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Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting, Held on Thursday October 16th, 2025.

at 7pm Parsons Meade Community Centre

Members Present: Councillors Linda Hook (Chairman), Kathryn Barker, David Garrett, Stephen Godfrey and Carl Squires

Also, present– Fiona Young (Clerk)

WNC Cllr Glen Butcher

Absent – Cllrs Kevin Reed and Jacqueline Hughes.

Item no	
25/162	<p>To receive and approve any apologies for absence.</p> <p>It was Resolved to approve the apologies received from Cllr Soosan Phillip and Cllr Ros Chisholm and also from WNC Cllrs Pinder Chauhan and Ron Firman.</p>
25/163	<p>To receive any pecuniary and non-pecuniary Declarations of Interest in respect of items on the agenda. Cllr Squires declared a personal interest in agenda Items 25/170.6 and 25/177.</p>
25/164	<p>To approve and sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on September 18th 2025</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on September 18th 2025 were circulated prior to the meeting, it was Resolved to approve the minutes and they were signed as a true record.</p>
25/165	<p>Public Forum</p> <p>Mrs Emma Gother, the Assistant Principal and SEN Co-ordinator from Abbeyfields School spoke to the council regarding their application for a grant of £1000 to help with the provision of a new sensory garden. The sensory garden will be embedded into the wider SEN curriculum as a therapeutic and educational space. Mrs Gother explained that a lot of work has been done to secure some funding already from other neighbouring parish councils and the Hope Centre. It is hoped that the new garden will be used all year round and will help to support emotional regulation, social interaction and practical learning.</p>

25/166	<p>To Receive Reports from</p> <p>1. Police Representative - Full crime report for September circulated to all councillors, 19 crimes reported. 3 burglary's, 3 thefts from motor vehicles, 1 personal robbery, 2 criminal damage to vehicles, 3 assaults, 2 thefts and one public disorder.</p> <p>It was agreed that as the crime numbers appear to still be increasing that the council would look into arranging a community crime prevention event. Cllr Ros Chisholm is the Police Liaison Rep and will be asked to speak to the local police team and see if something can be arranged.</p> <p>b) West Northants Councillors.</p> <p>WNC Cllr Glen Butcher reported that he and Cllr Ron Firman had spent a lot of time in Camphill in the past month dealing with a lot of fly tipping. There is also a tree that is leaning in Plantagenet Sq. and a lot of issues with litter in Camphill which have both been reported. Cllr Butcher is still looking at improving the surface of the car park in Ladybridge Park.</p> <p>Cllr Pinder Chauhan sent in a report prior to the meeting explaining that repairs had been completed to one of the two bridges that cross into Green Lane, making the bridge more accessible. Cllr Barker mentioned that the other bridge was the least accessible of the two and also needed some work.</p>
25/167	<p>To receive Clerks report and brief reports from Councillors or Clerk attending outside meetings.</p> <p>The Clerk circulated a report prior to the meeting, there were no queries. The Chairman reported that she had attended a zoom introductory meeting with Mike Reader MP, she explained that our local MP is chatting to all parish councils in the area so that he can understand more about local issues. The Chairman mentioned the issues that the PC have experienced with planning applications for change of use to residential care homes and it was agreed that it would be a good idea for WNC to produce a simple myth buster style guidance document to help residents understand more about these applications.</p> <p>The chairman also mentioned that she had met with Peter Hackett from WNC to talk about the gate closing times for the parks.</p> <p>Cllr Squires and the Chairman attended a zoom meeting with a consultant from Nacre to talk about Nacre's future plans. They also attended the NCALC AGM.</p> <p>Cllr Garrett reported that through his work he spoke to a representative of the RAIN project.</p>
25/168	<p>Matters arising from previous minutes, items not covered on the agenda, for report only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk confirmed a letter had been sent in support of the request for a safety barrier at the site of a recent high speed crash. • Clerk confirmed that the new bin has been ordered from WNC Partnership Unit, cost inc logo and fitting of a double bin £956.54

