerk and councillors should be congratulated. - Comments made by the Internal Auditor.

The full report made by the Internal Auditor can be found on our website, under Transparency, Internal Audit Reports.

All comments regarding the report can be made to:

The Clerk

Email: clerk@aynho-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 01869 934164

or by using the online form on the Contact Us page at [www.aynho-pc.gov.uk](http://www.aynho-pc.gov.uk)

## **Parish Council Income**

Aynho Parish Council is responsible for the financial governance of the parish of Aynho.

Our funds primarily come from:

- The Precept, a supplement added to the council tax of every household in the parish.
- Income from renting parish council owned assets, particularly the Pavilion and Sports Field.
- Fundraising events and donations, often organised by residents and community groups for the benefit of parish facilities.

Over the years this has included activities such as car boot sales, the village lottery, the fete, quiz and curry nights, and car show. The council greatly appreciates the efforts of residents and volunteers who have supported the parish in raising funds for community facilities.

### **Use of the Precept**

The precept funds the day-to-day running costs of the parish council and the ongoing maintenance of parish assets.

This includes:

- Maintenance of the Play Park and Sports Field
- Grass cutting and verge maintenance
- Street lighting
- Emptying dog waste bins
- Routine maintenance and operational costs associated with parish facilities

These services ensure the parish remains well maintained, safe and attractive for residents and visitors.

### **Sports Field and Community Facilities**

The Sports Field continues to generate strong income, which plays an important role in supporting the ongoing maintenance and improvement of this important community facility.

This income, together with generous donations and support from residents, has enabled the council to continue investing in improvements and new equipment for the Sports Field. These contributions from the community are invaluable and have allowed the council to maintain and enhance facilities in ways that would not be possible from the precept alone.

Looking ahead, the parish council is now planning significant improvements to the village playground, ensuring that facilities for younger residents continue to be modern, safe and enjoyable for families in the village.

The parish council would like to thank all residents, volunteers and community groups who continue to support parish facilities through fundraising, donations and volunteering. This community spirit plays a vital role in helping maintain and improve the shared assets that make Aynho such a special place to live.

## **2604 Reports from Local Authorities and Parish Organisations**

### **Ward Councillor Report – West Northamptonshire Council**

Cllr Rebecca Breese provided an update on activities at West Northamptonshire Council.

Following the 2025 elections, representation has changed significantly, with two ward councillors now covering an area previously served by seven. The Council is now led by a Reform administration, many of whom are new to local government, which has presented some operational challenges.

There have also been notable staffing changes, including the departure of several senior officers, alongside an increase in overall staffing levels.

Recent policy decisions include the withdrawal of proposed parking charges in market towns following public opposition, the removal of free parking for Blue Badge holders, and increases in green bin charges above inflation. Council Tax has increased by 4.95%, just below the permitted maximum.

Ward councillors continue to advocate for local priorities, including planning matters. Attendance at the recent biodigester hearing was noted, with approval granted following a casting vote.

Highways remain a concern, with numerous potholes identified and funding constraints affecting progress. Work is also ongoing to address flooding issues.

The closure of the Ability Bus scheme was highlighted as a challenge for rural transport provision.

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#### **Aynho Lottery**

Cllr Jerry Stephenson provided an update on the Aynho Lottery.

He thanked all residents who are currently participating. Since taking over in January 2025, membership has grown from approximately 40–45 participants to 162 this year, with a target of reaching 200 members.

The lottery raised £1,700 last year and is expected to raise more this year. Residents were advised that there are still a few days remaining before the first draw, and anyone wishing to take part can join at the end of the meeting. The introduction of potential bonus prizes was also noted.

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## **Village Survey**

Cllr Helen Mackenzie provided an update on the Village Survey.

Work is currently underway to compile questions, building on the previous survey. It is intended that the survey will be distributed online using SurveyMonkey, with alternative options being explored to ensure participation from residents who are unable to complete the survey online.

## **2605 RAF Croughton – Community Update**

Abigail Jeffs, Community Relations Adviser at RAF Croughton, introduced herself and outlined her role.

