

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
NORTON-JUXTA-KEMPSEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
23 MAY 2024**

There were no Public Question Time discussions.

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Fincher was proposed as Chair by Cllr Waizeneker, seconded by Cllr Arrow and all were in favour. Cllr Fincher accepted this position and was elected as Chairman. Cllr. Fincher signed the Chairman's undertaking and declaration of acceptance of office.

2. Apologies for Absence: A. Job, P. Richmond, C. Dawson (early departure), Cllr R. Adams (WDC District Councillor), Cllr Mrs L. Turier (WDC District Councillor), Cllr Mrs L. Robinson (WCC County Councillor). These apologies, and the reason for them, were accepted and approved.

Attending: K. Fincher (Chairman), C. Arrow, C. Dawson, M. Pollard, C. Rega, and J. Waizeneker and J. Greenway (Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer).

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Job was proposed as Vice-Chair by Cllr Waizeneker, seconded by Cllr Arrow and all were in favour. Cllr Job had agreed to accept this position (if elected in her absence) and was elected as Vice-Chairman. Cllr Job will sign the Vice-Chairman's undertaking and declaration of acceptance of office at the next Parish Council meeting attended. **Action: Clerk**

4. Changes to Membership

The resignation of Cllr Stafford was accepted, and Cllr Stafford was thanked for her contributions to the Parish Council and the community. WDC will be advised. **Action: Clerk**

5. Declarations of Interest

a) Reminder and requirements noted.

b), c) and d) Cllr Fincher declared an interest in item 25 due to the company assisting with the migration project being Cllr Fincher's employer. As agreed at the 25 April 2024 Parish Council meeting, Cllr Fincher is allowed to take part in discussions relating to this agenda item.

6. To consider and adopt Council's Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations, Online Banking Process and Complaints Procedures

The existing and previously circulated Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Online Banking Process, Complaints Procedure and Scheme of Delegation were re-adopted. It was noted that new model Financial Regulations are available and agreed for these to be reviewed as part of the Clerk/RFO handover process and for a draft document to be presented to the Parish Council for review. Proposed by Cllr. Waizeneker, seconded by Cllr. Dawson and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

7. To Note Council's Code of Conduct

The existing and previously circulated Code of Conduct was noted and re-adopted. The WDC Social Media Guidance provided by the WDC Member Conduct Committee was also noted and adopted. Proposed Cllr. Pollard, seconded Cllr. Arrow and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

8. To Consider Areas of Focus and Agree Allocation of Areas of Responsibility to Councillors

Allocation of responsibilities was reviewed and will remain unchanged, with the exception of Cllr Rega's responsibilities which will include Active Travel Corridor and infrastructure matters. Proposed Cllr Pollard, seconded Cllr Dawson and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

9. To Consider Progress with Rolling Programme of Policy Reviews

It was agreed for policies to be reviewed every 5 years unless guidance requires more frequent or immediate review. Policies and procedures will be reviewed to identify any last reviewed/adopted prior to May 2019. Proposed Cllr. Waizeneker, seconded Cllr. Arrow and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

10. To Note the Council's Risk Assessment and Insurance Requirements

These were noted as agreed at the Parish Council meetings of 22 January and 21 March 2024. Proposed Cllr. Waizeneker, seconded Cllr. Arrow and agreed by all.

11. 2024/119 Minutes

a) The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2024 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Pollard, seconded Cllr Arrow and agreed by all.

b) The minutes action summary was reviewed and will be updated following the meeting. Discussions pertinent to agenda items are recorded within the relevant section of the minutes. **Action: Clerk**

12. 2024/120 Reports

a) Cllr R. Adams and Cllr Mrs L. Turier (Wychavon District Council (WDC) District Councillors)

Apologies noted from Cllr Adams and Cllr Mrs Turier. Also see item 12b below.

b) Cllr Mrs L. Robinson (Worcestershire County Council (WCC) County Councillor)

Apologies noted from Cllr Mrs Robinson.

