

Item 12 – Clerk's Report

1. Councillor Vacancies update

A vacancy for a councillor has existed in the Copythorne North Ward since September 2024. In addition to the original "Notice of Vacancy", a "Notice of Co-Option" has been posted twice. The expiry date of the last of these was January 31st 2025. No applications have been received. A further "Notice of Co-Option" and associated publicity will commence shortly with applications to be received by March 31st.

A vacancy for a councillor in the Copythorne South Ward arose in January 2025 and the "Notice of Vacancy" was posted on January 20th 2025. At the time of writing this report we awaited word from the Electoral Services Team at NFDC as to whether a request for an election has been received by them (closing date February 7th 2025). If it is then that process will commence. If it isn't then a "Notice of Co-Option" will be posted with the same time frame as the vacancy in the Copythorne North Ward.

2. NFNPA and NFDC "Local Plan" Reviews

Both NFNPA and NFDC (as the Local Planning Authorities for our part of the country) are undertaking reviews of their Local Plans.

In broad terms, a Local Plan guides decisions on future development proposals and addresses the needs and opportunities of the area. Topics that Local Plans usually cover include housing, employment and shops and they also identify where development should take place and areas where development should be restricted.

Both NFNPA and NFDC are keen for local residents to engage with the review and information is beginning to be made public about what the reviews will consider and how residents can have their say.

The Parish Council will also be responding with its own comments and these will be discussed at future Parish Council meetings.

3. Flooding Matters Updates

- a. At the October 29th 2024 meeting of the Flooding Advisory Community a member of the public asked the following question:-

"Would the council be prepared to consider contributing financially to investigating/resolving riparian flooding issues when such action would result in the benefit to more than a single property?"

Having examined the spending powers available to a Parish Council I do not believe that the Council is able to use public funds in this way. The Parish Council will though continue to raise the profile of Riparian Responsibilities ("RR") via its newsletters; website; and social media. It will also issue letters to residents in areas prone to flooding to remind them of these responsibilities; and will seek the support of other bodies such as Hampshire County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) and the Environment Agency to assist residents. More information on "RR" can be found at <https://www.copythorne.org.uk/flooding/>

Many residential property insurance policies provide legal services which may be of use when the inaction of neighbours to undertake their riparian responsibilities is considered to be having a flooding impact.

- b. Riparian Responsibility letters – At the January 7th 2025 meeting of the Flooding Advisory Committee the members of the public present asked that letters be sent to the owners of properties that live in parts of the parish that regularly suffers from water overflowing from the main rivers (Bartley Water and the Cadnam River). Such letters, having been reviewed by the Environment Agency, will be issued in the coming weeks. Letters will also be issued to property owners in other parts of the parish that are impacted by ditches and culverts.
- c. Also at the meeting mentioned at point b above, it was asked if the Council would write to HCC about the culverts under Shepherds Road (near to the junction with Chinham Road) to ask if changes could be made to the culvert to increase the flow of water. Having gathered information about the existing structure, I will be contacting both HCC and the Environment Agency regarding this matter.

4. Advisory Committees

The following meetings have taken place since my last report to the January 2025 Council meeting:-

Flooding AC	January 7 th 2025
Five Year Plan AC	January 9 th 2025

At the time of writing, I am aware of the following meetings scheduled (or likely to take place) in the next few months.

Media & Publicity AC	February 13 th 2025
Personnel & Governance AC	February 13 th 2025
Finance AC	February 24 th 2025
Flooding AC	April 2025 (date to be confirmed)
Five Year Plan AC	April 24 th 2025

Agenda, meeting notes & papers for all Advisory Committee meetings can be found on the following page of our website (<https://www.copythorne.org.uk/committees/>) in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee.

5. Councillor Drop In Sessions

The following sessions have been arranged:-

Thursday 20th February & Saturday 15th March, both for an hour from 2pm at Copythorne Community Cafe

6. Matters reported to HCC/NFDC

Attached (as Appendix A) is a list of matters reported by the Clerk to HCC that remain outstanding. Also included are matters reported by councillors or residents who have then supplied the reference number to me.

David Rigby, Parish Clerk
February 4th 2025

APPENDIX A – Point 6 – Items reported to HCC/NFDC

ISSUES REPORTED TO HCC or NFDC FAULT REPORTING WEBPAGE - OPEN ENQUIRIES - (updated 4/2/25)

DATE REPORTED	REF. NUMBER	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE RAISED	REPORTED BY	FIRST CHECK DUE	LAST CHECKED	LATEST COMMENTS
11/04/20	7061319	Query condition of New Inn Rd (direct to Highways)	David Rigby	27/04/20	04/02/25	Last quarterly survey advised no worked planned. The last survey was due to take place in January 2025. Details will be sought.
23/11/22	21631147	Drain blocked near The Wilderness, Winsor Rd	David Rigby	30/11/22	04/02/25	Works were undertaken in mid Jan 2025 the results of which are awaited with interest.
10/10/24	21764994	Utilities repair issue in Romsey Road, Ower	David Rigby	17/10/24	04/02/25	Southern Water will be returning to undertake further repair works.
09/12/24	21774560	Catch pit gully problem, Southampton Road, Cadnam	David Rigby	16/12/24	04/02/25	10/12/24 – “No works required at this time” (To be monitored – no recent issues reported)
17/01/25	21780572	Shepherds Road drainage investigations on 3/3/25 (request for more details on extent of works)	David Rigby	24/01/25	04/02/25	17/01/25 – “We have received your enquiry and it will be passed to the appropriate team for further assessment.”

Number only = HCC

CS and Number = NFDC