# MONTHLY NEWS REPORT JUNE 2021

#### **News Report June 2021**

#### First Meeting of West Northamptonshire Council 20th May 2021

Cllr Ann Addison and Cllr Andre Gonzalez De Savage were appointed Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. Cllr Jonathan Nunn and Cllr Adam Brown became Leader and Deputy Leader. Membership of the Cabinet and Committees were agreed.

We formally agreed to 'make' the Ashton Neighbourhood Plan, which was considered at the Referendum on the 6th May 2021. 95% of those who voted did so in favour, which exceeds the required greater than 50%. By agreeing to this recommendation, we made this document a part of our Statutory Development Plan for the Area.

#### **Wombling with the Hackleton Wombles**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> May, I enjoyed a Wombling session with Leigh Mitchell and the Hackleton



Menagerie. But I now know that calling it litter is a misnomer. We collected a pallet, rubber piping, tyres, clean recyclables, builder's rubble, cans, bottles, a VHS video player and bottles with uncertain content! The team are doing a fantastic job and I applaud them for their hard work. It was lovely to see the ditch free of rubbish and the water flowing freely as we left.

"Fly-tipping is inexcusable. It is not only an eyesore for residents, but also a serious public health risk, creating pollution and attracting rats and other vermin. It also costs local taxpayers almost £50 million a year to clear up, which could be better spent on other vital services in our communities."

#### **Litter Animation Competition**

Northamptonshire Recycles is challenging Key Stage 2 pupils across the county to create a short animation of no more than 20 seconds about the issues of litter in their school or across the wider community. Entries should be sent to litterchampions@westnorthants.gov.uk by 4pm on Monday 5 July. The winning entry will receive £200 for their school. Find out more at https://bit.ly/3i146HF #GBSpringClean

#### **Fly Tipping**

We have got to find a solution to Fly-tipping, which is the illegal dumping of waste and it is a crime. Fly-tipped waste includes appliances like fridges and washing machines, waste from building and demolition work, animal carcasses, vehicle parts and tyres. Hazardous

waste such as oil, asbestos sheeting and chemicals are also dumped illegally. The Local Government Association (LGA) is warning us that almost 20,000 incidents of Fly-tipping occur every week in England. Latest fly-tipping statistics for England show that local authorities were forced to clear up just under 1 (976,000)million fly-tipping incidents, from tarmac and asbestos, to tyres and even a boat. The LGA said councils are working hard to try crackdown on offenders. The number of court fines issued increased by 30 per cent to 2,671 in the same period and the total value rose to £1,090,000 - a 7 per cent rise on the previous year. However, the LGA is calling for sentencing guidelines to be reviewed by the Government, so that offenders are given bigger fines for more serious offences.

# TIRED OF POTHOLES FLY-TIPPING LOOSE PAVING

DOG POOP VANDALISM BROKEN STREET LIGHTING?

# REPORT THEM TO THE COUNCIL WITH © FixMyStreet.com

another project from the lovely people at myS::ciety

Like other Local Authorities, West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC) open for the public to dispose of any waste that can't be collected at home. Significant volumes of material have continued to flow into these sites suggesting that the public have adapted to these measures well.

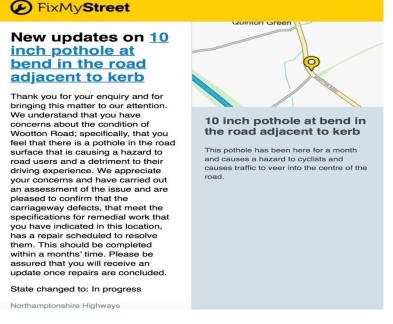
However LGA is asking manufacturers of furniture and mattresses to do more to offer more take-back services.

Anyone using a private company to dispose of any waste should check that they have a Waste Carriers License, which is required by any business that buys, sells, disposes of or transports waste. The Government is currently looking to strengthen the scheme, which currently fines those without a license up to £5,000.

We must work together, to deter individuals from spoiling our parks, highways, lay-bys and verges over and over again, and to help offset the huge costs to WNC.

