

NEWTON IN THE ISLE

PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Dave Gibbs, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS
Tel: 01945 870083 • Email: parishclerk@newtonintheisle.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Newton-in-the-Isle Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 13th May 2025

Present - Cllr R Bradley (Chairman), Cllr A Clark, Cllr S Clark, Cllr K Humphris, Cllr R Moore, Cllr B Simpson, Cllr K Simpson, Cllr A Osborn (CCC), D Gibbs (Clerk), 7 parishioners

001/25 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2025/26

Cllr Bradley was nominated by Cllr S Clark, seconded by Cllr B Simpson and duly elected. He signed his declaration of acceptance, witnessed by the Clerk.

002/25 Election of Vice Chairman for the Municipal Year 2025/26

Cllr Moore was nominated by Cllr S Clark, seconded by Cllr A Clark and duly elected. He was asked to sign his declaration of acceptance at the end of the meeting.

003/25 Apologies for Absence

Cllr B Barber (FDC), Cllr C Seaton (FDC)

004/25 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the agenda for the Annual Meeting includes many standing items, as set out in the Council's standing orders. He also reminded those present of the rules for the conduct of Council meetings.

The Chairman thanked the Village Hall Management Committee for organising the VE-Day celebration.

005/25 Public Forum

A resident expressed concern regarding the possibility of development in a field to the south of the High Road. The Chairman explained that the Council cannot comment until a specific proposal is submitted.

006/25 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

- a) Delegation to committees - Members discussed options for delegating decision-making to committees and resolved to continue with the current arrangements.
- b) Terms of reference and membership of committees - Members reviewed the terms of reference and membership of the Planning Committee. The Clerk noted that allowing the Committee to elect its Chairman at an unspecified future date lacked clarity. Members resolved to elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee at the

Annual Meeting of the Council and asked the Clerk to amend the terms of reference accordingly. Cllr Bradley was elected as Chairman and Cllr B Simpson as Vice Chair for the 2025/26 year.

- c) Standing orders and financial regulations - The Clerk introduced the latest version of the model standing orders with amendments relating to procurement and the transition to gender-neutral language. He also presented the new model financial regulations with similar amendments relating to procurement. The Council resolved to adopt the new standing orders and financial regulations.
- d) Insurance - The Clerk advised members that the Council's insurance policy with Ansvar Insurance is due for renewal on 1 June under a 3-year agreement to 2027.
- e) Subscriptions to other bodies - The Clerk reminded members that they currently have subscriptions to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils, Cambridgeshire ACRE and the Campaign to Protect Rural England. Members resolved to continue with these subscriptions.
- f) Appointment of a Trustee to the Newton Village Hall charity - Cllr K Simpson offered to undertake the role and was duly appointed.
- g) Register of assets - Members reviewed the register which has been updated to include recent purchases and the total value of assets now stands at £131,309.
- h) Meeting dates - Members agreed to meet on the second Tuesday of alternate months, namely 8 July, 9 September, 11 November, 13 January 2026, 10 March and 12 May. All meetings will commence at 7.30pm.

007/25 Minutes of Previous Meetings

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th March be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

008/25 County and District Councillors Reports

County - The Chairman welcomed Cllr Osborn to the meeting and invited him to say a few words by way of introduction. He explained that he has completed his induction as a County Councillor and is keen to support the work of the Parish Council in tackling local issues.

District - Cllr S Clark reported that it had been a quiet period for the District Council due to the County Council and Mayoral elections, but the Pride in Fenland awards had been launched, with a closing date for nominations of 2nd June.

009/25 Police Matters

The Clerk reported that Sgt Dave Arnold had been transferred to an Acting Inspector role in Peterborough and Sgt Lee Lombardo had taken his place in the Wisbech Neighbourhood Team.

010/25 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a District Council planning training webinar and an in-house planning briefing for members of the Parish Council.

Correspondence included a traffic order for closures of Mill Lane from 3-5 June and High Road from 23-25 June, the District Council's response to the Government on Local Government Reorganisation, and a Neighbourhood Watch local strategy consultation.