Following discussions under agenda item 11b:

The new WCC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways and Transport, Cllr Marc Bayliss, has been invited to visit the Parish to observe the deficiencies of the Active Travel Corridor (ATC). Cllr Mrs Robinson will be asked to press for this visit. **Action: Cllr Mrs Robinson**

It was noted that if WCC continues to be reluctant to carry out improvements to the ATC, there is believed to be a mechanism for Public Rights of Way to be upgraded which may provide a potential alternative approach.

The Active Travel Forum meeting on 21 May was postponed due to the change in Cabinet Member.

Cllr Mrs Robinson has been asked to press for a new meeting date. **Action: Cllr Mrs Robinson**

Drains in the vicinity of school were jetted by WCC contractors on 25 April 2024 and issues appear improved other than water discharge from the old Methodist Chapel site. A meeting between WCC and WDC highways/drainage representatives, Cllr Mrs Robinson, Cllr Adams, Cllr Waizeneker and a representative of the Plymouth Brethren (owners of the old Methodist Chapel site) has been arranged for 24 May to discuss the drainage issues and resolution.

Efforts continue to:

- Arrange a meeting between the WCC Public Rights of Way Manager and Parish Council representatives to discuss WCC changes to PRoW management. **Action: Cllr Mrs Robinson**

- Press WCC Highways to resolve the safety issue relating to the Crookbarrow Way Bridleway Bridge surfacing when icy. **Action: Cllr Mrs Robinson**

- Press WCC Highways to take action to improve safety along the ATC route, particularly the Woodbury Lane section. The Parish Council continued to stress that WCC needs to make the ATC route through the Parish safe or to de-classify it as an Active Travel Corridor which promotes its use by pedestrians and cyclists. **Action: Cllr Mrs Robinson**

c) Finance

(i) Balances: current account £7,321.47, instant access deposit account £87,946.08, 32-day notice account £50,596.59 (23 May). These balances include the £18,100 UK Share Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant relating to Parish Green Spaces Working Group projects and the first 50% of the 2024/25 Precept from WDC. Members were reminded that whilst balances are healthy, funds are committed or earmarked for future expenditure.

(ii) The monthly accounts and bank reconciliation to 30 April 2024 are not available due to preparation of the year end accounts.

(iii) Draft 2023/24 annual accounts have been prepared, the internal audit is underway and external audit preparations are in progress, including completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and supporting papers. All will be presented for review and approval at the Council meeting on 20 June. The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer highlighted the significant amount of work involved in completing this work.

d) Social Media Communications

The report circulated in advance of the meeting was noted, including most popular Facebook (FB) posts (SWDP Review petition, installation of 24/7 accessible defibrillator and WCC proposals for revised parking restrictions in the vicinity of NJK CE Primary School, Littleworth). The number of FB followers continues to increase (to 691), with website subscribers increasing slightly to 106. FB posts relating to the SWDP Review petition, Green Spaces Vision consultation and Housing Needs Survey were 'boosted' as agreed at the 25 April Parish Council meeting minute ref: 2024/100 (13b), with FB data evidencing a positive impact. Most popular subjects on the Parish Council website appear to be WCC

proposals for revised parking restrictions in the vicinity of NJK CE Primary School, Parish Council meeting minutes and planning applications. To reduce the risk of automated processes skewing website data, use of a 'are you a robot' type box will be explored.

Action: Cllr Pollard

e) West Mercia Police

The report and Police.uk data circulated in advance of the meeting was noted.

g) St. James the Great Church, Norton

Apologies from Rachel Coulthurst (Assistant Curate) and the report circulated in advance of the meeting were noted.

13. 2024/121 Community Apiary

Updates received in advance of the meeting were noted, with the apiary group continuing to work well.