#### **Potholes** Quinton

I had been alerted to a serious pothole, which had caused a cyclist to come off their bike and for cars to swerve into the middle of the road. This had been outstanding for quite some time. I escalated it on 'Fix my Street'. I made it clear that this was a cycle route and that they should do something before a cyclist, motorist or both have a serious accident. I received the enclosed update stating that a repair has now



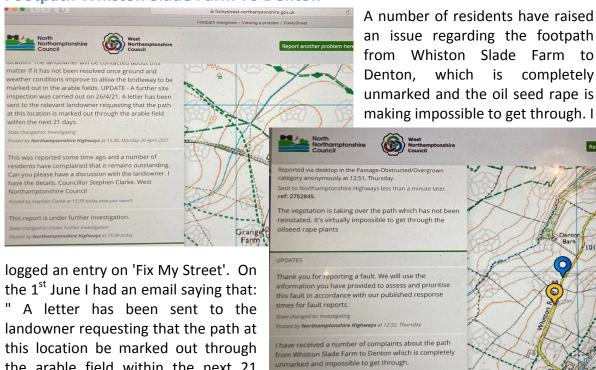
been scheduled. I will keep you all posted

#### **Footpath Horton To Piddington**

the arable field within the next 21

A number of residents have raised an issue regarding the footpath from Horton to Piddington, which is completely impossible to get through. I have logged an entry on 'Fix My Street' on the 29<sup>th</sup> May and this is still outstanding.

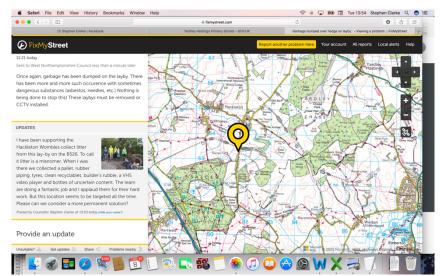
#### **Footpath Whiston Slade Farm To Denton**



days. UPDATE - Site inspected on 1-6-21. Route has now been marked out through arable field. NOW CLOSED.

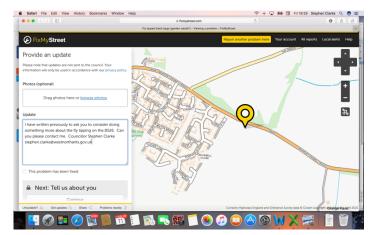
#### Fix my Street-Lay-by on B526

On the 8<sup>th</sup> June, I updated 'Fix my Street' regarding the persistent dumping of waste in the lay-by on the B526. I have been supporting the Hackleton Wombles recently to collect litter from this lay-by on the B526. To call it litter is a misnomer. When I was there we collected a pallet, rubber piping, tyres, clean recyclables, builder's rubble, a VHS video



player and bottles of uncertain content. The team are doing a fantastic job and I applaud them for their hard work. But this location seems to be targeted all the time. We now need a more permanent solution.

Posted on Fix my Street today by Councillor Stephen Clarke at 13:53 08/06/21.

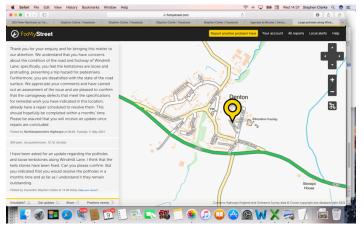


#### **More Fly tipping on B526**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> June, I have written to Fix My Street again as there have been further incidences of fly tipping in the lay-by on the B526y. I had previously asked them to do something about the persistent flytipping on the B526. I am now trying to get them to discuss it with me direct.

#### Fix my Street-Windmill Lane, Denton

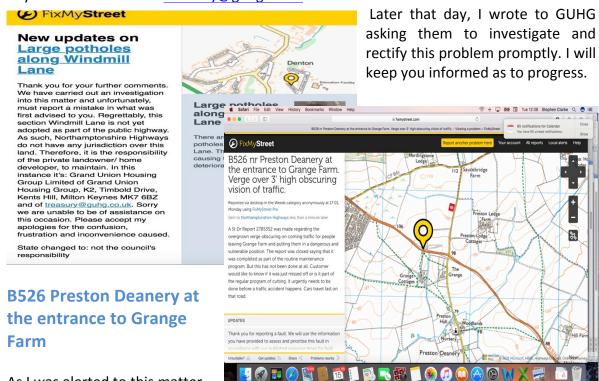
I have been asked for an update regarding the potholes in Windmill Lane, Denton. It is a



month since we were told it would be fixed within a month. I have logged the matter on Fix my Street again on the 9<sup>th</sup> June. I will keep you updated.