011/25 Outstanding Matters

- a) Accumulation of scrap in Colville Road - Members continue to monitor the situation.
- b) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - Awaiting a visit from Clarion Housing.
- c) Vacant properties - Members continue to monitor several vacant properties around the village.
- d) Allocation of vacant allotments - The Community Payback team will be asked to clear the concrete and metal from the site, enabling it to be cultivated for use.
- e) Village bus service - no further progress.
- f) Former Colville School site - The Clerk reported that he has spoken to the owner and expects a planning application to be submitted soon.
- g) Magnifica House (formerly Chartwell School) - Cllr B Simpson has visited.
- h) Bird deflectors on overhead power lines - UK Power Networks will consider the request.
- i) Replacement doors for Village Hall - The new door is due to be fitted on 5th June.
- j) Litter bin outside former Woadman's Arms - The Clerk is awaiting a response from the District Council.

012/25 Members' and Residents' Issues

- a) Cllr B Simpson reported several hedges overhanging the pavement on the High Road. Members asked the Clerk to write to the owners to ask them to rectify the situation.
- b) Cllr S Clark reported that the streetlight outside Common Cottages is not working. This has already been reported to the District Council.
- c) Cllrs S Clark and B Simpson met with the builders overseeing the development of the former Woadman's Arms site regarding early morning use of machinery. All contractors will now comply with the standard working hours.
- d) Cllr K Simpson reported that grass is encroaching onto the pavements around the village. The Clerk advised Members that the Payback teams had tackled this issue previously.
- e) Cllr S Clark reported that there is restricted visibility at the junction of Little Ramper and Sutton Road due to vegetation on the verge. The Clerk will report this.

013/25 Highways

- a) The Clerk reported that a new Local Highways Officer has been appointed. He will arrange a meeting with him shortly. A number of potholes have been marked for repair.

The Capital Maintenance Plan for 2025/26 has been published. Work is scheduled in Colvile Road in preparation for surface dressing in 2026/27.

- b) The Clerk reported that he had resubmitted the application to the County Council's 20mph scheme. The successful schemes will be announced later in the year.

014/25 Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field

The Clerk provided an update regarding issues relating to the management and maintenance of the Playing Field. They noted the following and resolved accordingly.

- i) The paperwork required to bring a Community Payback team has been completed and signed. The first session will take place on Sunday 18th May.
- ii) The clearance of the dyke has revealed further fly-tipping which the Community Payback team will remove.
- iii) Bricks, concrete and metal around the perimeter of the field will also be removed by the Payback team.
- iv) Cllr Bradley will liaise with contractors to obtain quotes for the installation of the new field drain.
- v) Cllr Bradley will dismantle the carousel bearing to ascertain whether it can be repaired.
- vi) The replacement of the soft play surfacing will take place after the repair of the carousel and the legs of the climbing frame.
- vii) Painting of the teen shelter will take place as soon as the weather permits.
- viii) The contractor is undertaking the removal of the moles.
- ix) The Clerk is preparing a list of the signs required and will arrange for them to be produced. The Handyman will install them.
- x) The new contractor is working to shorten the grass and will clear the copse when the bluebells have set seed.
- xi) The dead or damaged trees in the arboretum will be replaced when suitable replacements can be found.

015/25 Village Hall

The Clerk advised members that the Internal Auditor had enquired about the insurance valuation of the Village Hall. The Chairman of the Management Committee notified Members that they carried out a valuation through their insurers in October 2024 resulting in a figure of £492,000. A copy of the valuation will be provided for the records.

016/25 Annual Parish Meeting

This year's Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 28th May. All residents of the parish are invited. The Clerk advised members that Samantha Krauss, the District Council officer responsible for investigating fly-tipping and other environmental crimes will speak about the work of her team.

017/25 Residents' Survey

- a) Members considered the latest draft of the survey. They agreed to defer a final decision until the next meeting.
- b) A quote had been obtained for the publication of the survey, but Members agreed that this too should be deferred until the next meeting.

