

A Week Is A Long Time In Politics

Yesterday, **Cllr Jonathan Nunn resigned as Leader** of West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) amid allegations of domestic violence and assault (see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-68829156>). The resignation comes before an extraordinary meeting of the council scheduled for 9 May 2024 at which a motion of no confidence in the Leader was to be tabled. The Conservative group at WNC will need to choose a new Leader who presumably will be elected at the council's Annual Meeting to be held on **16 May 2024**. Meanwhile, in a fortnight we will know who the county's next Police Fire and Crime Commissioner is. Incumbent Stephen Mold is stepping down following multiple issues of cronyism and misogyny (see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-68581595>). For details on the three candidates standing for election on 2 May 2024 please see <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk/elections/pcc.northamptonshire.2024-05-02/police-fire-and-crime-commissioner-for-northamptonshire/>. It has been a **pitiful year for standards in public life** in Northamptonshire and nationally, with scandal after scandal hitting the headlines. All holders of public office, from parish councillors to members of parliament, are expected to adhere to **high standards of ethical behaviour** and to comply with their authority's code of conduct and also common law (just in case that is not obvious to anyone). This might be a good juncture for your council to reacquaint itself with the **Civility and Respect Pledge** for parish and town councils that was introduced because there is **no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation** within our sector. The pledge demonstrates that a council is committed to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct. For more details, please see <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/civility-and-respect-project>.

New Development Plans for Northamptonshire

Parish and town councils in West Northamptonshire will probably want to add an item to their May 2024 agendas "To respond the West Northamptonshire Council Draft Local Plan". The "Regulation 18" draft plan is out for an 8-week consultation running from **8 April 2024 to 2 June 2024**. A Reg 18 draft is essentially an almost-final draft, preceding the Reg 19 "Submission Version" of the Local Plan which will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for an 'Examination in Public'. In other words, this is pretty much the last chance to make alterations to the Local Plan before it goes off for approval. Clerks have been sent all the details, but you can also find information at <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/planning-policy/new-local-plan-west-northamptonshire>. The Local Plan for North Northamptonshire is also in development but is a few months behind the west. North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) expects to have a draft plan for consultation in the summer, with a further Reg 18 consultation in early 2025.

Local Council Vacancies

There are three vacancies to bring to your attention this week. **Little Harrowden Parish Council**, just north of Wellingborough, has a vacancy for a clerk working 20 hours per month. The council has 9 councillors, 770 electors, and the precept is £28,560. The deadline for applications is 26 April 2024. On the other side of the county near Daventry, **Newnham Parish Council** has a vacancy for a clerk working

30 hours per month. There are 8 seats and 472 electors. The precept is £34,722. The deadline for applications is 10 May 2024. And finally, right in the middle of the county, just south of Northampton, **Wootton Parish Council** has a vacancy for a full-time clerk. Wootton has 5,884 (and growing) and 12 councillors. The precept for 2024/25 is £315,576. The job is based at the council's offices at Wootton Community Centre. The deadline for applications is 6 May 2024. Full details of these vacancies can be found at <https://www.northantscalc.com/council-vacancies>.

I hope you have a very good weekend.

Best regards,

Danny.