



Annual Parish Council Report

2022 – 2023

Compiled by:

Marion Fox Goddard

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

May 22nd 2023

Introduction

The annual report of Fernwood Parish Council covers the civic year, which starts in May at the Annual Parish Council Meeting when the Chairman of the Council was elected by fellow Councillors. The report also covers the financial year, from 1st April to 31st March and gives an overview of the financial position of Fernwood Parish Council.

This report is divided into sections, each outlines relevant information and details the work the Parish Council has been doing during the Civic year May 2022 to May 2023. We hope that you find this report of interest as it is intended to be a communication and information tool to keep you, the electorate, informed of the activities of your local Council. Much of this information is included on the website and is updated on a regular basis, this report simply collates the information on an annual basis.

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Introduction to Fernwood Parish Council and Councillors

The Parish of Fernwood is relatively new with Fernwood Parish Council being formed in 2008. Parish Councils are now seen as an important tier in the government structure and can take on and manage local areas.

The Parish Council is proactive in ensuring that the views of its electorate are heard at District and County Council level, with the Parish Clerk in regular contact with both District and County Councils to ensure requests made by residents are dealt with.

The Parish Council is proactive with all aspects of Planning within the Parish and will also respond to planning consultations in adjacent Parishes/Districts if it is felt that the application will have an impact on Fernwood residents. Any planning policy changes at either local or national level are considered, and responses sent when appropriate to the decision makers to ensure that these are fit for purpose. The Parish Council responses to consultations on applications are assisted when comments are received from parishioners, so these are welcomed. Due to the work conducted by the Parish Council, to ensure that Fernwood has a Neighbourhood Plan in place, Fernwood receives a larger proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy - 25%, uncapped. The Neighbourhood Plan went to referendum in September 2017 and now this is a more local policy document, to help to meet the future needs of the community.

The Parish Council is proactive in trying to represent as much of the Parish as is possible. Residents are encouraged to come to our meetings, contact our Councillors and staff if you need help or have an idea to share. We publish the Fernwood Gazette every six months and regularly update our website and Facebook page to keep residents informed.

The Parish Clerk (Marion Fox Goddard) can be contacted by the following methods:

Telephone: 01636 613024 email: clerk@fernwood-pc.co.uk

The Clerk is available on Tuesdays, Wednesday, and Thursdays from 10am – 1pm in the Parish Council office at Fernwood Village Hall (but will pick up/respond to emails and phone messages Monday to Friday).

Fernwood Parish Councillors

Councillor Name	Email Address
Dave Mack	cllr.david.mack@fernwood-pc.co.uk ;
Ian McGregor	cllr.ian.mcgregor@fernwood-pc.co.uk
Neill Mison	cllr.neill.mison@fernwood-pc.co.uk
Leigh Rixon	cllr.leigh.rixon@fernwood-pc.co.uk
Kim Shepherd	cllr.kimberley.shepherd@fernwood-pc.co.uk
Jim Weale	cllr.jim.weale@fernwood-pc.co.uk
Mollie Weale	cllr.mollie.weale@fernwood-pc.co.uk

Achievements and Progress during the year

- 1. Costall Woods** - The woodland (behind Fernwood Day Nursery) purchase was completed in May 2022. The lights that had not worked for years have been repaired/upgraded to LED. Bins have been installed. A meeting was held with the community in July 2022 to discuss ideas for the woodland which led to the design of a wildlife garden on the area behind Marron Court which was delivered in April. A community bulb planting session was held in October.. An ecological survey has been conducted and necessary tree work has been done. One of the felled trees has been carved into an owl. Community Infrastructure Levy (money from developers - CIL) is being used to fund this project.
- 2. Community Jubilee Celebration** - In June 2022, we held a Platinum Jubilee Celebration with live music, free entertainment, and fireworks – the event was a great success. Thanks go out to all our volunteers who worked with the Parish Council to make this happen. Also, many thanks to the local businesses and residents who were understanding of our need to close Rubys Avenue to keep event attendees safe.
- 3. Youth Club** - Fernwood Youth Club opened its doors on Friday evenings from April 2022. The club is open to young people in year 6 to year 11. The service

is delivered by Nottinghamshire Youth Services. Community Infrastructure Levy funding along with grants and contributions from Newark and Sherwood District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. The Parish Council has committed funding for the club for the next financial year and foresee this continuing in future years should the club to be in demand.