25/169	<p>Planning</p> <p>1. New applications</p> <p>2025/4002/FULL, 14 Hill Fort Close Northampton NN4 9RT Single Storey Extension to rear It was Resolved to submit no comments.</p> <p>2. Decisions</p> <p>2025/3027/FULL, 3 Whaddon Close Northampton NN4 9XS Change of use from dwelling (C3) to children's home (C2) and garage conversion. To report from WNC Planning Committee meeting 9th Oct 2025. Application Approved. This was Noted.</p>																												
25/170	<p>Finance</p> <p>1. To note the receipt of the second instalment of the precept £14,250.00. Noted.</p> <p>2. Resolution to approve the payments listed below for October</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 824 1458 1267"> <thead> <tr> <th>Payable to</th> <th>Details</th> <th>Amount £</th> <th>Power to Pay</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Clerk</td> <td>Salary</td> <td>953.91</td> <td>Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC</td> <td>Tax and NI</td> <td>358.27</td> <td>Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NCALC</td> <td>Training course inv 5520</td> <td>55.20</td> <td>LGA 1972 s175</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Welford Christmas Tree Farm</td> <td>Parish Christmas tree</td> <td>767.00</td> <td>LGA 1972 s 144</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NCALC</td> <td>Training inv</td> <td>127.20</td> <td>LGA 1972 s 175</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F Young</td> <td>Reimburse MS365 renewal</td> <td>84.99</td> <td>Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>It was Resolved to approve the payments listed above; Cllr Hook will authorise the payments online.</p> <p>3. Approval of the bank reconciliation statements for September 30th, 2025</p> <p>Bank Balance on 1st April 2025 £13,747.52 + £31,270.01 = £45017.053</p> <p>Plus, Receipts £29,427.28</p> <p>Less Payments £12,738.81</p> <p>Total - £61,706.00</p> <p>Bank Balance on 30th September 2025 = £30,227.97 + £31,478.03 = £61,706.00</p> <p>The bank reconciliation was noted for 30th September.</p> <p>4. Confirmation that the internal controls checks have been completed by Cllr Phillip. The Clerk confirmed that the internal controls checks have been completed by Cllr Phillip and there were no concerns.</p>	Payable to	Details	Amount £	Power to Pay	Clerk	Salary	953.91	Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112	HMRC	Tax and NI	358.27	Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112	NCALC	Training course inv 5520	55.20	LGA 1972 s175	Welford Christmas Tree Farm	Parish Christmas tree	767.00	LGA 1972 s 144	NCALC	Training inv	127.20	LGA 1972 s 175	F Young	Reimburse MS365 renewal	84.99	Local Government Act 1972 ss101, 111 & 112
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	<p>5. Resolution to approve the budget report for Q. 2 (July, Aug, Sept) The Clerk circulated the Q.2 budget report prior to the meeting and there were no queries.</p> <p>6. Resolution to approve a grant request from Abbeyfields Secondary School for £1000 to help create a sensory garden. After some discussion it was Resolved to approve the donation of £1000 to help Abbeyfields School create a new sensory garden.</p>
25/171	<p>Parish council website and emails – Resolution to consider transferring the parish council website plus 10 email addresses from Cuttlefish to Parish Councils Online.</p> <p>After some discussion it was Resolved to change the council’s website provider over to Parish Councils Online, the council also currently subscribes to the online mapping system from the same provider. The current website provider is Cuttlefish and there have been some issues with the provision of emails which has prompted the decision to change suppliers.</p> <p>The cost of a new website will be £490 ex vat with an additional cost of £42 ex vat for an enhanced mailbox for the Clerks emails.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Parish Online and Cuttlefish and start the process off.</p>
25/172	<p>Complaints Policy – Council to resolve to approve a revised Complaints Policy.</p> <p>The Clerk circulated a revised complaints policy which includes a simple form for the complainant to fill in which should make the whole process more streamlined. It was Resolved to approve the revised policy.</p>
25/173	<p>Community Events Working Party – to receive an update from the Chairman and to resolve any actions required.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Friends of Hunsbury Parks are holding another quiz night on October 24th, they have also been busy getting ready for Remembrance weekend. The local Nit and Natter group have been making some new crochet poppies. The parish council will put up the usual display around the remembrance bench soon and will also put some poppies on a few lampposts in the parish, particularly those lampposts close to the parks.</p> <p>St Benedicts Church is holding a Christmas Tree Festival on December 6th; the parish council will be providing the large tree that is situated outside the Church and will be erected on November 28th.</p> <p>The Chairman also explained that following the Community Events Working party meeting last week it was agreed that the council would consider holding two community events in 2026, the first one would be on May 4th 2026 and would be series of guided walks around the park, there will be different levels of walks to suit all fitness levels and also a scavenger hunt for kids. On June 20th, 2026, a Picnic in the Park style event will be planned, between 1pm and 5pm. More details on both these events will be published closer to the dates.</p> <p>Northants Acre was also briefly discussed, and it was agreed that Nacre are welcome to attend any of the PC meetings and speak to council in the public forum section. If they have a big project in mind that they need to speak to the PC at length, then it would also be possible to hold a 30 min session with them before a normal meeting.</p>