018/25 Play Equipment Safety Inspection

- a) Members considered the RoSPA Playsafety inspection report. They noted that the issues raised were already under consideration and would be addressed before next year's inspection.
- b) The Clerk highlighted the importance of regular inspections of the play equipment. Cllr B Simpson agreed to undertake the regular inspections. The Clerk will provide the necessary paperwork and training.

019/25 Planning

Members considered the following planning applications and resolved accordingly:

- a) *F/YR25/0367/F - Erect an extension and grain dryer to existing agricultural building - Agricultural Building East of Willow Holt Pumping Station, Fen Road, Newton-in-the-Isle*
Members resolved to offer no objection.
- b) *F/YR25/0311/F - Continue use of existing care home as a specialist care facility (Class Use C2) - The Willows, Fitton End Road, Gorefield*
Members resolved to offer no objection.

020/25 Finance

- a) Members approved the internal accounts for the 2024/25 financial year.
- b) Members approved the statement of reserves as at 31st March.
- c) Members reviewed and adopted the final budget for 2025/26.
- d) Members reviewed the Council's fees and charges. They resolved not to increase any charges for the 2025/26 financial year.
- e) Members reviewed the mandate for the Council's bank accounts. They resolved to add Cllr Bradley as an authorised signatory.
- f) Members considered the use of electronic payments for the Council's expenditure and resolved to ask the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate this.
- g) Members reviewed and approved the Governance and Management Risk Assessment.
- h) Members considered and approved the Internal Audit Report. They agreed to adopt the following recommendations:-
 - i) The Clerk will evidence that invoices are approved for payment;
 - ii) Bank reconciliations will be noted in the minutes of the next meeting;
 - iii) The Village Hall charity will provide evidence of insurance annually on renewal;
 - iv) The annual budget will be published on the Council's website;
 - v) A reserves policy will be prepared and published;

- vi) Training will be provided to enable Councillors to undertake an annual appraisal of the Clerk; and
- vii) More detail will be added to the Council's asset register.
- i) Members reviewed and approved each of the statements on the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- j) Members reviewed and approved the Accounting Statements 2024/25 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- k) Members reviewed and approved the Certificate of Exemption for 2024/25 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- l) Members resolved that the period for the exercise of public rights be from Tuesday 3 June to Monday 14 July.
- m) The Clerk explained that the internal audit process had included a thorough examination of the Council's policies and procedures. Members resolved to reappoint Helen Symmons as Internal Auditor for 2025/26.
- n) At the request of the Clerk, Members approved the signing of a direct debit mandate in favour of HMRC for payments of tax and national insurance.
- o) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of April, showing income of £13,100.00 and no expenditure, resulting in a surplus of £13,100.00 and total funds held of £44,815.04
- p) Members noted the following sums received:

<i>Barclays Bank (interest)</i>	£ 104.56
<i>HMRC (VAT refund)</i>	£ 1,482.21
<i>Fenland District Council (precept instalment)</i>	£13,000.00
<i>J McGregor (licence fee)</i>	<u>£ 100.00</u>
	£14,686.77

- q) Members ratified the following payments issued since the last meeting:

<i>100815 Idverde Ltd (grass cutting)</i>	£ 358.80
<i>100816 D A Gibbs (expenses)</i>	<u>£ 111.06</u>
	£ 469.86

- r) Members approved the following payments:

<i>100817 D A Gibbs (salary April and May)</i>	£ 893.96
<i>100818 D Freeman (handyman)</i>	£ 270.00
<i>100819 Idverde Ltd (grass cutting)</i>	£ 358.80
<i>100820 Tydd St Giles CC&RG (room hire)</i>	£ 24.00
<i>100821 Playsafety Ltd (play equipment inspection)</i>	£ 115.20
<i>100822 Business Services at CAS Ltd (insurance)</i>	£ 681.35
<i>100823 Helen Symmons (audit fee)</i>	<u>£ 240.00</u>
	£ 2,583.31

021/25 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 8th July at 7.30pm.