14. 2024/122 Parish Green Spaces Working Group (PGSWG)/Biodiversity Matters

PGSWG updates received in advance of the meeting were noted. The UK Share Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) £18,100 grant will fund work to re-establish/re-define one of the tenanted field boundaries (following an area being relinquished by the tenant). The contractor has been instructed and work will be completed as weather/ground conditions allow; this will assist with development of the area as 'The King's Meadow'. Other grant opportunities continue to be positively explored including sources such as WDC Community Legacy Grant (CLG), Natural Networks (via WCC), National Highways and DEFRA. Following the Parish Council Green Spaces Vision CLG consultation, the CLG application will be submitted to WDC. Members were reminded that if grant opportunities require a commitment to land use, the implications of this need to be fully investigated with the potential for legal advice to be needed. Delivery of the open air gym 'Air Skier' is being arranged.

15. 2024/123 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) / Parish Paths Warden (PPW)

No news to report.

16. 2024/124 Public Open Space/Verge Maintenance, Highways and Drainage Matters

It is understood that works to rebuild/repair sections of the Barracks curtilage wall along Brockhill Lane will re-commence in early June. See item 12b above for discussions relating to WCC safety improvements to the Active Travel Corridor (ATC) and Wadborough Road flooding matters.

The WCC consultation relating to proposals for revised parking restrictions in the vicinity of NJK CE Primary School has been publicised by the Parish Council and closes on 30 May. As discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 9 May, the parking situation will be monitored following any changes to the current parking restrictions to assess the impact.

A resident has requested details of who to engage with to seek traffic calming measures along Church Lane, Norton to reduce speeding. The resident has been advised that the Parish Council continues to press WCC to introduce such measures and has suggested contacting Cllr Mrs Robinson (WCC Councillor) directly to reinforce the Parish Council's continuing requests. It was noted that speed traps are carried out along Church Lane, with the various locations now being used.

A resident has enquired about the possibility of a crossing being installed on Norton Road to provide a safe crossing to Little Treasurers Nursery and for the 40mph speed limit in this vicinity to be reduced. Following discussions relating to road layout changes proposed as part of the SWUE and that despite Little Treasurers Nursery being located just outside the Parish boundary, it serves many of the residents of NJK Parish, it was agreed to write to WCC Highways with a request for a crossing point and a reduced speed limit to be explored (copy to Cllr Mrs Robinson, WCC County Councillor). Proposed Cllr Waizeneker, Cllr Pollard and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

17. 2024/125 Norton Connector (NC)

Positive feedback continues to be received with passenger numbers in the usual 60-90 range.

18. 2024/126 Employment Matters

a) This item was discussed on a confidential basis, with minutes prepared on a summary/overview basis.

b) An update was provided including the number of applications received for each role. Interview proposals were agreed, with the power to make appointment decisions/offers delegated to the interviewing panels (two Parish Councillors and Clerk) subject to the applicants being suitable for the roles. Proposed Cllr Arrow, seconded Cllr Pollard and agreed by all.

19. 2024/127 Planning

a) The following current planning applications were noted.

	<u>Application</u>	<u>Description of Proposal</u>
<u>Approvals:</u>	None	
<u>Refusals:</u>	Land At (Os 8785 5016), Hatfield Lane, Norton W/24/00507/FUL	Proposed live/work unit. Amendment to application Ref. W/23/02506/FUL. Parish Council objects.
<u>Awaiting Decision:</u>	Land At (Os 9017 5117), Mucknell Farm Lane, Stoulton W/22/01955/FUL	Development of a 1MW solar farm and associated infrastructure. Parish Council objects.
	Properties 1 and 2, Church Cottages, Church Lane, Norton, W/23/02496/FUL	Creation of 2no. Detached Bungalows. Comments submitted without support or objection.
<u>Internal Consultation:</u>	Hazeldene, 22 St James Close, Littleworth W/24/00497/HP	Erection of single-storey rear extension; two storey front/side extension; extension of stable; relocation of garage and widening of access
<u>Other:</u>	Appeal: APP/D1835/W/2/3340942 (Worcester City Council application: 22/00751/FUL) Land off Broomhall Way	Change of use of land to provide 10 permanent Travellers Pitches including the stationing of caravans for residential purposes with ancillary dayroom for each pitch plus associated access, parking, landscaping, engineering and infrastructure works.

b) SWDPR: The Joint Parishes Group/SWDPR Team liaison group meeting was attended by the new Head of WDC Planning and Infrastructure, with the update circulated in advance of the meeting noted. It appears unlikely that the Planning Inspector will schedule Public Hearings before early 2025.