25/174	<p>Underpass improvement –Clerk to update council on the project</p> <p>The Clerk explained that there was no update on this project at the moment, the group are waiting to hear whether WNC will be prepared to improve the lighting in the underpasses as currently it is felt that there is little point in trying to secure funding for the artwork if the lighting will remain so poor.</p>
25/175	<p>West Hunsbury Parks</p> <p>1. Resolution to support the Friends of West Hunsbury Parks with their application to gain Green Flag accreditation for the parks in West Hunsbury</p> <p>The Chair outlined the reason behind the agenda item, she understood that the Friends of West Hunsbury Parks wanted to try and achieve Green Flag Status for our parks. Cllr Squires advised that work towards an application for Green Flag accreditation was started last year and he was involved as he was then a WNC Cllr. The application was not completed at the time. The application is quite complicated and involves various stakeholders including West Northants Council and IDVerde. The Friends of West Hunsbury Parks are a key part of the application but they cannot submit an application independently, it would need to be supported by all the other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>It was agreed that the parish council would provisionally be in support of an application for Green Flag status for our parks if one was submitted by relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>2. Resolution for the parish council to take over the responsibility for the opening and closing of the park gates.</p> <p>The Chairman explained that WNC installed gates at both the parks in the parish to try and prevent anti-social behaviour. The gates were installed many years ago, WNC were not able to open and close the gates and so that role has been done by the Friends of the Parks group and Welland Valley Football Club, for many years. Many of the original volunteers no longer open and close the gates anymore and new volunteers have been recruited from local residents. Cllr Hook, who is a volunteer for the gate herself, was involved in finding and coordinating the new volunteers. It was suggested that the parish council take over responsibility for the gate opening and closing by managing the rota of volunteers. The Clerk explained that she has spoken to the council’s insurance provider and that as long as risk assessments are prepared and appropriate protective equipment is provided then the volunteers would be covered on the council’s insurance policy.</p> <p>It was Resolved that the parish council will take over the responsibility for the opening and closing of the park gates, the council will maintain the rota of volunteers who will be offered a hi vis vest and a torch. A risk assessment will also be carried out and an inspection of the gates will be done at regular intervals. Cllr Garrett will produce and information and safety document for the volunteers.</p> <p>3. Resolution to approve the proposed car parking improvements in an attempt to reduce anti social behaviour in Ladybridge Park car park.</p>

	<p>The Chairman reported that she met with Peter Hackett from WNC at the park to look at the signposting in the car parks which need updating to ensure visitors to the parks are more aware of opening and closing times of the gate. He agreed to do new signs. After consultation with users and volunteers the new opening and closing times will be : 1st Nov to 31st March. 8am opening - 5pm closing and 1st Apr to 31st October 8am opening - 8.30pm closing.</p> <p>After some discussion it was agreed that a plan suggested by Peter Hackett to subdivide the bottom car park in Ladybridge Park by installing bollards and a new gate part way across the car park in an attempt to reduce anti social behaviour be declined at this time. It was felt that it would possibly be better to look at resurfacing the car park so that it is not so appealing to those who wish to drive their vehicles in an anti social manner but WNC may or may not have monies available for this.</p> <p>Cllr Hook also advised that the new sign relating to having no dogs in the children’s playground in Ladybridge park is not easily seen and this was discussed at a meeting with Peter Hackett on site. It was agreed to look at moving it to a more appropriate place . There is a need for more than one sign and the signs in Hunsbury Country Park will be looked into as well.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding the new rules surrounding allowing dogs in parks, whether on lead or off lead and whether they are allowed in children’s play areas. The difficulty in West Hunsbury is that the play areas are not enclosed by fencing, which they are in other areas, the clerk was asked to contact WNC for clarity on the new rules.</p>
25/176	<p>Budget and Precept 2026-27</p> <p>To begin preliminary discussions about the budget for the coming financial year, final figures to be agreed at the December meeting.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about projects for the coming year, ideas included providing goal posts for football in the park, a new noticeboard in Hill Fort Close, a new defibrillator and new benches.</p>
25/177	<p>Correspondence, to include actions when needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Governors needed, Abbeyfields School • Resident enquiry about allotments, Clerk responded. • PLR Update, Northampton Police – Clerk sent to Cllr Chisholm • Resident query about tree maintenance in the parish, Clerk sent on to WNC Cllrs • WNC One stop Shop opens at One Angel Sq. • Immediate Justice Team – Request for work opportunities • WNC – Community Resilience Project, referred to Chairman • Haworth Group – Latest newsletter, sent to Cllrs.
25/178	<p>Next meeting November 20th 2025</p>