#### **Windmill Lane Denton**

On the 14<sup>th</sup> June, I was informed that this section of Windmill Lane is not yet adopted as part of the public highway. As such, Northamptonshire Highways do not have any jurisdiction over this land. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the private landowner/ home developer, to maintain. In this instance they say that it's: Grand Union Housing Group Limited of Grand Union Housing Group, K2, Timbold Drive, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes MK7 6BZ and of treasury@guhg.co.uk.



As I was alerted to this matter,

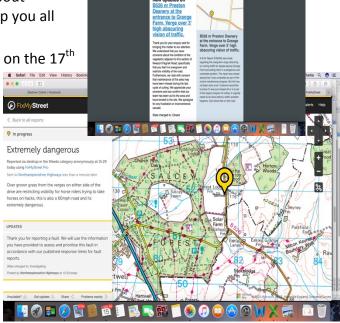
on the 15th June, I have asked 'Fix My Street' to take a look at this as soon as possible and let me know when it is fixed. I am concerned about highway safety at this location. I will keep you all updated. **B526 Nr Preston Deanery** 

I received a response from Fix My Street on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021, to say that they have fixed

this problem.

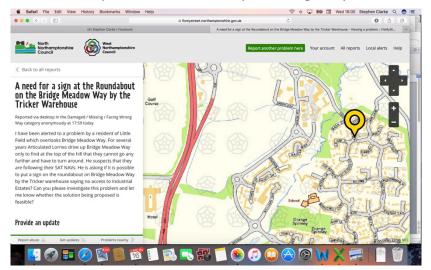
#### **Extremely Dangerous**

I was also alerted to the over grown grass on the verges on either side of the drive which are restricting visibility for horse riders trying to take horses on hacks, the B526 is also a 60mph road and its extremely dangerous and therefore a problem of Highway Safety. I have escalated the problem for a prompt resolution.



#### **Bridge Meadow Way, Grange Park**

I have been alerted to a problem by a resident of Little Field, which overlooks Bridge Meadow Way. For several years Articulated Lorries drive up Bridge Meadow Way only to find at the top of the hill that they cannot go any further and have to turn around. He



suspects that they are following their SAT NAVs. He is asking if it is possible to put a sign on the roundabout on Bridge Meadow Way by the Tricker warehouse saying no access to Industrial Estates? Can you please investigate this problem and let me know whether the solution being proposed is feasible?

#### Hackleton Coffee@Carey

I promised Pamela Clements that I would visit Coffee@Carey at the Carey Baptist Church, 2 Chapel Lane, Hackleton last month. As I needed to be in Hackleton on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, I visited there for a well needed coffee and cake. This is a new initiative and they had only been open for three weeks. They have plenty of seating and they are open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 10.00am -2.30pm. It was a great surprise to meet one of my fellow Wombles at the Coffee@Carey . Whilst, I missed seeing Pamela, Cynthia Worman looked after us very well. Everyone was very welcoming and we had a good cup of coffee and cake, followed by a chat with some of those who were there. What a great initiative. Well done to those who have set it up in the village.



I have been appointed Chairman of the South Northamptonshire Area Planning Committee on West Northamptonshire Council. I have 16 years experience of Development Control and 12 years as the Chairman of the SNC Development Control Committee, it was perhaps a natural progression to now lead the Area Planning







#### First South Northamptonshire Area Planning Committee

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> June I had a Chairman's Briefing for the South Northamptonshire Area Planning Committee on the following day. We ran through the Agenda items and I reviewed a new Members information leaflet on public participation, which is now available on the WNC website.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June, I chaired the very first South Northamptonshire Area Planning Committee for West Northamptonshire Council at the Forum, Towcester. There is a big difference for all of us, which is that as a Unitary



Authority we are responsible as the Local Highways Authority for Highways, and as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Flooding/Surface Water Drainage. Both of these were pertinent to the application before us today and in the future.