20. 2024/128 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)/ Parish Aspirations Document

The Housing Needs Survey (issued by Wychavon DC) closes on 23 May. The NP working group will meet to review the outcome of the Survey (once this is available) and will undertake the next quarterly review of the Aspirations Document (due May/June 2024). **Action: NP Working Group**

21. 2024/129 Parish Council Owned Land

The latest update from Kidwells solicitors reports on actions taken, and those proposed, to resolve the issues with the Persimmon Homes Land Registry transfer documents. Regular updates have been requested and the Council has advised Kidwells that it reserves the right to take this matter to the Legal Ombudsman should this become necessary.

The wooden verge posts (with reflectors) have been installed along the driveway edge of the Gazala Drive grass verge, with a letter delivered to adjacent properties to explain the installation. No feedback has been received.

Persimmon Homes (PH) has agreed to a 12-month indemnity period (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025) in respect of work undertaken to the willow tree and stump adjacent to the garage of 9 Gazala Drive. An inspection by PH and Parish Council representatives will be undertaken at the end of the indemnity period to assess any issues following the work e.g. ground movement/garage subsidence. A reminder to arrange a site meeting after 31 March 2025 will be placed on the Council's files. **Action: Clerk**

22. 2024/130 Allotments

The update circulated in advance of the meeting was noted. Replacement of the damaged water meter glass fascia has been requested and efforts continue to submit monthly water meter readings. An update will be sought on 'no dogs' signs for allotment gates. **Action: Clerk**

23. 2024/131 Parish Defibrillators

Defibrillator signs have been installed in the Crookbarrow Road bus shelters and contact will be made with Little Treasurers Nursery to arrange installation of the sign above the defibrillator. **Action: Clerk**

24. 2024/132 Parish Hall Recreation Facilities and Outside Space

No update has been received from the baseball team following discussions at the April Council meeting.

In addition to play area/MUGA maintenance matters discussed at the April Parish Council meeting, reports of a swing seat and the 'hip hop/spyro giro' piece of equipment needing maintenance were considered.

IGH Maintenance & Solutions Ltd will be requested to attend to the swing seat. **Action: Clerk**

The swing will be taken out of action pending repair. **Action: Cllr Waizeneker, Cllr Fincher**

Information relating to a previous repair to the 'hip hop/spyro giro' and items for monitoring will be forwarded to Cllr Dawson for review and exploration. **Action: Clerk, Cllr Dawson**

In the Assistant Clerk's absence, the weekly check for w/c 27 May will be carried out by Cllr Dawson and the check record template completed for the Council's file. **Action: Cllr Dawson**

Following a junior football team enquiry received by the Hall Manager, it was agreed that 'roll on goals' would be allowed if stored at the team's own risk and secured in the area to the rear of the MUGA. The Hall Manager will be advised. **Action: Clerk**

It was noted that general storage for the team would be considered by the Hall Trustees.

It was agreed to instruct CDF Management Group Ltd to undertake weed spraying around the Parish Hall outside space at a cost of £480.00 + VAT. Clarification will be sought that the areas for spraying include the play area, MUGA and tennis court prior to instructing. The Grounds Person will be asked to remove the dead weeds. Proposed Cllr Pollard, seconded Cllr Rega and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

A report was received following review of the Hall rainwater system/flow of water through the rainwater manholes in the Hall car park. It was noted that not all covers could be lifted (due to weight or need for specialist equipment), that some appeared to need re-setting/securing and that stone from the carpark had entered some of the manholes, but none appeared to be blocked or flooding. It was agreed to seek quotes for all manholes to be lifted and checked, and to be re-fitted where required. Following completion of this work, quotes will be sought for jetting via the manholes to ensure the pipework is clear. Parish Council files will be reviewed to obtain details of the contractor that installed the manhole covers/foul water mains drainage to approach for quotes. **Action: Clerk, Cllr Arrow**

It was noted that work to identify the outflow pipe into the ditch to the side of the car park has been unsuccessful despite extensive excavation of the ditch in the area identified in the drainage plan. Enquiries continue to obtain quotes for installation of resin/bonded type pathway surfacing around the main entrance to the Hall.