4. **Village Hall Expansion** – The Council has submitted a pre-planning application enquiry to the planning authority to assess the likelihood of a planning application for the addition of a new hall (on the back car park) along with adaptation of the changing rooms to storage space being permitted. The feedback received led the Council to appoint a highways specialist to help us with ensuring the Council has enough parking spaces for the additional floor space planned. A parking survey will be completed in May 2023 and the Council will take the next steps to move the application forward. Should the application be successful the hall will be able to accommodate more parties and regular activities/groups.
5. **Fernwood Central Land Transfer** - The Council is still working with Newark and Sherwood District Council to get the open spaces in Fernwood Central handed over from Barratt David Wilson Homes to Fernwood Parish Council. The progress of this is much slower than we would have liked but we continue to push for this and are assured that Barratt David Wilson Homes are committed to handing the land over.
6. **Land Transfer/Maintenance in new developments in Fernwood** – The Council has continued to work with Newark and Sherwood District Council to ensure public ownership and maintenance of public open spaces and community facilities are achieved without the use of management companies. This work is ongoing with there being three developers in/due to be the Parish.

7. Highways

- a. *Interactive Speed Sign* - It has been agreed that the Parish Council can fund an interactive speed sign using Community Infrastructure Levy although we are waiting for Via East Midlands to deliver this.
- b. *Rumble Strips* - Following a resident raising concerns regarding the noise/vibrations caused by rumble strips, we consulted with all households living close by to these on Goldstraw Lane and Dale Way. These are having a significant effect on some residents so the Parish Council approached Nottinghamshire County Council/Via to see if this could be addressed using CIL. Nottinghamshire County Council advise that rumble strips are not recommended for residential areas so alternative options have been requested.
- c. *Hollowdyke Lane* – The Parish Council conducted an online consultation with residents through social media. A significant number of residents

said they supported the Council investigating the possibility of keeping Hollowdyke Lane open although Nottinghamshire County Council have detailed lots of barriers to this. Our highways specialist has given an indication of the costs involved to keeping Hollowdyke Lane open and suggested that this be a condition of a future planning application and would be subject to political will.

The Council had speeding tubes placed on Hollowdyke Lane to assess the traffic using the road. The evidence shows that most traffic is not following the advisory 20mph limit and 50% of traffic is travelling over 30mph. A request has been submitted to Via East Midlands for the speed limit to be reduced to 30mph funded by Community Infrastructure Levy but unfortunately they have declined.

- 8. Local Council Award Scheme** - The Parish Council was successful with its application for the Local Council Award Scheme Foundation Level. This award shows not only that we meet a set of minimum standards to deliver effectively for the community, but we are striving to offer more to our residents. To meet this award the council has had to demonstrate that it has the required documentation and information in place for operating lawfully and according to standard practice. The Council is committed to applying for the next level award and hope to do this in 2023/24.
- 9. Coat of Arms** – The Council invested in a Coat of Arms from the College of Arms. This was funded with CIL funding with no cost to the council taxpayer. It was bought to use for signage at the gateways to the Parish. The amount of money spent on this and community involvement with the decision was a concern to some residents leading to a petition being submitted to the Parish Council. Reports were published and a response to the petition given.
- 10. Staff** - The Parish Council team of staff this year, has been further strengthened with the appointment of Claire Blackman as Administration Assistant. Claire works 15 hours per week alongside the Parish Clerk who has been moved to a full time contract. The Caretaker continues to work 30 hours and has enjoyed the additional work in Costall Woods.
- 11. Elections** - On May 4th 2023 local elections were held. The election for Fernwood Parish Council was contested with 12 candidates standing with only 7 seats on the Council. 5 new councillors and 2 members of the previous council were elected (see page 3 for full details). Thanks goes to Ryan Cullen, Dee Harrison, John Newton, Henry Micah, and Barry Smith for their public service over the years.