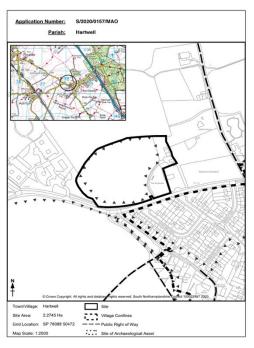
#### **Planning Appeals**

#### Land North of Ashton Road, Hartwell

Since the election, I have been getting up to speed with all of the written submissions from application to appeal stage and I was thinking carefully about the points I wished to make. The Appeal Hearing was to be held virtually on the 1st June 2021 at 10.00am. The Appeal by Kler Group Limited relates to the application to SNC for



Outline application for the erection of up to 55 dwellings,



landscaping, open space and associated works

including access, with all other matters reserved at Land North of Ashton Road, Hartwell, NN7 2JA. I joined via Microsoft Teams and I played an active part in the discussions.

Together with representatives from WNC, Hartwell Parish Council and Philip Weston, I chose to speak. I felt that we did manage to make the points on the key policies and the fact that we have more than 5 years land supply. I also reiterated the points about the status of the village within the development plan, the extent of local service provision including the lack of services and the effect on the character and appearance of the open countryside. I also expressed our concerns about the scale of the recent flooding. Thank you Nathan and Sonia Clews and Philip Weston for your photographs and all the other residents who have contacted me via Facebook. It's now in the hands of the Inspector. Let's hope that the outcome is favourable and meets the needs of the village.

#### **Appeal-Land South Of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> June, as soon as I was alerted to this Appeal, I wrote to Alison Bell, Case Officer at the Planning Inspectorate stating my intention to join the virtual Appeal Hearing, which opened on 8th June 2021 at 10.00am and lasted 5 days. The Appeal by Richborough Estates is for up to 69 dwellings, with associated access, landscaping, open space, and drainage infrastructure (all matters reserved other than access) on Land South of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton.

#### Landscape

I made most of my contribution on the third day of the Planning Appeal, I had prepared the points that I wished to make beforehand about the clarification of the existing value of

the landscape. Thank you to Tim Knights for your photographs.



This photograph taken from the same place as viewpoint 12 shows the poles and overhead lines, as reference for where the roofline of houses in the proposed development might be visible.



Buildings on this site would stick out like a sore thumb when viewed for a very wide area, particularly to the west. The current western boundary of the village is not visible at all from many places in the surrounding countryside, and anything in front of them would be intrusive and detract from the rural character of the village setting. This is contrary to the statement in the Executive Summary that the visual impact of the development will be localised, especially as the field rises towards the north-west, as discussed elsewhere.

#### Fifth Day of the Appeal

We finished the fifth and last day of the Planning Appeal by Richborough Estates for the Land South of Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021. We spent the entire day on

Here is a photograph taken looking north from Bradden Road that shows where building on this site would have a significant impact on the view. (The houses along Falcon View and Benham Road are on the right.)



These three views from Blakesley Road give a better impression of what is at stake, and the barely discernible roofline of the existing houses on the edge of the village.



planning obligations and conditions and closing arguments. The Council's Barrister referred to my photograph 4 as a fine example of the landscape, which would be lost by this application. The Inspector confirmed that he had carried out an unaccompanied site visit yesterday and he had looked at all of the 'view-points' identified in the Landscape session. It's now over to the Inspector, let's hope he makes a decision, which meets the needs of the residents of Greens Norton, West Northamptonshire

I am told that there are a number of other Appeals outstanding, more of this next month.

#### **Council Obtains High Court Ruling Over Pension Fund**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June, West Northamptonshire Council obtained a High Court ruling, which has avoided it having to pay a £6.5 million 'exit credit' to a private contractor. In 2011 Daventry District and Northampton Borough Councils – now both part of West



Northamptonshire Council — entered into a seven-year environmental services contract with Enterprise Managed Services (EMS), which became part of the Amey group during the contract. Council staff that transferred to EMS remained in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), and under the contract the two councils took on responsibility for the contributions and retained the risk. In the last months of the contract, a change in legislation

introduced 'exit credits' for employers when they left the LGPS, meaning Amey/Enterprise could have a claim on the pension fund's £6.5 notional million surplus. The Government later amended the 2018 regulations, allowing councils to make the decision whether any exit credit should be paid, taking all relevant factors into account.