25. 2024/133 Parish Council Website Domain Names and Email Addresses

Following update, it was agreed to establish the website nortonjuxtakempseyparishcouncil.gov.uk at a cost of £110 + VAT for the domain name for 2 years (using the existing Parish Council website host (Cloud Next) which is an approved provider). Both websites will be run in tandem for a period following migration as a contingency measure. Each website will cost £5 per month in hosting fees. It was agreed for the content of the existing Council website to be migrated to the new .gov.uk website at a cost of £150 + VAT by Eyelid Productions Ltd who currently provide website support to the Parish Council (also an approved provider). Proposed Cllr Waizeneker, seconded Cllr Dawson and agreed by all. The new website domain name will be progressed along with migration of content. Provision of new .gov.uk email addresses will be also explored. **Action: Cllr Pollard**

26. 2024/134 Parish Hall

An update was received from Cllr Fincher (Chair of the Hall Trustees and Parish Council representative) including work to the main hall comprising replacement of the windows and external door, fitting of new blinds and replacement of the floor during August. The Parish Council was thanked for its grant funding towards these improvements.

27. 2024/135 Worcester Norton Community Interest Company (WNCIC)

An update was received from Cllr Fincher (Parish Council WNCIC Board representative) in line with the agreed dispensation. The project is progressing well with a visit by WDC Officers and Councillors arranged for early June, the facilities due to open to the public in late July and a formal opening in early September. The first two tranches of WDC CLG funding have been released against agreed milestones and have been paid across the WNCIC.

28. 2024/136 Annual Parish Meeting (APM) – 9 May 2024

Feedback received at the APM was very positive, with attendees expressing appreciation to the Parish Councillors, Council employees and volunteers for their efforts in providing a vibrant community. Also see discussions under agenda item 16 regarding speeding and parking matters.

Cllr Dawson gave his apologies and left the meeting at 9.30pm.

29. 2024/137 Martyn's Law - Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill

Further guidance is awaited. It was agreed for this item to remain on meeting agendas for discussion of guidance as this evolves.

30. 2024/138 Sentry Statue Landscaping Proposals

The Norton Worcestershire Regiment Group continues to maintain the area e.g. weeding and laying of bark mulch. It was agreed to explore installing a membrane around the base of the oak tree planted within the tree seat located on the Crookbarrow Road grass verge. **Action: Clerk**

31. 2024/139 Finance

a) It was proposed by Cllr. Arrow, seconded Cllr. Waizeneker **and all were in agreement** that the accounts presented to the meeting, as summarised below, be approved for payment/confirmation.

Accounts for Confirmation:

Payee	Detail	Amount £ *
Administration	Payment of CLG funds received from Wychavon DC re WNCIC redevelopment of the cricket club site (released by WDC against completed project milestones)	67,000.00
	Grant towards 2024 mowing of St James churchyard	1,680.00
	CALC Annual subscription (agreed PC meeting 25 April 2024)	1,238.38
	Final 50% of 2023/24 accountancy fee	648.00
	Annual Parish Meeting booklet for all Parish households	573.50
	2023/24 annual payroll administration fee	363.00
	APM information booklets and roadside signs	236.16
	April/May 2024 printing (ink)	25.49
	Stamps	25.25
	Mobile phone contract May 2024 DDR	11.10
Website fees May 2024	5.98	
Community Services	Norton Connector April 2024	300.00
Grounds/ Parish Property Maintenance	April playing field mowing and 'groundsman' mowing	310.90
	Annual allotments rodent control service	285.00
	Verge mowing at Norton 7 May 2024 (commuted sum)	224.40
	Lengthsman duties April 2024	224.00
	Mowing field adj. to Coppice Cottage	108.00
	Refund of allotment refundable deposit	50.00
	TOTAL	73,309.16