Chairman's report (Annual Meeting of Parishioners - Wednesday 24th May 2023, at 7:45pm in the main hall at Fernwood Village Hall)

I would like to introduce myself, as the newly elected Chair of Fernwood Parish Council. I would like to thank Barry Smith for his service as Chair for the past seven years and Dee Harrison, John Newton, Ryan Cullen and Henry Micah for their service to Fernwood over the years.

We are a new council and have had our first meeting plus our annual parish council meeting. We have begun productive conversations on all our ideas and have strategy workshops planned imminently. During the summer we will bring forward our ideas and decide, as a Council, our priorities. During the election period we outlined our plan for Fernwood and intend to bring this forward. We will provide updates in due course and consult with the residents of Fernwood as much as possible over the next four years. Our hope is to shape our community to suit all.

Finance: 2022/23 year

The Parish Council is in a favourable financial position with adequate reserves and a significant amount of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to deliver excellent services in the Parish of Fernwood. The Parish Council, when setting the budget for 2023/24, has recognised the need to plan for future service delivery & development, whilst also not increasing the financial burden on residents.

An internal audit has been undertaken with the auditor report being submitted to full council. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return report to the council was signed in April and associated paperwork has been submitted to the appointed external auditor. The Parish Council has served notice of the public inspection period for the accounts. Once the external auditor has assessed our submission and reported back this will be published. The accounts can be inspected by appointment with the Parish Clerk in accordance with the Notice of Public Rights. Fernwood Parish Council has set the dates for the public inspection of their 2022/23 accounts from June 5th to July 14th, 2023 – to make an appointment to view the accounts, contact the Parish Council office.

The Council has an Investment Policy to ensure prudent management of the reserves the Council hold. Full details of expenditure and budgets are available on the Parish Council website.

Some Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is available to local groups through grants. No applications have been received this year.

Councillors Attendance Record (is published on the website [Fernwood Parish Council, Fernwood, Newark \(fernwood-pc.co.uk\)](https://www.fernwood-pc.co.uk))

2023/24 Timetable of Meetings

Full Council - The Parish Council meets on the third Monday of each month (except August and December when there is no meeting) at 7pm in the small hall of Fernwood Village Hall. All meetings of the Parish Council have a public forum which starts shortly after 7pm. Residents are invited to all meetings.

15	MAY 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
19	JUN 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
17	JUL 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
18	SEPT 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
16	OCT 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
20	NOV 2023, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
15	JAN 2024, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
19	FEB 2024, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
18	MAR 2024, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall
15	APR 2024, MON	●	19:00 – 22:00	Parish Council Meeting PCM	Small Hall

Annual Parish Council Meeting - In May, we hold an Annual Parish Council Meeting at 6pm prior to the usual Parish Council meeting. This is where we elect the Chair for the year and review all our standing orders, financial regulations and many more items regarding the administration of the Council. This meeting is open to residents.

Closing remarks

The Parish Council which served up to May 8th, 2023, worked hard to make improvements throughout the parish for the benefit of all residents. The new Council (elected on May 4th) and our staff will serve the community to the best of its ability during the next 12 months and will rise to the challenges that constantly require us to review and change what we do and how we do it, to represent the community which we serve.

Full details of the Council's work can be found in our 2022/2023 Action Review and a plan of action for 2023/24. This can be found on the Fernwood Parish Council website. Fernwood Parish Council is committed to considering all matters brought to the attention of the Parish Council, either through its Councillors or direct to the Parish Clerk.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Clerk or the Parish Councillors.