Amey/Enterprise challenged the Government amendments in a judicial review action, which on Thursday 27 May decided in favour of the Government. The former councils had been involved in the action as 'interested parties' in support of the Government. This important decision means that the Council is not bound to pay contractors unfair windfalls from pension funds, which would ultimately need to be made up by taxpayers. "The court has found that the Government was right to correct its earlier error, and now the regulations allow the Council, as pension fund administrator, to fairly consider if Amey should receive money from the pension fund, and if so how much that would be."

#### Department of Transport consultation closes on 23 July 2021

A Department of Transport Consultation regarding

Street manager and permit scheme changes closes on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021.

- The proposals include:
  - Introducing a new type of flexi permit that would cover a number of standard and minor works in a certain area for a period of time
  - Allowing phases within a permit so that up-to-date information on traffic management can be sent to Street Manager and then published
  - Including notifications about Section 58 and Section 58A/Schedule 3A road restrictions in Street Manager
  - Requiring works start and stop notices to be sent within 2 hours at weekends; and requiring highway authorities to submit start and stop notices for their works so that up-to-date information can be provided via Street Manager to road users

3 changes relating to street works inspections:

- 1. Amending the way an inspection unit is calculated
- 2. Using performance to calculate the number of sample inspections carried out each year so that poor performers are inspected more frequently
- 3. Consolidation of the fee that needs to be paid for re-inspections of reinstatements that have failed a previous inspection

This consultation closes on 23 July 2021.

Street manager and permit scheme changes - GOV.UK (<u>www.gov.uk</u>) This consultation closes on 23 July 2021.

#### £400 a month on transport for 16-19 year olds

A Chichester council is calling on the Government to provide more financial support for young people living in rural and isolated areas required to travel to receive their post-16 education.

The Chairman of the Parish Council has written to Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson MP to say that he wanted to bring to [his] attention that young people are



spending "up to £400 a month" on transport costs to access their education and the considerable injustice facing thousands of young people living in rural areas who are forced fund prohibitively expensive transport costs in order access compulsory further education opportunities. He calling for a 'comprehensive review' of transport policy for 16-to 19year-olds to ensure that they have

free access to their nearest local higher education establishment, with guaranteed young-persons fares introduced for all children under the age of 18.

What do you think about this? Do we have a similar problem in West Northamptonshire and in particular in the ward of Hackleton and Grange Park?

#### **The Planning Bill**

MPs will vote on a controversial overhaul of England's planning system within the next year. The Planning Bill - announced at the Queen's Speech - aims to stop local opponents blocking development in designated "growth zones". Ministers said the plan would make it easier to hit house-building targets, but critics have said that it would sideline locals -



with one rural charity warning of a "free for all for development".

Conservative MPs and councillors have raised serious concerns about plans to change the planning system, cautioning the proposals could lead to substandard homes in the wrong places, with local views being overlooked or ignored.

Countryside charity CPRE also called for a rethink on the Planning Bill, saying it

would lead to "open season for developers on large parts of the countryside".

It is vital that any changes introduced by the Government, will consider the impact on the development of any new planning system to ensure that rural areas are not left behind when levelling up across the country. What do you think?

#### **WNC First Corporate Plan**

On Tuesday (8 June), Cabinet approved proposals for West Northamptonshire Council's first-ever Corporate Plan. You can view the Draft Corporate Plan and Report to Cabinet on

the WNC website. It sets out our Council's strategic vision over the next four years, including its key priorities and ambitions so that all residents, businesses and partners are clear on the commitments the organisation is making to them and to the area

The Corporate Plan sets out six key priorities that will guide policy, service planning and budget setting going forward:

- Green and Clean
- Improved Life Chances
- Connected Communities
- Thriving Villages and Towns
- Economic Development
- Robust resource Management.

There will be further consultation and stakeholder engagement on the detail around how the priorities will be delivered and implemented within the Council's services.





#### Carers' Week 7-13 June

Carers' Week takes place 7-13 June and this year's theme is making caring Visible and Valued. Our Carer's Network are planning some events to provide information and mutual support during the week to people throughout the organisation.