* Incl. VAT where payable on invoice

Accounts for Payment:

Payee	Detail	Amount £ *
Staff Costs	May 2024 payroll (gross): Clerk and Assistant Clerk (incl. pension contributions and expenses reimbursement)	1,932.94
Grounds/ Parish Property Maintenance	Mower repair	44.95
	Refund of allotment refundable deposit	50.00
	Verge mowing at Norton 19 May 2024 (commuted sum)	224.40
	TOTAL	2,252.29
	GRAND TOTAL	75,561.45

* Incl. VAT where payable on invoice

b) Renewal of The Countryside Charity (CPRE) membership was agreed at a cost of £36. Proposed Cllr. Arrow, seconded Cllr. Waizeneker and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

c) Continued use of standing orders, direct debits, BACS and CHAPS payments (authorised in line with

the bank mandate/Council Financial Regulations) was approved. Proposed Cllr Waizeneker, seconded Cllr Rega and agreed by all. **Action: Clerk**

32. 2024/140 Correspondence for Information

See Appendix 1 for a list of correspondence received. It was agreed for correspondence relating to a waste and recycling pop up event to be forwarded to the Hall Manager for consideration. **Action: Clerk**

33. 2024/141 Clerk's Report on Urgent Decisions/Expenditure Delegations since the Last Meeting

As reported during the meeting.

34. 2024/142 Items for Update to Local M.P.

None.

35. 2024/143 Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda

None.

36. 2024/144 Date of Next Meeting

Parish Council Meeting 20 June 2024.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Correspondence Received for 23 May 2024 Parish Council Meeting	
Sender	Subject
CALC	New model finance regulations
Community First	Newsletters/bulletins
CPRE: The Countryside Charity	Campaign updates
NALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Good Councillors Guide 2024 • Chief Exec bulletins, newsletters, events
National Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M5 northbound full closure, J8 to J7, 9pm to 6am, 16 May & 17 May 2024 • M5 junction 9 Ashchurch Roundabout resurfacing - full closure J9 southbound exit slip, plus single lane closures of the other entry/exit slip around the roundabout, 9pm to 6am from 30 May to 6 June 2024, excluding weekends. • M50 junction 2 to M5 junction 8 eastbound resurfacing - full closure of the eastbound carriageway 9pm to 6am on 28, 29 and 30 May
One Network	Local roadworks reports
Police / Police & Crime Commissioner / Neighbourhood Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our News Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters May • West Mercia Police - Economic Crime Unit - Fraud & Scam Bulletin
Resident	Traffic calming/speeding Church Lane, Norton
Resident	Hedge encroaching pavement along Wadborough Road, Littleworth
Resident	Water discharge from the old Methodist Chapel site, allotment hedge cutting
Resident	Speed limit/crossing by Little Treasures Nursery
Rural Bulletins	Bulletins: Rural opportunities/funding/vulnerability service/news
Soc. Local Council Clerks	Chief Exec news bulletins and updates
Worcs CC	Waste & recycling information/pop up event
Wychavon DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Chairman for Wychavon District Council • Social Media Guidance for Councillors • Unique training opportunity for Armed Forces veterans • £250,000 amphitheatre created in Wychavon • Chairman joins pupils in Upton Snodsbury to help plant new woodland • Praise for Eckington's community fields project • Pershore's Water Play Park Is Open • Seatbelt covers to help neurodivergent children and adults as part of 'Project Treasure'
Wychavon DC Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda for Planning Committee meeting 23 May 2024 • Minutes for Planning Committee meeting 25 April 2024 <p><u>Refusal Notice:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W/24/00507/FUL - Land At (Os 8785 5016), Hatfield Lane, Norton: Proposed live/work unit. Amendment to application Ref. W/23/02506/FUL.