She encouraged residents and the Parish Council to make contact regarding community initiatives, events, support, or with questions related to the base. RAF Croughton is keen to strengthen its relationship with the local community and continues to work closely with local councils.

Opportunities to visit the base are limited; however, a 4th July event is likely, all attendance at base is subject to advance registration and identification requirements.

## **2606 Aynho Facebook Page**

Les Horley introduced and outlined the administration of the Aynho Community Facebook page, along with other related social media platforms. He explained that the page is intended as a medium for sharing information with residents and noted that comments are currently disabled.

He invited feedback from attendees on how the community would like social media to be used going forward.

Members noted that:

- An Aynho Community Chat page has also been established.
- There is potential to enable comments on selected posts.
- Internet access is now available at the Pavilion.
- Sessions could be arranged at the Pavilion to support residents in accessing and using Facebook.
- Feedback on social media use could be incorporated into the upcoming Village Survey and Newsletter.

## **2607 Questions from the Public**

Approximately 20 members of the public attended.

**Q1 – Loss of Ability Bus** - Concerns were raised regarding the lack of alternative transport, the high cost of taxis, and the impact on independence. The loss of the Ability Bus service was described as significant.

**A – Cllr Breese** - A call has been put out for other organisations to take over the service. Further information will be shared when available.

**Q2 – Loss of Ability Bus** - A question was raised as to whether another bus service is being considered. It was noted that many users held bus passes, which may have impacted income generation.

**A – Cllr Breese** - She will continue to advocate for Aynho to be included in any future scheme. At present, expressions of interest are being sought from potential providers. Any future service would require sufficient usage to remain viable.

**A – Cllr Herring** - There is a lack of understanding at a central level regarding rural transport needs. She will continue to press for provision for villages.

**Q3 – Loss of Ability Bus** - Clarification was sought as to who is responsible for addressing the issue.

**A – Cllr Herring** - The matter is being dealt with by the current Reform administration at West Northamptonshire Council.

**A – Cllr Breese** - The Ability Bus service was not owned by the Council but operated as a Community Interest Company.

**Q4 – Contact with Council** - A resident reported that when contacting West Northamptonshire Council, the operator was unfamiliar with Aynho.

**A – Cllr Herring** - This may be due to the village having an Oxfordshire postcode.

**Q5 – Grass Cutting** - While the service was praised, it was suggested that advance notice of cutting schedules would help prevent obstructive parking.

**A – Cllr Ray Willis** - The schedule is published on the Parish Council website and could also be shared via Facebook and the village newsletter.

**Q6 – Parking** - Concerns were raised regarding parking in several areas, including Charlton Road, the Glebe, and Portway. Suggestions included a one-way system and improved parking layouts.

**A – Cllr Dawn Willis** - West Northamptonshire Council has previously advised that there is no funding available for changes at the Glebe. A one-way system for Charlton Road has been suggested but is not currently supported.

**A – Cllr Ray Willis** - Residents are encouraged to report concerns directly to Kier, as increased feedback may strengthen the case for change.

**Q7 – Hollow Way** - A sign has become detached and requires refixing.

**A – Cllr Poppy Hoole** - This has been reported to West Northamptonshire Council, who have advised that it is not their responsibility.

**Q8 – Parking (Sports Field Events)** - A question was raised regarding the use of signage to direct parking during football matches.

**A – Cllr Dawn Willis** - The Council is working with organisers to encourage use of alternative parking at Green Lane. However, parking on public roads cannot be restricted, and gates cannot be left open outside organised events.

**Q9 – Cartwright Site** - An update was requested.

**A – Cllr Dawn Willis** - The site is currently listed for auction at £1.2 million.

**Q10 – Helicopter Traffic** - A question was raised regarding any restrictions on helicopter movements, including frequency and height.

**A – Cllr Dawn Willis** - This does not fall within the remit of the Parish Council. Residents were encouraged to monitor activity, and any concerns can be investigated further if necessary.

#### **2608 Any other business**

None

#### **2609 Closing Remarks**

The Chair thanked all for attending and their contribution and closed the meeting.

Meeting closed at 20:15.