#### **West Northamptonshire Consultation Hub**

Consultations, engagement activities and participation events run are hosted on the Council's Consultation Hub. These activities are also promoted to members of the Consultation Register and the West Northamptonshire Residents' Panel. As we move forward, we are reviewing how we can enhance our participation groups.

We are being asked to encourage our constituents and other stakeholders to join our participation groups and be notified of new consultation and engagement activities. Countywide activities developed in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council are promoted on the West Northamptonshire Consultation Hub.

Here is an example of an item out for consultation:

Country Parks Outdoor Learning Provision: Northamptonshire County Parks are trying to gain a better understanding of how our country parks are currently used by schools for outdoor learning provision. Closes: 14 June 2021

#### Joint Meeting of the three Planning Committee Chairman

The three Chairmen of the WNC Area Planning Committees myself, Cllr Stephen Clarke,



South Northamptonshire, Cllr Kevin Parker, Daventry and Cllr Jamie Lane, Northampton met with Jim Newton, Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration and Paul Seckington,

Interim Head of Development Management, Enforcement & Land Charges at 1 Angel Square on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Phil Bignell, Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee, joined us via 'Microsoft Teams.' The purpose of the

meeting was for us to better understand the working of the three Area Committees and the Strategic Committee.

These committee arrangements ensure that local decision-making remains at the heart of the planning process across West Northamptonshire and continues to put engagement with local communities at the forefront of planning issues.

#### **Street Trading**

A street trading consent is needed in order to sell any goods from any street within the South Northants area of West Northamptonshire. Every street in the district is designated as

a consent street which means that no trading can take place anywhere unless a consent is in place, this includes private land where the public have free access, and then accordance only in with any conditions attached. For more information you can call 01327 322278 or email licensing.snc@westnorthants.gov.uk. I understand that conditions can vary depending on what is being sold and that you can get pre application advice.



#### **More Training**

On Saturday the 12th June, I attended the Councillor's Welcome Day at One Angel Square. The purpose of which was to meet the Executive Leadership Team, Assistant Directors and fellow Councillors so as to find out more about WNC services.

We were split into groups on arrival and because of social distancing we did not leave the



One Angel Square, Northampton ...

rooms allocated, whilst the officers went from room to room to complete their introductions and presentations. We had sessions with Corporate (Planning, Place Services, Highways, Waste Children's Trust, Adults and Communities, Education & Schools, Resources and the Chief Executive. lt lasted approximately four hours altogether.

#### **Grange Park Parish Council and SEGRO**

In April 2020 SEGRO launched a new £10 million fund, The SEGRO Centenary Fund. They



now intend to build on and extend the company's approach to community engagement and support by launching further initiatives through 2021 continue to support the community. They have Community Liaison Group (CLG), which is managing and sharing information relating to development of the SEGRO

Logistics Park Northampton Gateway (SLPNG) and a Community Fund Scheme. Attendees include representatives from Roade Parish Council, Blisworth Parish Council, Milton Malsor Parish Council and Collingtree Parish Council. Members of Grange Park Parish Council have asked why they were not included in the CLG. Today, I have written to Lizzie Humphreys, SEGRO enquiring as to why they were excluded. She is on Maternity Leave and the matter was passed to Gary Gaskarth, External Communications Manager who has asked the Partnership Development team to respond directly.

In addition, I have been in conversation with the relevant officers at WNC who have provided the following information.

The Development Consent Order (DCO), which Government approved in 2019 did not require a Community Fund. But, SNC agreed to administer such a fund via a S106 Agreement and entered into such an agreement with SEGRO and named Roade, Blisworth, Milton Malsor and Courteenhall Parishes as beneficiaries to a £300k fund. 8 months later in 2020 Collingtree Parish Council woke up and enquired whether SEGRO would be in favour of adding them to the Community Fund. They agreed and SNC entered into a second S106 Agreement for £75k.

If the Parish Council wishes Grange Park to be a beneficiary of the Community Fund then the Parish Council will need to apply to SEGRO direct. Before doing so, I suggest that it might be worthwhile speaking to Collingtree Parish Council to gain an understanding as to how they went about things. In the meantime, I will continue to press for a response from the Partnership Development team and advise you accordingly.